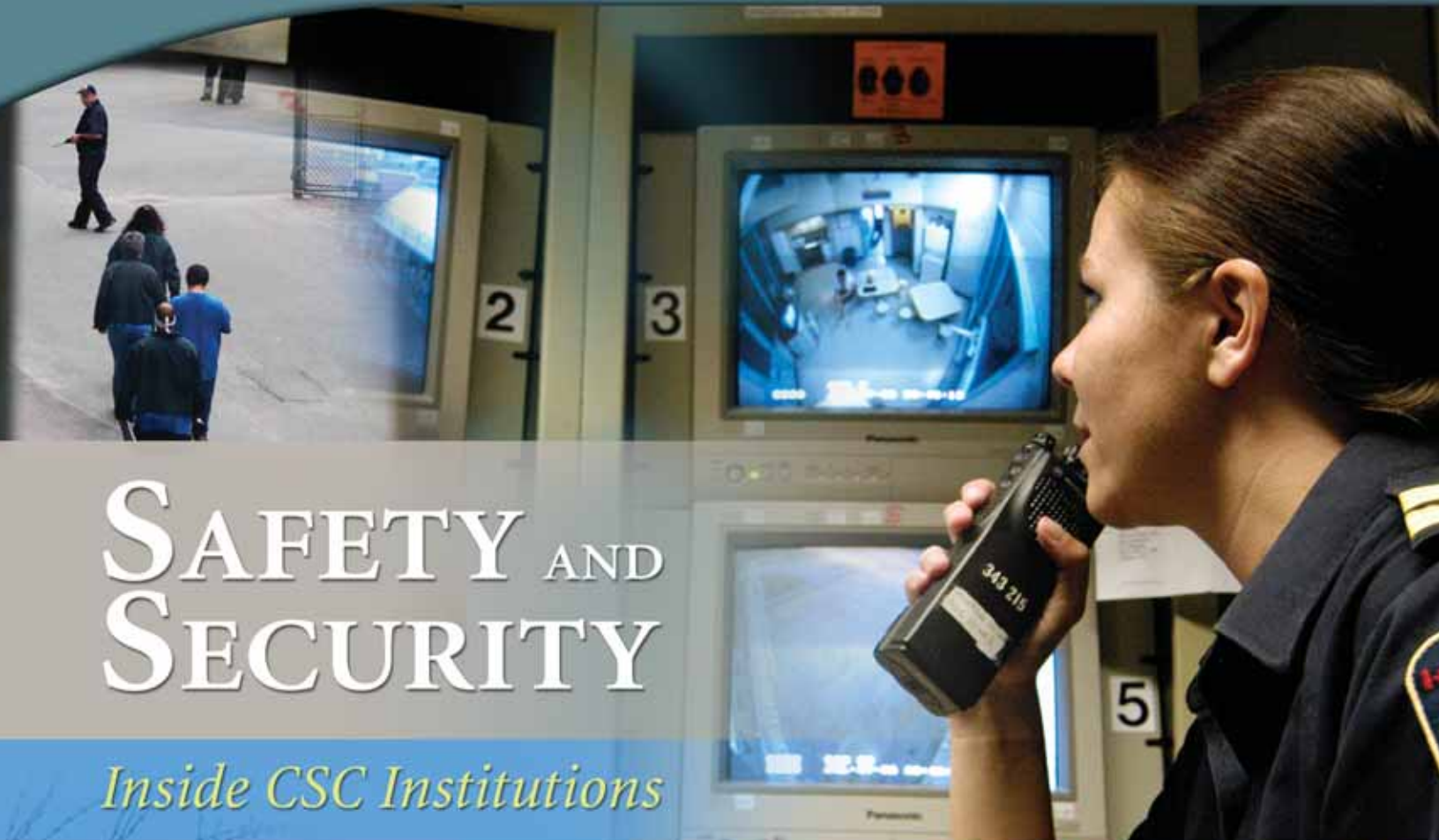


LET'S TALK

DECEMBER 2006 VOLUME 31, NO. 2



SAFETY AND SECURITY

Inside CSC Institutions



Correctional Service
Canada

Service correctionnel
Canada

Canada 

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DECEMBER 2006 VOLUME 31, NO. 2

COVER



A correctional officer monitors inmate movement using state-of-the-art surveillance equipment that allows the user to keep an eye on several locations at once. It's one example of static security methods that CSC employs to make their institutions safer and more secure. Even more important is the positive, daily interaction between offenders and staff – known as dynamic security – that breaks down communication barriers and creates an atmosphere that promotes trust and rehabilitation.

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COMMISSIONER'S EDITORIAL

Enhanced Safety and Security for Staff and Offenders in Our Institutions

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) employees from across Canada moved into fall 2006 with the shared objective of meeting our results commitments in our five strategic priority areas for 2006-07. Our focus on these priorities is a necessary response to the rapid changes in the profile of the federal offenders coming through our front door. For example, we are seeing more offenders with histories of violence and violent criminal behaviour, more offenders with previous convictions, more offenders with affiliations to gangs and other organized crime groups, and more offenders rated maximum security when admitted. This issue of *Let's Talk* explores how we are working to improve our results in one of our key priority areas: enhancing safety and security for employees and inmates in our institutions through specialized strategies and programs.

For example, you will read about how our security intelligence officers use identification, surveillance and dynamic security strategies to deal with threats posed by inmates who have affiliations to organized crime. We have also developed specialized programs that address their resistance to changing this antisocial behaviour.

In an article on the Special Handling Unit (SHU), you will learn how CSC staff handle our most disruptive offenders. At the SHU, inmates participate in intense programming that strives to modify their violent behaviour, the goal being their quick and safe return to the mainstream offender population.

Keeping Drugs OUT focuses on the challenges of offender substance abuse, a problem with which 80 percent of our offenders are afflicted prior to arriving at CSC. As part of our fight against drugs — which includes eliminating the flow of drugs into our facilities — we are developing



world-class, research-based addiction treatments to stop the demand for these harmful substances.

Of course, not all threats are physical. Frequent attempted breaches of electronic security both from inside our institutions and from external sources over the Internet mean CSC's Information Management Services staff are on the alert 24/7, protecting CSC's networks from these attacks.

I hope that reading this issue helps you understand how CSC employees are playing a key role enhancing safety and security at our institutions, thereby increasing CSC's public safety contribution. While this hard work and dedication in an operationally focussed business is always challenging and often under-appreciated, we need to continue to measure our progress against our business plan to ensure that we stay on a steady course to deliver the best possible public safety results.

