



National Parole Board

Performance Report

For the
period ending
March 31, 1996

Improved Reporting to Parliament –
Pilot Document

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Foreword

This document was prepared as phase two of the Improved Reporting to Parliament Project which has been established within the Treasury Board Secretariat to improve the Expenditure Management information provided to Parliament, and to update the processes used to prepare this information. This is part of a broader initiative known as “Getting Government Right” to increase the results orientation and increase the transparency of information provided to Parliament.

During the period from August 1995 to June 1996, extensive consultations were held with Members of Parliament and other key stakeholders to examine options to improve the information provided to Parliament. A clear requirement was identified to provide a focus on departmental performance and actual results achieved.

In June, 1996 the House of Commons gave its concurrence to tabling, on a pilot basis, separate performance reports from sixteen departments and agencies. These pilot documents will be evaluated, and if Parliament and others endorse the approach, Parliament will be asked to formally approve the introduction of separate performance reports for all departments and agencies beginning in the fall of 1997.

These documents are also available electronically from the Treasury Board Secretariat Internet site: <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/tb/key.html>

Comments or questions about this document, or the Improved Reporting to Parliament Project, can be directed to the TBS Internet site, or to:

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NATIONAL PAROLE BOARD

PERFORMANCE REPORT

1995-96

September 26, 1996

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NATIONAL PAROLE BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT 1995-96

1.0 CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Canadians want to be safe in their homes and communities and that is why the government remains committed to ensuring safe homes and safe streets as essential elements to the security of all citizens.

The National Parole Board, an independent administrative tribunal, makes decisions contributing to that security. The Board does this through its mandate to determine the timing and conditions of release of offenders in a manner that contributes to the protection of society.

To ensure that protection, the Government has indicated its priorities will be focused on using corrections resources for high risk offenders while developing alternatives to incarceration for low risk offenders. Conditional release, through the discretionary role of the National Parole Board, is essential to determining the timeliness and appropriateness of the return of offenders to our communities.

The National Parole Board works in partnership with a number of other members of the criminal justice system and the community (e.g., Correctional Service of Canada; police forces; aftercare agencies, and victims and their families) in making these decisions.

The risk assessment process of National Parole Board decisions is pivotal to the protection of society. The appointment of qualified Board Members is integral to the quality of decision-making. To ensure a high standard of appointment, the Board has implemented a revised method for the selection of Board Member candidates. This involves selecting and interviewing candidates against selection criteria with particular attention on criminal justice knowledge and experience, administering a test to assess skills in analysis and judgement, and submitting the names of successful candidates for appointment. The government has appointed only those successful candidates who have been presented for appointment through this system of selection.

The public is interested in the subject of conditional release. In order to foster an environment of trust and respect for conditional release, the National Parole Board is committed to being open and accountable to the public.

Conditional release was established many years ago to protect the public, and while many changes have occurred since its inception, it continues to serve its original intent, that of public protection through facilitating, as appropriate, the timely reintegration of offenders as law-abiding citizens.

2.0 DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Board's Mission states that: the National Parole Board, as part of the criminal justice system, makes independent, quality conditional release and pardon decisions and clemency recommendations. The Board contributes to the protection of society by facilitating, as appropriate, the timely integration of offenders as law-abiding citizens.

Four main core values were established to guide its work in relation to the Mission and reflect that the Board:

- contributes to the attainment of a just, peaceful and safe society;
- respects the dignity of all individuals and the equal rights of all members of society;
- believes the contribution of qualified and motivated individuals is essential to achieving its Mission; and
- is committed to openness, integrity and accountability in the execution of the mandate.

Legislation governing the Board includes the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)*; *Criminal Records Act (CRA)*, and the provisions of the *Criminal Code*. The *CCRA* empowers the National Parole Board to make conditional release decisions for federal offenders and offenders in provinces and territories without their own parole boards. Provincial Boards currently exist in Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia. The *CRA* entitles the Board to issue, grant, deny, or revoke pardons for convictions under federal acts or regulations. The Board also exercises authority regarding the use of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy for those convicted of a federal offence in all jurisdictions.

