

Chapter 20

Justice and Attorney General and Corrections, Policing and Public Safety—Leading the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative

1.0 MAIN POINTS

As of January 31, 2021, the Ministries of Justice and Attorney General, together with Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, are taking steps to improve their processes for leading the Community Safety and Well-Being initiative since our 2016 audit.

The initiative was launched in 2012; its goal is to increase community safety by addressing the root causes of crime.

The Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety engaged the services of an external consultant to conduct an evaluation of the initiative. The evaluation is to include measuring whether the initiative is leading to better outcomes for the individuals involved. Also, the Ministries expect to use the evaluation results to inform the selection of success measures for the initiative. Full evaluation results are expected by June 2022.

Without effective processes to measure the success of the initiative, the Ministries do not know if the initiative is providing timely and valuable coordinated services. For example, it does not know if participation in the initiative leads to better outcomes for the individuals involved. (e.g., where student truancy was a risk factor, was the student going to school more, less or the same amount after connection with services). The Ministries are also unable to make appropriate adjustments to ensure the initiative addresses root causes of crime. Without measuring the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative, the Ministries cannot understand if it is making a difference.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Historically, Saskatchewan has, and continues to have, one of the highest crime rates in Canada.¹ The province requires a focused approach to crime reduction, in addition to law enforcement. The Community Safety and Well-Being initiative (formerly called Building Partnerships to Reduce Crime) approach was launched in 2012 to address the urgent need for new approaches to crime in Saskatchewan as desired by police, the Government of Saskatchewan and the public.²

The overall goal of the initiative is to reduce crime by using a risk-driven, crime-reduction partnership approach. The approach combines the efforts, expertise, information, intelligence, and resources of the justice and human services systems. Together they contribute in deliberate and co-operative ways to address the full spectrum of crime

¹ www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2018008-eng.htm#about (23 February 2021).

² [Building Partnerships to Reduce Crime \(Details\) \(publicsafety.gc.ca\)](http://publicsafety.gc.ca) (17 February 2021).



reduction. This approach includes crime prevention, intervention, and suppression. The overall focus is on reducing victimization and improving community safety outcomes.³

At January 2021, there were 14 Community Mobilization Hubs in Saskatchewan serving 14 communities across Saskatchewan.⁴ A Hub is comprised of agencies chosen for their focus on needs specific to their community. Each agency agrees to participate. Examples of participating agencies include the Ministries of Social Services and Health, policing services, and school divisions.

The Hub's objective is to provide an integrated, proactive response to at-risk, marginalized, and vulnerable populations. Understanding of composite risk factors informs responses while improving community safety and well-being.

The Hub also identifies individuals or families with acutely elevated risk factors. A single agency is unable to address these risk factors. The Hubs mobilize human service agencies for a targeted and timely response specific to individual and/or family needs.⁵ Each Hub has a chairperson and a steering committee.

The Centre of Responsibility, closed since 2019, focused on data collection, research, and quantitative analysis to identify systemic gaps and opportunities for improved community safety and wellness.⁶

2.2 Focus of Follow-Up Audit

This chapter describes our second follow-up audit of management's actions on the recommendations we made in 2016.⁷

In 2016, we reported the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety did not have effective processes for leading the Community Safety and Well-Being initiative. We made four recommendations. By January 2019, the Ministries implemented two recommendations, partially implemented one, and did not implement one recommendation.⁸

To conduct this audit engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook—Assurance* (CSAE 3001). To evaluate the Ministries' progress toward meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Ministries' management agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow-up audit, we discussed actions taken with representatives of Ministries' management, and reviewed guidance and documentation provided by the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

³ www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/plcng/cnmcs-plcng/ndx/dtls-en.aspx?n=154 (12 February 2021).

⁴ The Community Mobilization Hubs are located in Weyburn/Estevan, LaRonge, Prince Albert, Nipawin, Melfort, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton, North Battleford, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Île-à-la-Crosse, and Regina.

⁵ results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/LandscapeCS_Canada_4.pdf (12 February 2021).

⁶ results4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/LandscapeCS_Canada_4.pdf (12 February 2021).

⁷ *2016 Report - Volume 1, Chapter 10, pp. 99-112.*

⁸ *2019 Report - Volume 1, Chapter 16, pp. 223-227.*

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at January 31, 2021, and the Ministries' actions up to that date.

3.1 Identifying Success Measures In Progress

We recommended the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (formerly Ministry of Justice and Attorney General) identify how to measure the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative. (2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 108, Recommendation 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 11, 2017)

Status—Partially Implemented

We recommended the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (formerly Ministry of Justice and Attorney General) in collaboration with the Centre of Responsibility and Community Mobilization Hubs analyze and report on the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative.⁹ (2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 111, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 11, 2017)

Status—Not Implemented

As of January 2021, the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety are in the process of identifying measures, but have not yet analyzed or reported on the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being initiative.

The Ministries have taken the initial steps to measure the success of its community mobilization hubs. In March 2020, they engaged the services of an external consultant to carry out an evaluation of the initiative. The evaluation will take a phased approach to achieve the following evaluation objectives:

- Measurement of if/how involvement with a Hub Table leads to better outcomes for the individuals involved¹⁰
- Cost/benefit analysis for participating Hub Table agencies
- Social return on investment
- Measurement of the impact on specific risk factors that were identified in each case one year post-involvement with the initiative

⁹ The only Centre of Responsibility in the province, which was located in Prince Albert, discontinued operations effective June 28, 2019. As a result, the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety assumed some of the Centre of Responsibility responsibilities, including tracking of risk information.

¹⁰ A Hub Table is team of people from various government ministries and community agencies. They meet weekly to address specific situations involving individuals and/or families who have a significant probability of experiencing harm if they do not receive some type of intervention. The team works collaboratively to develop immediate, co-ordinated and integrated responses by mobilizing existing resources with the intent of reducing risk in a timely manner, usually within 24 to 48 hours.



The Ministry expects completion of the full evaluation by June 2022. Evaluation results will inform the determination of the Community Safety and Well-Being initiative success measures. The outcome of the consultant's evaluation will determine how the Ministries will analyze and report on the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being initiative.

Without effective processes to measure the success of the initiative, the Ministries do not know if the initiative is providing timely and valuable coordinated services. For example, it does not know if participation in the initiative leads to better outcomes for the individuals involved. (e.g., when student truancy was a risk factor, was the student going to school more, less or the same amount after connected with services). The Ministry is also unable to make appropriate adjustments to ensure the initiative addresses root causes of crime.