The next edition of *Let's Talk* will focus on another one of our key priority areas: enhancing the safe transition of offenders into the community. ♦

Keith Coulter
Commissioner
Correctional Service of Canada

Staying One Step Ahead of Organized Crime

Experts will tell you that organized crime doesn't spring from any particular country or culture; it's a culture all its own, a way of life driven by a need for profit and power, two appetites that cross both ethnic and sociological lines. Today there is an intricate web of organized crime groups operating in Canada — traditional, eastern European, Asian and Aboriginal gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, Colombian cartels, and others with business connections that span the globe. Organized crime is not a new phenomenon in Canada but its complexity and level of sophistication have dramatically increased over the past two decades.

BY **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector

Photo: Bill Rankin

A High Price to Pay

Ordinary citizens may shrug their shoulders and think they are unaffected by organized crime as long as they are not directly threatened or do not accidentally stray into the crossfire of street gangs' turf wars. But the director of CSC's Preventive Security and Intelligence Division will tell you that the facts are otherwise.

"Organized crime operates on three different levels. The first is highly visible: the stabbings and drive-by shootings — settling of accounts between rival gangs, the street-corner drug dealers, and the sex trade that infiltrates respectable neighbourhoods. These are the activities that provoke a strong reaction in the community: concern and fear that crime is out of control. The second level involves the *unseen* profits of organized crime and how these funds are concealed through money laundering techniques that drain the Canadian economy. The third and most troubling level is reinvestment of laundered money into legitimate businesses, allowing criminals to seize even more power, more profits, and entrench themselves in normal society, masquerading as honest citizens."

Many criminal organizations that have undergone rapid expansion over the past 20 years gloss over their transformation into

global enterprises and try to persuade the media and the public that they remain unchanged from the 1970s and '80s. But every Canadian — from the suburban hockey mom to the Bay Street broker — pays a high price for their growth not only in street crime but through deteriorating health caused by the illicit drug trade, increased incidences of fraud, and higher insurance premiums, to name just a few.

An Ongoing Threat

Organized crime groups value their privacy; their very existence is jeopardized by exposure. Much of their operations are well hidden, and any clues that rise to the surface are valuable and must be analyzed. When gang members are convicted of crimes and sent to federal institutions, it is a unique opportunity for front-line staff to report on their activities and interactions, gain an understanding of how they operate and share findings with partners in law enforcement. It's vital because organized criminal groups pose a serious and ongoing threat not only to the community but also to the safety and security of CSC institutions.

Incarcerated gang members — estimated by CSC Research Branch at approximately 14 percent of the total federal inmate population at intake — try to pursue their illicit activities and maintain their ties with the outside world. Typically, they seize opportunities that will give them the leverage needed to reach their own goals, using violence and intimidation as their tools. They try to undercut other inmates' desire to reform, discourage fellow members from breaking ties with their



Dynamic security is one of the keys to managing organized crime members in CSC institutions.

organization and intimidate unaffiliated inmates so they bow to the gangs' priorities. The links between these offenders, violence and drugs within federal institutions are undisputed and pervasive.

Effective Strategies on the Front Lines

How does CSC staff combat this situation? What strategies do they use to counter the often subtle effects gang members may have on an entire institution? First, it is essential to positively identify organized crime members as early as possible in the correctional process, ideally at the remand stage before they pass through the gates of any federal institution.

Once they are in CSC custody, front-line workers employ multidisciplinary strategies based on proven principles and substantiated by research to stay one step ahead of these

offenders. How staff reacts to a gang member is very specific to that individual in that particular situation: keeping them under close supervision, collecting information and, if need be, using it in court to prosecute for illegal activities. Gang members come to realize that trying to stay active members during incarceration is *not* in their best interests.

Security staff work diligently to sort out the full gang members from the associates, the hangers-on, and those who claim to be members but really aren't. This is often difficult because smart gang members tend to keep a low profile in prison and blend in with the regular population. Their orders are passed down verbally with no direct link between the issuers and the followers who carry them out; their actions are protected by a wall of silence. For security staff, closing the gap between knowledge and legal proof of illegal activities is a challenge. Adding to the murk are other offenders — outsiders foolish enough to think they can gain some kind of status or protection by falsely claiming affiliation. It's important for CSC staff to accurately identify the real players.

Cooperation and Communication

Central to the security and safety effort is the security intelligence officer (SIO) in each institution. "It's a role that over the last few years has become increasingly strategic," explains one security intelligence supervisor. "This means SIOs undergo thorough training in gang management and share best practices with other law enforcement agencies such as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service which protects our national security interests."

On a daily basis, SIOs across the country penetrate the surface of institutional life, gathering intelligence, sharing it with law enforcement partners and, most importantly, working with the correctional officers (CXs) that walk the floors of the ranges each day, interacting with offenders, and keeping their eyes and ears open.

"The CXs have incredible abilities to talk to these guys," comments one SIO. "They get really good at sensing an inmate's state of mind and know whether the inmate is trying to feed them lies or half-truths, whether their information is for real. They are trained to know that behind a gang member's behaviour often there is an underlying strategy. So they watch carefully. I wouldn't be able to do my job without the CXs. I'm only one employee; they are many."

Correctional officers record vital clues as they become available. Reports are written and information flows both horizontally and vertically, through regional intelligence coordinators and into a national centralized intelligence unit, then on to other law enforcement agencies, and back again — a reciprocal process that continuously feeds itself and proves invaluable for decision makers. At first, it's like putting together a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing, but gradually correlations are made and patterns of behaviour and association are established.

In 2004 CSC launched the Security Intelligence Network or SINet in maximum-security institutions across the country, a secure network for storing and sharing Protected 'C' and eventually secret information on gangs, suspicious or illegal activities occurring in CSC penitentiaries and in the community, and threats to the safety of staff, other offenders and the public. The goal is better and faster responses to security threats by giving SIOs and their counterparts in the community increased intelligence gathering, analysis and dissemination capabilities.

Information Management Services is currently in the process of hooking up minimum-security institutions to SINet and next year the connections will extend into the community via another secure network called the Classified Communications Network. This will allow CSC to safely share classified information with its law enforcement partners, including the RCMP, National Parole Board and many others. On an even larger front, the network will be linked to the Integrated Threat Assessment Centre that liaises with foreign intelligence organizations.