2.2 Organization and Program Composition

The work of the National Parole Board is carried out by a network of offices in Ottawa and the Regions. The national office is responsible for clemency and pardons, investigations, appeals, policy development and interpretation, performance outcomes, and advice and guidance in the area of Board member training, planning, communications and corporate services. There are five regional offices: Atlantic (Moncton); Quebec (Montreal); Ontario (Kingston); Prairies (Saskatoon); and Pacific (Abbotsford) and all are in close proximity to the Correctional Service of Canada regional offices. A sub-office, sharing CSC premises, was recently established in Edmonton, Alberta as an efficiency measure to bring the Board members closer to the institutions.

The complex task of making conditional release decisions is carried out by qualified Board members in each region with knowledge and experience in the criminal justice system. In order for the Board members to assess the risk of each case and make subsequent decisions to grant or deny conditional release, they are supported by a team of knowledgeable staff who, working closely with CSC, ensure that all required information for decision-making is received, and that it is shared with the offender within the prescribed timeframes. They also provide policy interpretation, maintain contact with victims, schedule hearings, make arrangements for observers at hearings, and communicate the resulting conditional release decisions.

The Board's operations are broken down into three business lines: Conditional Release, Clemency and Pardons, and Corporate Policy and Management. The most significant business line is conditional release that accounts for 70% of the total Board's resources. The following describes the business lines:

Conditional Release includes the review of cases of offenders and rendering of quality conditional release decisions; the provision of support for decision-making; the provision of training necessary to ensure quality and professionalism in decision-making; the development and review of conditional release policy; the coordination of program delivery throughout National Parole Board (NPB) and with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and other key partners; the provision of information to victims and interested parties within the community; and dissemination of information related to conditional release to the public.

Clemency and Pardons involves the review of applications and the issuing of pardons, the rendering of pardon decisions and clemency recommendations.

Corporate policy and management involves the provision of information and support for planning, resource management and decision-making.

2.3 Objectives and Priorities

The National Parole Board's prime objective, as outlined in the Mission, is to contribute to the long term protection of society. The Board, in carrying out its responsibilities specifically relating to conditional release and pardons decisions and recommendations for clemency, will continue to make decisions according to risk assessment criteria with all decisions based on the ultimate protection of society; be sensitive to the needs of offenders, victims and their families; strengthen relationships with partner groups; recognize that offenders can and do change; employ the least restrictive determination in release decisions consistent with the protection of society; and behave in a manner that is professional, accountable, and fiscally responsible. An environment of trust, respect, openness and sharing of information will be supported and encouraged by management and staff of the Board.

Corporate Objectives

The Board will pursue the following Corporate Objectives from 1996/97 to 1998/99:

Commitment to Quality - the Board will *strive constantly for the highest quality in decision-making, through enhanced training, policy development, learning from decision outcomes, research and statistical analysis, public education, and ethical management.*

Effectiveness and Efficiency Improvements - the Board will *continue to develop policies and design systems and processes that will improve the overall quality of conditional release decision-making, reduce costs, streamline processes, add value to products and services at every point, and eliminate needless constraints and duplication by pursuing the sharing of common services.*

Openness and Accountability - the Board will *ensure openness and accountability to the Government and public and continue to work closely with partners in the criminal justice system such as, victims and victims' groups, and participate actively in the community.*

Priorities for the Board in the coming fiscal year will focus on initiatives relating to the quality of conditional release decision-making and openness and accountability by:

- completing the annual performance evaluation of Board members and ensuring corrective action is carried out with respect to identified weaknesses;
- implementing the action plan with our CSC partners to resolve issues respecting case preparation;
- developing and implementing an action plan to follow-up on the results of the evaluation study of the Board member training program to ensure it supports professional development and quality decision-making;
- ensuring policies and practices are sensitive to and responsive to the unique needs of Aboriginal people;
- implementing changes respecting high/low risk offenders, subject to the passage of the relevant legislation; and
- enhancing education of and consultation with the public, partner groups, including victims' groups and offender advocacy groups, specifically relating to the Board's programs and conditional release decision-making.