Involving All Staff

CSC's comprehensive organized crime strategy is more than identification and surveillance. Just like every other inmate, gang members are required to follow a correctional plan that includes programs that go to the root of their antisocial behaviour and encourage them to break the ties or "disaffiliate" from their criminal organizations. These offenders are often in need of the Violence Prevention Program and community maintenance programs once they are on statutory release. Soon they will be able to take the newly developed Alternatives, Attitudes and Associates program that deals with peer pressure, antisocial lifestyle and self-control problems. The program will be piloted this winter and will be rolled out in the community and the institutions in June 2007.

All institutional employees play a vital role when it comes to dealing with organized crime. Many are well versed in the legal process necessary to identify an offender as a member or associate. They know if an inmate has been prosecuted under sections of the *Criminal Code of Canada* that deal with criminal organizations. Through the proper channels they can contact the Regional Strategic Intelligence Committee if they discover emerging gangs or gang activity. In their daily interactions, staff make it clear to offenders that membership or association in a criminal organization is considered a strong risk factor that influences parole recommendations and other decisions that affect the offender's release plans. Even if they do achieve conditional release, record of their affiliations will follow them into the community. These are strong incentives for inmates to cease gang-related activities.

New Legislation Holds Promise

Canadian law enforcement and Crown prosecutors are hopeful that the country's relatively new anti-gang legislation will give them increased clout against members of organized crime. So far, tougher laws have resulted in longer prison terms for members of the Quebec Hells Angels convicted of gangsterism. Still, there is a heavy burden imposed on the Crown to prove a crime has been committed for the benefit or with the help of a criminal organization.

Police and prosecutors are constantly devising new strategies to destabilize or cripple gang activities and to keep them off balance. Law enforcement agencies are lobbying hard for harsher sentences for criminals that target the most vulnerable in Canadian society and destroy their lives through both violent and non-violent crimes. As cases wind their way through the courts, new legal precedents will be set and CSC may find that it will be playing host to more and more of these types of offenders.

In the meantime, the Service is aware of the very real dangers of organized crime and working to counteract the effects both in institutions and in the community. Battling the global criminal will require the cooperation not only of law enforcement but all citizens in all countries working together. ♦

THE SPECIAL HANDLING UNIT

HIGH SECURITY,
SPECIAL
EXPERTISE

As one of its main priorities, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is working to meet the challenges related to the changing offender profile, including the safety of both offenders and staff in our institutions. Whether it is infrastructure, equipment or programs, CSC continues to make the necessary changes to ensure an essential level of safety and security.

The Special Handling Unit (SHU) at the Regional Reception Centre in Quebec Region is one excellent example of an environment where safety has true meaning. The Let's Talk team was recently given an on-site tour with Unit Manager Serge Brouillette, who spoke openly about the environment, the day-to-day work and the security challenges in this national unit that serves all maximum-security institutions in Canada.

BY **Djamila Amellal**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photos: Bill Rankin

Standing at the entrance of the unit, Brouillette prepares to do his rounds. "Transfer of offenders to the SHU is an exceptional measure of last recourse, designed to accommodate inmates who cannot be integrated into a maximum-security penitentiary for safety reasons. These

are our most violent offenders who, at some point in time, have demonstrated the danger they pose for other inmates or staff. Our unit's mission is, first and foremost, to provide the necessary supervision to stop the violent behaviour and thus ensure the staff's and inmates' safety. We must then prepare inmates, within the shortest possible timeframe, to return to a maximum security institution by putting them through a long list of programs that target violent behaviour."

"I always know what time I start work in the morning," says Brouillette with a broad smile, "but I never know what time I'll be leaving at the end of the day. I leave when the work is complete." The unit manager is proud of the fact that both he and his staff, through their own diligence, have prevented any major incidents from occurring in the last nine months.

Alert and Prepared

As we closely follow our guide through the dimmed interior, a deafening bang suddenly fills the silence, abruptly ending our conversation. For a moment time stands still. Brouillette is immediately on the alert, thanks to his 27 years of service with CSC. He quickly scans the surroundings and turns to two correctional officers (CXs) standing before a broad plexiglass barrier. He approaches them and quickly fires off a few questions. A bare-chested inmate standing behind the plexiglass has punched the barrier, complaining that the temperature in his cell is intolerable. Brouillette has a few words

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with the inmate. He turns to one of the CXs and suggests placing the inmate in the range yard as an interim solution until the air conditioning unit for his cell is repaired. He turns to us, apologizes, and says, “We never know when something will happen, and when it does, we need to be ready.”

The Facility and Population

“The Unit’s layout is based on dynamic security,” explains Brouillette. “It’s shaped like a star, with the control post located at the centre. It may appear forbidding to outsiders, but normal institutional activities take place in this unit and additional controls are implemented when movements occur.”

The SHU, built in 1984, can accommodate nearly 90 inmates in cells that are divided into five wings with two ranges on each wing. Each range houses nine inmates and includes a common room and yard access. The wings are divided according to population, including the assessment, segregation and protection wings. Cell 100 is reserved for any inmate in a crisis situation. Information concerning each offender

is carefully entered on a chart in the control room and updated daily. Contact with staff is reduced to a minimum by hallways that are divided into two sides, one for staff movement and one for inmates. More than 50 cameras have been strategically installed for complete visual surveillance of the unit.

The SAS System Tailored to the SHU

Whether they are receiving visitors, taking a course, being interviewed or being transferred, inmates absolutely must transit through a double-locked security area: the SAS. Unit Manager Brouillette explains: “The SHU is based on the SAS system. The SAS is a secure area where correctional officers handcuff and frisk inmates and scan them with a metal detector before entry or exit. This system also makes it possible to monitor inmates’ movements one by one and thus, protect staff and inmates.

A Stay at the SHU

The SHU currently houses 71 inmates, their average age being 34 years, although some are as young as 21. The majority arrives from

maximum-security institutions after being involved in serious incidents that demonstrate they are not manageable under ordinary security. The regional deputy commissioner of the region from which the inmate arrives authorizes a transfer to the SHU for assessment purposes. A national committee chaired by the senior deputy commissioner, composed of all the wardens from maximum-security institutions, assesses the unit’s inmates every four months to determine progress. Inmates are then transferred or remain at the SHU if no progress is noted. A correctional plan, including programs, is developed for each one. On average, they stay for close to one year.

Keeping Abreast of Tense Situations

According to the SHU manager, inmates assault staff or each other for various reasons. Thus, vigilance is crucial in this environment where appearances can be deceiving. “When something happens, we do not immediately jump to conclusions,” explains Brouillette. “In order to understand the reasons for the tension and to control the situation, we must keep in mind at all times that inmates are familiar



Separated by a safety barrier of plexiglass, CXs reply to an agitated inmate’s questions while, at the same time, trying to assess the reason for the disturbance and determine whether it is a trap or diversion used to conceal a more serious intention.



Inmates are placed in ranges with other compatible offenders. They share common areas and the yard, both of which are supervised through plexiglass or from the second-floor gallery.

THE SPECIAL HANDLING UNIT

with our security techniques and may try to use them against us. So, each time we stop, assess the situation, and make sure that we are not walking into a trap.”

SHU Placement and Transfers — National Responsibilities

According to Lee Redpath, SHU Senior Advisor to the senior deputy commissioner (SDC), management of the SHU’s inmate population is closely tied with the recommendations issued by the National Advisory Committee, chaired by SDC Don Head and supported by the other members, all maximum-security institution wardens. Final decisions concerning proposed placement, transfers or detention are made through the National SHU Advisory Committee by the SDC. “The SHU houses the most difficult inmates,” Redpath comments, “and even when they make progress, these inmates may have incompatibles somewhere. When the time comes to send them to another institution, the Committee is there to make things happen.” After consultation with and the decision of the SDC, the SHU has 30 days to move the inmate. “We contribute to everyone’s safety by ensuring that the inmates are placed in the location most appropriate for them.”



Lee Redpath



Michèle Bourbonnais, CX II, works in the gallery’s communication centre. Very proud of the new surveillance equipment, she can view various parts of the unit simultaneously and closely monitor inmates’ activities and movements in the common areas, yards outside the ranges, the SAS or along the SHU perimeter. She can also zoom in on the faces of inmates involved in disputes and provide concrete evidence, if need be, during internal disciplinary court hearings or regular court trials. Using the zoom lens, she can also determine whether an incident is genuine or a trap set for correctional staff. When she detects violent activity, she sounds a shrill alarm to warn inmates that they have been observed. She is able to oversee any location at any time within the institution. She communicates with staff members and coordinates inmates’ movements upon exit and entry.”

Motivation-Based Intervention Strategy (MBIS)

Various programs are available at the SHU to help inmates fulfil their correctional plan. In 2003, Sébastien Girard, a psychologist at National Headquarters, and Isabelle Bastien, responsible for the program at National Headquarters, developed the Motivation-Based Intervention Strategy expressly for SHU inmates who lack motivation and present a high risk of re-offending.

This intervention by parole officers at the SHU helps to increase the offenders’ receptiveness to change, helps them identify problem behaviours, select the behaviours they wish to change, consider the good and bad repercussions of their decisions, and determine their life goals. According to Girard, the results obtained so far are very promising.

THE SPECIAL HANDLING UNIT

Ongoing Training, a Prevention Tool

Sylvain Mongrain, National Training Coordinator, Reintegration Programs, National Headquarters, has participated this year in the development of institutional and community parole officers' (PO) continuous training. This year, one of the two training workshops addresses ways to deal with resistant offenders. "It is a matter of safety," he explains, "to equip POs with the tools they need to manage these inmates. A certain number of them are susceptible to re-offending and turning to violence."

The CSC new recruit training program is solid and improves over time and with experience. The selection process for recruits is rigorous from the outset and training prepares them for work inside institutions at any security level. New recruits receive 11 weeks of theoretical and practical classroom training, and 2 weeks of practical training in an institution.

Yves Malépart, Assistant Director, Training, Quebec Region Staff College, explains that new recruits must recertify according to standards



Yves Malépart, Assistant Director, Training, Quebec Region Staff College and Mario Paré (right), one of the 14 instructors at the College. "We teach respect for both inmates and for correctional officers. Holding discussions between these two groups minimizes problems and reduces tension," explains Paré.

and additional courses on personal safety are organized at the request of the institutions. He emphasizes that continuity is an essential

part of the preparation for security work. The recruits may also choose to become members of the institutional emergency response teams if the warden and members of the IERT recommend them.

"It's a matter of safety to equip POs with the tools they need to manage resistant offenders."

Sylvain Mongrain

Team of Experts and Dynamic Security

"In spite of all the new facilities and equipment we have," says Brouillette, "dynamic security is essential. Groups that customarily form within the inmate population of most institutions also exist within the SHU. The mix of various populations, such as organized crime groups, street gangs or protection groups, in Canada's only SHU sometimes becomes very difficult to manage. Thanks to the expertise of my multidisciplinary team members, everything remains under control; they have developed an expertise that is specific to the SHU. Team members are skilled at talking with inmates, and they know when offenders are plotting. That is what dynamic security is all about." ♦

Safety measures in the SHU are commensurate with risk. For example, plexiglass barriers have been installed in the interview rooms, classrooms and other areas to minimize contact between staff and inmates.



SECURITY LEVELS and What They Mean

Before being assigned a security level, a new federal inmate is admitted to a regional intake assessment centre and housed on a special intake range with other newcomers. During the assessment (an extremely thorough procedure that takes up to a few months to complete), the inmate will come into contact with a great number of Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) employees — correctional and parole officers, and health workers.

The parole officer will build an exhaustive social and criminal profile, identify problem areas that contributed to the offender's criminal behaviour and may lead to re-offending, and devise a compulsory correctional plan that focuses on both risks and needs. The plan will be carefully monitored and updated throughout the inmate's sentence.

The main factor for determining a security level is safety — for the public, for CSC staff and for the offender.

MAIN SECURITY LEVELS

Minimum Security

- The institution perimeter is defined but usually there are no walls or fences. There are no armed correctional officers, no towers, no razor wire or electronic surveillance equipment.
- Restrictions on movement, association and privileges are minimal. Inmates are non-violent and pose very limited risk to the safety of the community. Many are on work-release programs that allow them to hold jobs during the day.
- Inmates show the desire and ability to get along responsibly with fellow inmates with little or no supervision.

Medium Security

- These institutions are usually surrounded by chain-link fences topped with razor wire. Firearms are present but not normally deployed within the perimeter.
- Inmates pose a risk to the safety of the community. They are contained in an environment which promotes and tests socially acceptable behaviour. Inmates are expected to act responsibly under regular and often direct supervision and participate in their correctional program plans.

- Many of these institutions have training centres and a variety of educational and treatment facilities.

Maximum Security

- Maximum-security facilities are surrounded by high (20 feet) walls or fences with guard towers in strategic positions and electronic systems that ensure any movement within the perimeter is detected.
- Correctional officers in the towers are supplied with firearms and there are additional locked caches of firearms within the institutions in the event of a serious disturbance.
- Various parts of the facility are separated by locked gates, fences and walls. Inmate movement, association and privileges are strictly controlled because inmates pose a serious risk to staff, other offenders and the community.
- Inmates are expected to interact effectively with other individuals and in highly structured groups such as in educational and treatment programs and skills development programs.
- Some inmates live in segregation units, due either to behavioural problems or out of concern that they will be harmed by other inmates, usually as a result of their crimes.