3.0 BUSINESS LINE PERFORMANCE

3.1 Results Commitments

Protection of society is the paramount consideration in any conditional release decision. These decisions are made based on available information and careful assessment of risk. Effective conditional release benefits both the community and the offender by:

- providing a controlled re-entry into the community that contributes to the long term protection of society;
- recognizing that offenders can and do change;
- reuniting offenders with their families;
- reducing the need for social assistance, and
- allowing offenders an opportunity to contribute to society.

The Board will continue to refine the framework for enhancing program effectiveness and accountability. The following outline the key results commitments that focus on the conditional release business line for 1996/97:

to provide Canadians with	as demonstrated by:
quality decision-making for conditional release	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• improved process of Board member appointments/evaluations;• number of day and full parole successful completions as a proportion of all conditional release completions; and• number of serious charges laid against offenders while on day and full parole.
open and accountable decision-making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• development of a public education strategy;• continued meetings with criminal justice partners, victims' groups, community organizations, and the media to provide information concerning the work of the National Parole Board;• sharing the findings of investigations and audits, on request;• providing information on conditional release outcomes; and• stakeholder feedback.

3.2 Results Achieved

Over the last couple of years, the Board has been committed to improvements of its operations specifically with respect to quality, and openness and accountability of its decision-making. The following are some of the key accomplishments that have resulted in improvements of the Board's performance:

Quality Decision-making:

- refocused the Mission and established core values to guide Board operations;
- implemented improvements to the Board member selection and appointment process;
- enhanced decision-making policies and training of Board members and staff;
- participated with CSC in review and modification of the case preparation process;
- approved an Aboriginal policy document to reflect the Board's commitment to understanding and meeting the needs of Aboriginal offenders; and
- participated in the Sentencing & Corrections Review with Department of Justice and partners within the Ministry.

Openness and Accountability:

- implemented a performance evaluation process for Board members;
- developed performance measures and service standards relating to the Board's programs;
- implemented the user fee for pardons applications shifting some of the administrative costs from the taxpayer to those who receive the direct benefit;
- implemented the amendments to the *CCRA* (Bill C-45);
- developed a plan to address public education. NPB has met with criminal justice partners, victims' groups and media to provide information concerning the work of the Board;
- shared the findings of investigations and audits with members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and others who expressed interest;
- provided information on conditional release outcomes to the media, Members of Parliament and interested members of the public;
- received on average 500 applications annually from observers to attend hearings. Observers generally reacted positively to their experience and reported greater understanding of NPB decision-making;
- continued working with partner groups in the criminal justice system including: corrections, police, parole organizations (Canadian Association of Paroling Authorities, and Association of Paroling Authorities International), and advocacy groups for victims and offenders; and
- maintained ongoing dialogue with victims' organizations in order to improve the services provided to victims. NPB's commitment to improve the victims' services resulting from a joint CSC/NPB evaluation of victims' services resulted in the establishment of 1-800 numbers in Atlantic, Ontario, and Pacific Regions. In addition, a workshop was organized for regional staff working with victims to provide a forum to discuss best practices and issues.

Conditional Release Business Line:

The following provides performance information related to: a) grant rates; b) number of serious charges laid against offenders while on day/full parole; and c) number of day and full parole and statutory release completions.

- a) **Grant rates** are calculated based on the total grant decision as a proportion of the total grant and denial decisions made by the Board. On average, the National Parole Board makes approximately 35,000 conditional release decisions per year. The 35,000 decisions are made up of about 37% for day parole and 35% for full parole.

The following are the Grant Rates for day and full parole for provincial (under NPB jurisdiction) and federal offenders for the period 1990-91 to 1995-96:

YEAR	FEDERAL		PROVINCIAL	
	DAY %	FULL %	DAY %	FULL %
1990-91	64	30	63	70
1991-92	67	34	64	69
1992-93	66	37	66	65
1993-94	65	38	58	64
1994-95	60	33	53	52
1995-96	59	34	52	50

Between 1990-91 and 1995-96, day parole grant rates for provincial and federal offenders ranged from 52% to 66% and 59% to 67% respectively. Grant rates for full parole for provincial and federal offenders ranged from 50% to 70% and 30% to 38% respectively.