OTHER SECURITY LEVELS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Multi-Level Security

- Offenders with serious mental health issues are accommodated in multi-level security facilities that combine the features of two or more of the security levels described above.

Special Handling Unit

- The highest level of security is reserved for the small percentage of extremely violent male offenders who cannot function safely at the maximum-security level. The goal of the SHU is to prepare inmates to return to maximum security institutions by evaluating their risks and behaviour and providing appropriate programs.

Women Offenders

- There are no firearms within the institution or on the perimeter, which is surrounded by a chain-link fence and topped with razor wire.
- Typically, women are housed in living units that accommodate 2-4 persons. Their movement, association and privileges are designed to give them freedom to pursue educational and training opportunities within the grounds of the institution.
- Women with serious behavioural issues may be confined to a "secure unit" within the larger institution.

Aboriginal Inmates

- Aboriginal inmates can be found in institutions of every security level. Their particular needs are accommodated in special living units where Native culture and spirituality are taught and practiced. In addition, the Correctional Service of Canada is responsible for the establishment of eight healing lodges across the country, specially designed to accommodate the needs of minimum-security Aboriginal offenders, based on the principles, philosophy and teachings of the Aboriginal way of life. A small number of non-Aboriginal offenders may be accommodated at healing lodges if they are willing to take the same programs as Aboriginal offenders.

Community Correctional Centres

- Community correctional centres are federal facilities that house offenders on conditional release. The facility director, parole officers and support staff work as a team, often in co-operation with community partners, to supervise and provide programs for offenders. ♦

Keeping Drugs OUT

If they are not confiscated, homemade weapons and alcohol can lead to violent confrontations. "Shine" is pure alcohol, refined from home brew (fermented from almost any kind of organic foodstuff — even ketchup) using a crude distillery apparatus cobbled together from copper pipe and electric wires. The bottom line with drugs — be it crack, cocaine, prescription pills, marijuana or home brew — is that they are the root of violence inside correctional institutions.

It was a hot summer for Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) security intelligence divisions across the country. At Stony Mountain Institution (SMI) in Manitoba for example, more drugs were seized in that one season than in its entire last fiscal year, including the largest single seizure in the institution's history — marijuana, morphine and heroin with an institutional value of over \$34,000. Half a dozen seizures in one week were made in both April and August. Thanks to sharp eyes and ears and effective strategies, a total of well over \$120,000 worth of street and pharmaceutical drugs have been turned over to the RCMP and charges have been laid against a number of inmates and visitors. Stony Mountain officials credit their teamwork approach and hard-working staff for the recent successes.

BY **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photos: **Bill Rankin**

This is just one recent success story concerning CSC's efforts to halt the inward flow of drugs — a problem the Service shares with correctional systems around the world. Drugs have a serious negative impact on effective corrections, often leading to violent criminal behaviour, interfering with successful programming and contributing to the spread of infectious diseases. The detection of contraband, especially drugs, is a serious challenge for security staff, in part due to the number of persons who enter and leave an institution on any given day. For example, a medium-size penitentiary that houses 650 inmates records approximately 1,900 individuals — visitors, staff, contractors, deliveries, inmates — entering every week. Policies, strategies and staff procedures to counter the drug trade must be clear and coordinated if they are to be successful.

Part of the National Drug Strategy

CSC strategies include using existing legislation in innovative ways to deal with inmates and visitors involved in the drug trade; carrying out thorough searches of inmates, visitors and staff; random drug-testing of offenders; and working with police and Crown prosecutors to secure serious consequences for law breakers.

Innovation Is Part of the Solution

In past years, Stony Mountain Institution and many other penitentiaries across the country have had a serious problem with “throw-overs” — drug packets being tossed or otherwise projected over walls and fences and landing in prison yards where inmates can scoop them up and distribute to fellow users.

“The initiative to fight this,” explains SMI Search Coordinator Christer McLauchlan, “was to gain the cooperation of community members who lived close to the institution. They could act as eyes and ears for security staff and if they saw any strangers on their property

they could immediately call the Stony Mountain Suspicious Perimeter Activity Hotline and make a report.”

McLauchlan came up with the idea of placing lettered signs on the surrounding perimeter fence so that any person making a report could easily pinpoint the location of the suspicious activity for security staff, who could be dispatched swiftly to the scene.

“We involved the community in coming up with solutions,” says McLauchlan. “We also removed foliage from our perimeter, added additional camera equipment, and increased our motor patrols. This has been very successful in pushing throw-overs out of the community and on to the institutional reserve where they can be more easily detected.”

Everyone's Business

“The main point is that drug interdiction is everyone's business,” says SMI Security Intelligence Officer Tim Van der Hoek. “And everyone takes part. We are not successful because of *one* department or *one* individual,



Morphine pills confiscated during an institutional drug seizure



Able to detect substances in parts per billion, the amazing canine olfactory sense is Mother Nature's contribution to institutional security. A trained dog can detect the tiniest trace of a specific chemical, sometimes from a considerable distance, even if the scent is masked by other harsh odours. Dogs work and live with their handlers, developing a close partnership that can become almost telepathic in nature. The dogs' subtlest signs speak clearly to the experienced handler. Dog handlers and their canine counterparts, along with ion scanners, metal detectors and even more intrusive forms of search, are a vital part of front-line security enforcement within federal institutions.

need treatment. In fact, it can be argued that no other single factor has as great an effect on criminal behaviour as substance abuse. But there's no sense trying to stop the drug trade without also trying to limit the demand for drugs, which necessitates smuggling in the first place. Research evidence consistently demonstrates that substance abuse treatment for inmates reduces drug and alcohol demand as well as lowers criminal activity. Treatment and intervention are essential factors in the drug interdiction equation, part of a balanced and integrated approach.

notions and misconceptions about methadone use. The most common of these beliefs is that being on methadone is a 'free high.' The reality is that there is no high, but there is a reduction in cravings and in opioid usage. And it is less costly to provide methadone treatment than to pay for the associated costs of institutional drug use [including violence] or to treat those infected with HIV and/or hepatitis."

Brian Mitchell, a lifer at Saskatchewan Penitentiary who began MMT one year ago, says that he no longer craves drugs and he has distanced himself from the violent subculture that accompanies their use.

"I used to react quickly to frustrations and it seemed that if I wasn't high, I was angry.... Whenever I communicated with other inmates, it was for the purpose of obtaining or selling drugs in whatever way possible. I muscled and manipulated people for drugs.

"Now I no longer communicate for the purpose of buying or selling drugs. I'm not around violence any more. I've been the chairman of the Lifer's Group since beginning methadone. I've gone from being a destructive force in the institution to a constructive force."

Challenging Population Calls for Ingenuity

Given the increasingly diverse and challenging offender population — more gang members, higher rates of mental health problems, higher prevalence of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis, an aging population — CSC is seeking new ways to manage inmates that come into their custody, inmates with complex and often interlocking health and social problems, drug addiction being just one of them. It takes truly dedicated staff and a combination of strategies involving experts in treatment, programming, health care, law enforcement, education and research to come up with comprehensive solutions. ♦

we are successful because all our staff make it a priority. Everyone is involved, from the security intelligence officer, to the search coordinator/dog handler, to the front-line correctional officers, to the non-custody staff, to the management team. And we are working harder than ever to foster alliances with other criminal justice agencies, including the RCMP, Manitoba Justice, the Winnipeg Police Service and many more."

Getting this message out to the public is another effective strategy. SMI and many other institutions across the country have been very proactive about sharing drug interdiction stories with local media. "We know for a fact that this has had an effect on persons considering smuggling drugs or other contraband," says Van der Hoek. "They are scared about what they see on the news. Now they think twice about making an attempt."

Solving the Problem from the Inside Out

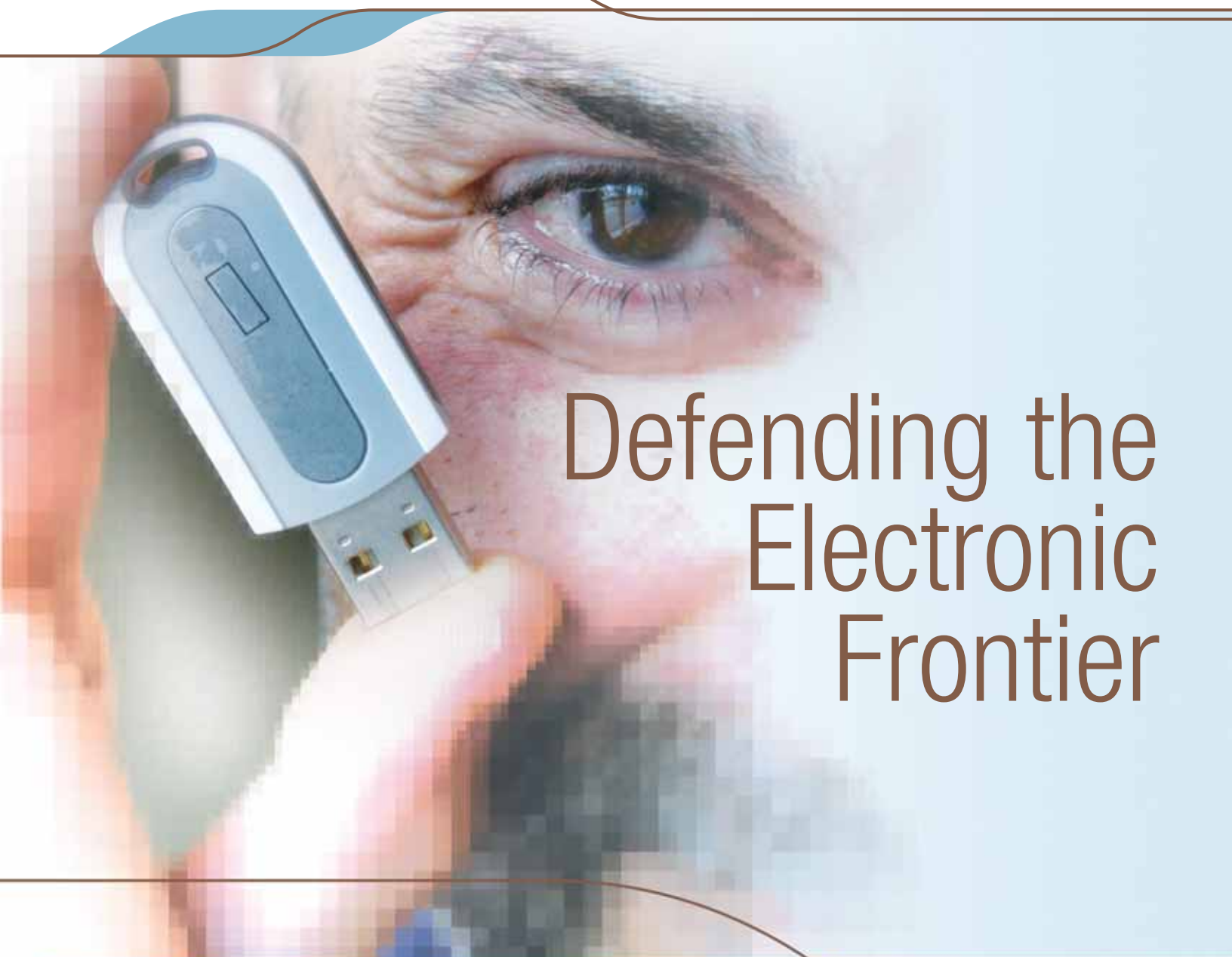
Research across North America and Europe shows that the vast majority of offenders have alcohol and other drug-related problems that

Inmate Assessment Is Vital

At CSC intake/assessment centres, new inmates are assessed for the purpose of drug and alcohol treatment matching. It's important that offenders be assessed at the earliest stage possible to get them on the right track. In recent years this has become a growing challenge due to the increasing number of inmates who are serving sentences of three years or less. The pressure is on to get them assessed and treated before a significant part of their sentence has passed. Treatment is provided through various programs: Choices, the High Intensity Substance Abuse Program, and the Offender Substance Abuse Pre-Release Program.

Going from Destructive to Constructive

The CSC Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) program is one of the many successful treatment programs designed to get inmates off drugs. Started in 1997, MMT is widely recognized as a very effective approach to dealing with opiate addiction. Allan Magnin, a correctional program officer at Saskatchewan Penitentiary who works with inmates in MMT, says, "People who are not involved with MMT frequently have preconceived



Defending the Electronic Frontier

A thumb drive or memory key is small enough to be easily concealed yet is capable of storing digital data in the gigabyte range.

“As the offender population changes, so does technology. The populations we manage are not standing still in the technology race. For each advance that we make in maintaining order, they have a vested interest in subverting.”