The reduction in the grant rate may be due to a number of factors such as: impact of the *CCRA* implemented in 1992 requiring inmates to apply for day parole rather than being automatically reviewed; a change in day parole eligibility from one sixth to 6 months in advance of full parole; an increase in the number of offenders admitted for violent offences; the expansion of schedule 1 to include offences such as sexual offences against children; and the addition of schedule 2 relating to drug offences. These factors significantly increase the level of complexity in the risk assessment of cases for conditional release. With respect to provincial offenders, it appears that offenders are increasingly taking advantage of provincial/territorial absence programs rather than applying for federal conditional release.

- b) While CSC is responsible for community supervision, both NPB and CSC regularly monitor the behaviour of offenders in the community on day and full parole and statutory release as a short-term indicator of decision outcomes.

Charges are tracked for eight serious offence categories including: murder, attempted murder, sexual assault, major assault, hostage taking, unlawful confinement, robbery, and other sensational incidents (e.g., major drug seizures, arson).

The following table is a breakdown of the **Charges for Serious Offence by Release Type** from 1990/91 to 1995/96:

YEAR	DAY PAROLE	FULL PAROLE	STAT. RELEASE	TOTAL
1990/91	62	63	110	235
1991/92	66	72	99	237
1992/93	73	55	98	226
1993/94	68	79	93	240
1994/95	64	69	123	256
1995/96	15	43	107	165

As can be seen, the number of serious charges against those offenders on conditional release in 1995/96 has decreased significantly. For example, between 1994/95 and 1995/96, there was a significant reduction of:

- 49 charges (77%) for day parolees;
- 26 charges (38%) for full parolees; and
- 16 charges (13%) for offenders on statutory release.

The significant reduction in the number of charges may be due to a combination of improvements both within NPB and CSC, such as: better identification of risk and needs of offenders and provision of programming; improved release plans; improved appointment process for Board members; enhanced training; selection of appropriate offenders for release; and returning offenders to custody who present a risk before commission of an offence (refer to technical revocations included in the day and full parole successful releases).

- c) **Successfully completed releases** are key indicators of accountability for the Board. Information on the outcomes of decisions to release is crucial. Factors influencing success or failure on conditional release are complex and many extend beyond the control of NPB and CSC.

The successful completion rate is calculated by dividing the number of parole or statutory releases who have reached their warrant expiry by the total number of parole or statutory releases over the fiscal year. There are two types of revocations - technical and new offence. Technical revocations include a violation of a condition, such as, drinking, breaking curfew, or deterioration of an offender's behaviour. In order to protect the public, NPB may revoke an offender's release, based on a CSC suspension, if the Board believes an offender is at risk of committing a new offence.

The following tables display the proportion of successfully completed releases out of the total number of completions for the years 1992-93 to 1995-96 for day and full parole and statutory release.

DAY PAROLE

	1992-93 %	1993-94 %	1994-95 %	1995-96 %	92-93 - 95-96 Average
Successful Completion	84	75	78	84	80
Revocation (Technical)	9	17	17	12	14
Revocation (New Offence)	7	8	5	4	6

FULL PAROLE

	1992-93 %	1993-94 %	1994-95 %	1995-96 %	92-93 - 95-96 Average
Successful Completion	78	70	70	72	72
Revocation (Technical)	10	16	18	18	15
Revocation (New Offence)	12	14	12	10	13

STATUTORY RELEASE

	1992-93 %	1993-94 %	1994-95 %	1995-96 %	92-93 - 95-96 Average
Successful Completion	52	58	59	59	57
Revocation (Technical)	28	24	28	28	27
Revocation (New Offence)	20	18	13	13	15

The above indicates that offenders on day and full parole present less risk than offenders on statutory release. The successful completion rates for offenders who reached their warrant expiry date in 1995/96 was: 84% for day parole; 72% for full parole; and 59% for statutory release.

The higher successful completion rates of offenders on day and full parole as compared to those offenders released by law on statutory release is due in part to the Board's ability to select those offenders most likely to be successful on these releases.