By **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer, Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector

Photo: Bill Rankin

The speaker was Paul Urmson, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Prairie Region, addressing participants at the annual week-long National Security Equipment Committee meeting in Saskatoon this past May. The audience comprised almost 70 professionals from across the regions and their provincial counterparts, all of whom share the same concern: safety for staff and inmates within correctional institutions.

Included in the event was a trade show where approximately 40 suppliers and manufacturers demonstrated the latest in hi-tech gear and security technologies, most of which are highly specific to the needs of correctional security. It was an opportunity for managers to see what's available in a marketplace that is expanding in leaps and bounds.

It was also a chance for staff to don their strategic thinking caps and brainstorm about common objectives in security operations, both for the short term and the future. In his speech, Urmson underscored the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) commitment to public safety and its responsibility for managing a changing offender population both in institutions and in the community.

Keeping Ahead of the Wave

Many of the issues he highlighted — electronic threats to security, in particular — are global in nature, challenging criminal justice organizations almost everywhere. As more and more of the world's population becomes dependent on computers and related storage and communication devices, opportunities increase to bend these new technologies to illegal purposes: as a means of communication between criminals, a tool for theft and extortion, and as a repository to hide incriminating evidence or contraband.

Electronic devices range from mainframe computers and pocket-sized personal data assistants (e.g., a BlackBerry) to the diskette, compact disc and miniature electronic chip devices. Text, images, audio and other data on these media can be quickly altered or destroyed, and many of these devices, such as thumb drives (see photo) and key-stroke loggers, are easily concealed.

To keep abreast, law enforcement agencies need up-to-date knowledge and equipment to investigate this modern breed of criminals that use established and emerging technologies to support their illicit operations.

Guardians at the Gate

Ted Reinhardt, CSC Director of Information Technology (IT) Security, is an advisor with years of experience battling electronic threats. Reinhardt and all Information Management Services (IMS) staff are on the alert 24/7, protecting the Service's networks from external and sometimes even internal attackers. Much of their demanding work goes on in the background, leaving CSC employees blissfully unaware of any threats until one actually penetrates defences — a rare occurrence — and interferes with their day-to-day work.

The Wild Frontier

External threats come mainly from the Internet, the wild frontier of our age, where speed-of-light communications renders meaningless both distance and geography. An attack on a network can be mounted from Tokyo just as easily as from Toronto.

“When you connect your computer to the Internet,” Reinhardt explains, “you can expect an attack within *one minute*.”

“But don't take it personally,” he adds with a wry smile. “Most of these attacks are automated and aimed broadly, at nobody in particular.”

To put the situation in perspective: of the close to 100,000 electronic messages that reach CSC every day through the Internet, approximately 60,000 are spam and roughly 350 contain viruses. Do the math and you will see that over the course of a year, the numbers add up to a forbidding amount — a constant bombardment from an enemy that never sleeps. IT Security has been very successful in keeping the “undesirables” out, but occasionally one manages to breach the CSC firewall. Most employees will remember the Sasser Worm two years ago, a “denial-of-service” worm that disrupted workflow without being capable of actually accessing the network.

First Worms, Now Fishing

Not all the attacks are simply a form of vandalism. Skilled hackers try to penetrate networks to gather vital security data that is specific to CSC. But they are after much more than money-related information: intruders also want access to a computer's resources, meaning its hard disk space, fast processors, and Internet connections. They hijack computers and turn them into “zombies” that spew out spam promoting everything from vitamins to Viagra or use these resources to attack other computers on the Internet. In fact, the more computers an intruder uses, the harder it is for law enforcement to figure out where the attack is really coming from. If intruders can't be found, they can't be stopped — or prosecuted.

Another ploy of on-line hackers is “fishing,” in which fraudulent e-mails are sent to unsuspecting individuals. These highly sophisticated fraud artists pose as persons of importance in positions of trust, such as a banker, and using bogus but very authentic-looking log-in screens, ask for personal information such as employees' names and account numbers so they can solve “urgent problems.”

Working Against Time

IT Security staff also spend a lot of time repairing vulnerabilities in software programs used by CSC. When one is detected, it must be eliminated by applying a “patch” — a corrective measure in the form of updated software. Without the patch, the weakness could be exploited by hackers who lie in wait for such opportunities to wreak havoc.

Once the weakness is discovered, patch notifications are sent out, often by the manufacturer, to software users. That’s when the clock starts ticking. The challenge for IMS staff is to test the new patch’s effectiveness and apply it quickly to CSC’s thousands of servers, desktops and laptops (which are often on the road) before trouble starts. It’s a race against time, with employees sometimes working flat out, day and night, to avert the threat.

Unauthorized Software Spells Trouble

Reinhardt says that employees sometimes unknowingly disrupt the network by trying to download unauthorized software onto their desktops. “Let me give you an example,” he explains. “You just got a new digital camera for Christmas. It comes with a little software program for loading photographs onto your computer. Seems innocent, but it may cause serious problems because it’s not compatible with our critical service delivery infrastructure, it may interfere with large network systems or compromise our security mechanisms. Some of these little software programs act like miniature Web servers and, unsuspectingly, you end up sharing not only your snaps of Santa Claus but your sensitive documents as well.”

Threat of the Week

Technology is developing at such a fast rate that devices that were unimaginable 10 years ago are now in the hands of the average consumer. Who would have thought even five years ago that millions of Canadians would be carrying cell-phones that are also cameras and MP3 players all rolled into one?

“These gadgets are so easily accessible,” Reinhardt comments. “I look at the flyers I get in the newspaper every week that advertise these goods and I think of them as ‘threat-of-the-week’ magazines. The emerging technology is so powerful, yet so cheap. One of our jobs in IT Security is to ensure these devices are kept *off* the network and *out* of our institutions.”

Technology on the Inside

Inside CSC penitentiaries, miniaturization of technology is a concern. There are cameras available on the market the size of a grown man’s finger and radio transmitters half the size of a fingernail. They are a challenge to detect.

Another serious problem is the encroachment of housing on institutional perimeters. With new homes come new communications services, including access points for cell-phones and other wireless devices (e.g., a BlackBerry) and wireless Internet. The indiscriminate broadcast of radio- and micro-waves often extends outside the neighbourhood, through fences and walls and into the institutions. If an inmate manages to smuggle in a device that is capable of receiving these broadcasts, he/she may be able to gain access to local wireless networks, and instant communication with the outside world.