Clemency and Pardons Business Line:

Through the review of appropriate information, the Board issues or grants pardons and formulates recommendations to the Governor in Council for the exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy. An indicator of the Board's effectiveness in this area is the average time involved in processing applications for pardons.

The following table outlines the number of accepted applications and average processing time from 1991-92 to 1995-96:

	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Accepted Applications	12,167	21,125	17,565	21,218	15,040
Average Process Time (months)	15	10	8	7	7

The number of applications received to-date is down compared to the same period last year. It is difficult to predict if this trend will continue. The average processing time has been reduced over the past four years and has remained constant in the last two years.

The percentage of pardons granted has remained relatively constant over the years (approximately 99%). The number of pardons revoked (for a new offence) each year represents an extremely small proportion of all people in Canada who have been granted a pardon since the program's inception.

The Board implemented the necessary policies and procedures with respect to the introduction on April 26, 1995 of the user fee for pardons. In 1995-96, the Board credited \$615,000 to the Consolidated Revenue Fund relating to the user fee. The impact of the user fee will be evaluated in 1997-98 including its possible impact on the number of applications received.

Key Reviews

In addition to an ongoing review of the Board's performance, reviews of its business lines are carried out as required to ensure compliance with the law and support of the mission and objective of public safety. Annual plans and initiatives involve an integrated approach in which evaluation, audit and studies provide complementary information to address important business line issues.

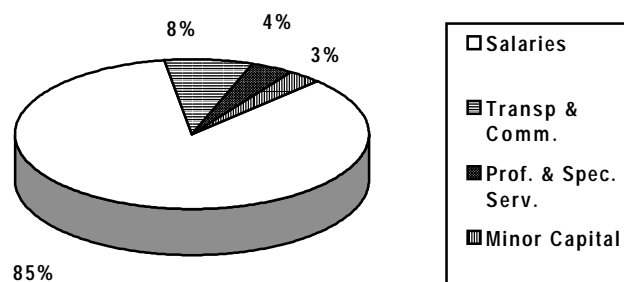
The major study currently underway is a review of the changes implemented with the introduction of the *CCRA*. It is jointly underway with CSC to support the parliamentary review of the *Act* in areas such as:

- availability of information for decision-making;
- interim release programs (temporary absence, work release);
- day parole;
- full parole including accelerated parole review provisions;
- changes to post-release provisions;
- operation of the decision registry provisions;
- provisions for observers at hearings;
- detention provisions (update of 1995 study);
- statutory release;
- role of victims and victim information; and
- judicial determination of parole eligibility.

3.3 **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

The Board continues to manage its Programs in an effective and efficient way despite its reduced resource base from year to year. The Board is continually pursuing innovative approaches to delivery of its programs without affecting its prime objective of protection of society. Some examples of innovative changes include: enhanced training, improved scheduling, and the expanded use of technology.

Both the volume and complexity of the workload have increased significantly, mainly as a result of an increase in offender population as well as a change in the inmate profile. This has had a considerable impact on the Board's limited resource flexibility, given the non-discretionary nature of much of NPB's operating costs (e.g., Board member and staff salaries, training and travel). Expenditures on salaries for Board members and staff consume 85% of the budget. Transportation and communications account for 8%; 4% of costs is expended on professional and special services; and 3% is spent on printing, supplies, and minor capital.

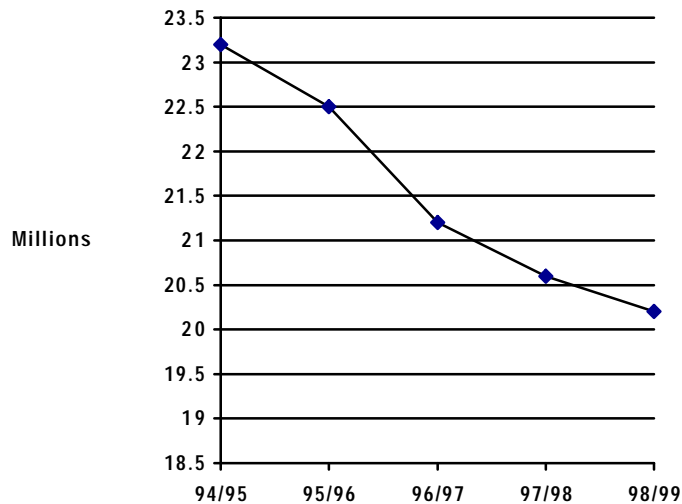


The Board has been faced with and will continue to experience significant reductions of \$3.1 million or 13% to its operating budget between 1994/95 and 1998/99. The following table and chart outline this reduction:

(In millions)

1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
\$23.3	\$22.5	\$21.2	\$20.6	\$20.2

Budget Reduction Trend



Note: These numbers do not include contributions to employee benefit plans.

4.0 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

In the past, the strategy to effect reductions has been mainly to re-engineer and streamline the corporate support functions. This approach is no longer sufficient in light of the significant reductions to the Board's resource base in the past and in the future. The Board is pursuing the following strategies to effect the necessary savings to offset previous budget and program review reductions. They include:

- reducing the number of hearings/reviews that an offender is entitled to from every year to once every two years;
- reducing the quorum to two votes for detention and interim detention reviews;
- removing the ceiling of forty-five full-time Board members to allow for more full-time Board members and reduce the need for part-time members who incur higher costs;
- streamlining the pardons process through a combination of legislative, policy, and administrative changes;
- pursuing sharing of common services such as informatics with CSC; and
- continuing to streamline operations both at the National Office and in the Regions.

5.0 Appendices

- 1. Contacts**
- 2. Resource Plan**
- 3. Organization Chart**

1.0 Contacts

Office	Address
National Office	Director, Communications 340 Laurier Avenue West Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0R1 Phone: (613) 954-6549 Fax: (613) 957-3241
Atlantic Region	Regional Director 1045 Main Street Unit 101 Moncton, N.B. E1C 1H1 Phone: (506) 851-6345 Fax: (506) 851-6926
Quebec Region	Regional Director 200 René Lévesque Blvd. W. Guy Favreau Complex, West Tower Montreal, P.Q. H2Z 1X4 Phone: (514) 283-4584 Fax: (514) 283-5484
Ontario Region	Regional Director 516 O'Connor St. Kingston, Ont. K7P 1N3 Phone: (613) 634-3857 Fax: (613) 634-3861
Prairies Region	Regional Director 229 Fourth Ave. South 6th Floor Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 4K3 Phone: (306) 975-4228 Fax: (306) 975-5892
Pacific Region	Regional Director 32315 South Fraser Way Room 305 Abbotsford, BC V2T 1W6 Phone: (604) 870-2468 Fax: (604) 870-2498

2.0 Resource Plan

Net Cost of the Program by Business Line (thousands of dollars)

<u>1995-96 Comparison of Main Estimates to Actuals</u>				
Business Line	Operating	Capital	Gross Expenditures Total	Total Main Estimates
Conditional Release	17,700	0	17,700	17,086
Clemency and Pardons	1,868	0	1,868	1,635
Corporate Policy and Management	6,268	0	6,268	6,442
	25,836	0	25,836	25,163
Revenue credited to CRF				
Cost of services by other Depts.				3,385
Net Cost of Program				28,548

Departmental Appropriated Planned and Actual Spending (thousands of dollars)					
Business Line	Actuals 1992-93	Actuals 1993-94	Actuals 1994-95	Main Estimates 1995-96	Actuals 1995-96
Conditional Release	16,646	18,116	17,074	17,086	17,700
Clemency and Pardons	1,849	1,714	1,674	1,635	1,868
Corporate Policy and Management	6,711	7,348	6,201	6,442	6,268
TOTAL	25,206	27,178	24,948	25,163	25,836

NOTES:

1. All numbers above include Contribution to Employee Benefit Plans and the numbers included in the Outlook document did not.
2. The increase in 1993-94 was due to the provision of funds for implementation of the CCRA. The continuing reductions are due to the end of the funding provided for the CCRA and various budget reductions.
3. The 1995-96 Main Estimates excludes \$1.1 million of supplementary estimates.

3. Organization