“To counter this, we do physical searches and electronic sweeps,” says Reinhardt. “And we place a heavy reliance on staff awareness; that’s what



A cell phone can act as a powerful receiver for access to the Internet.

gives us in IT Security the biggest bang for our buck. A combination of awareness, monitoring and implementing technical controls keeps us on top of this problem.”

Computer Security Is Everyone’s Business

Reinhardt urges everyone to educate themselves about computer security and heed the warnings that IMS staff post through the e-mail system. There are a number of simple steps that everyone can take to protect themselves and the network:

- Use strong passwords and don’t share them with other employees.
- Lock your computer when you leave your workstation, even if you’re gone for only a minute.
- If you are a laptop user, keep your workstation “patched,” and update your anti-virus software by either accepting updates or bringing the laptop in regularly to be patched. And keep your laptop out of sight and secure when not in use.
- Don’t leave print-outs on the printer where other people might see them.
- Don’t install personal devices on your desktop, e.g. MP3 players, iPods.
- Report any suspected IT Security incidents to your manager.

By taking the time to follow these steps, employees can help ensure the security of IT systems and make life easier for IMS staff. We all benefit from a more secure IT network. ♦

Simonne Poirier

A Thirty-Year Contribution to Public Safety

BY **Djamila Amellal**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector

In 1976, at age 26, *Simonne Poirier* joined the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) as a secretary at the Atlantic Regional Training Centre. She had no idea that a remarkable career was ahead of her. Today, the newly retired warden of Dorchester Penitentiary takes us on her extraordinary journey and recounts her contribution to public safety.

"I loved my career at CSC," says Ms. Poirier. "During 30 years of service, I never felt bored or wanted to go elsewhere. I followed my passion for correctional services, which led me to Dorchester Penitentiary, where I worked for 14 months." Her colleagues in the Atlantic Region agree in saying that Ms. Poirier has more than one ace up her sleeve, including courage, determination and perseverance. "Simonne had the potential to succeed," explains Marena McLaughlin, former Deputy Commissioner of the Atlantic Region. "She had the support of her colleagues and accomplished the rest with her open-mindedness and perseverance."

Support Goes a Long Way

In the 1980s, employees in the field of corrections were being encouraged to return to school. Eugène Niles, former warden of Dorchester Penitentiary, noted Ms. Poirier's interest and abilities and encouraged her to continue studying to learn more about corrections. "My boss encouraged me to move ahead," says Ms. Poirier. "This confidence he had in me spurred me to apply, and I was accepted. I returned to school and earned a baccalaureate in business management." According to Ms. Poirier, the support she found in her managers and colleagues was crucial. After completing her studies, she resumed working at CSC and made valuable contributions to human resources, official languages and many other fields at Regional Headquarters.

From Administration to Operations

Rémi Gobeil, then-Deputy Commissioner of Atlantic Region, did not fail to notice Ms. Poirier's growing passion for correctional services and asked her whether she wanted to join Operations. She accepted the challenge. Still today she recalls the Range Nine at Springhill Institution in Nova Scotia, as well as her mentoring work with women offenders: "I really enjoyed my work with the women at Springhill Institution. It was quite an experience." In 1998, she succeeded in a competition and was appointed deputy warden (and later

warden) of a maximum-security facility in Renous, New Brunswick: Atlantic Institution.

A Strong Management Team Essential for Success

When asked what she feels she has contributed to the safety of staff, offenders and the public, Ms. Poirier answers with conviction: "The best way to contribute to safety is to ensure that the management team is strong and that everyone works together to achieve the same objective. Consultation with the unions is very important too. Respect for others — whether it is members of staff or offenders — is obligatory. For this reason, we put in place many initiatives to ensure everyone's safety and well-being."

Visibility Is at the Heart of Dynamic Security

According to Ms. Poirier, ongoing consultation with members of her team, at regional and national headquarters, and with community members is important. She also sees visibility in the workplace as essential. "As an institutional warden, I felt I must be seen by all staff and offenders. It is important to walk the corridors, enter units, talk to inmates and staff, and maintain contact with the security intelligence staff. Any information we receive must always be taken seriously and checked out, and we must then act on it. When you have a presence, you have a better understanding of the reality so you can make good decisions. I remember the disturbance in January 2000 at the Atlantic Institution. We had to shut down the entire institution after I consulted with the management committee, the inmate committee and the emergency response team as well as many other key persons to avoid any loss of life and re-establish security in the institution."

Invaluable Partnerships

Ms. Poirier feels that establishing partnerships with various organizations and the community is vital to overcoming difficulties. "Our partnerships



with the police, RCMP and community members are crucial," she says. "It is important to consult each other, listen to people and coordinate our efforts. The community is a major partner in our success and its members must be informed before offenders are released so that the latter can succeed."

Making a Difference in Offenders' Lives

"Being able to listen to offenders," adds Ms. Poirier, "understand what they are going through and work with them to get them back on the right track, it makes a difference in their lives. It takes a lot of courage, tenacity and perseverance because there is so much negativity, and results are not immediately obvious. And, if at the end of the day, we can turn them into good, law-abiding citizens, then we have really made a difference and contributed to everyone's safety."

Retirement Looks Exciting

With the satisfied feeling of a job well done, Simonne Poirier is adjusting to retirement and already has clear plans. The mother of three children, and grandmother of three, Ms. Poirier is getting set to travel with her husband and spend more time with her family. She also wants to earn a motorcycle licence, and spend time fishing, hunting and camping. "I am leaving, but I will always be there, if need be. I am proud of our correctional system. It has a lot of tools to offer those who want to make a difference in offenders' lives and, at the same time, contribute to public safety." ♦



Environmental Safety

The Need to Establish a Vast Protection Perimeter

BY **Paul Provost**, M.Sc., National Coordinator,
Environmental Protection Programs

Whether we talk about protecting the environment, conserving natural resources, preserving environmental quality, or managing sustainable development, the common denominator remains the same: we must ensure environmental safety for current and future generations. With the recent explosion of environmental phenomena such as climate change, natural disasters, smog and waterway pollution, people are becoming acutely aware of the fact that we are highly dependent on the natural environment. Building on this realization, the time has come to strengthen our delicate, but neglected — even abandoned — relationship with nature. Over time, environmental safety will become more rooted in many public and private organizations in Canada and abroad. Through a growing dedication to this issue, staff at the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) are already making a contribution to environmental safety.

Pillars of Action

Most people associate penal institutions with images of fences, high walls, bars, and heightened security and supervision. Others associate them with rehabilitation, personal learning and professional development programs, based on the expectation that human beings will change for the better. For environmentalists, a penitentiary is a microcosm of an urban centre, which inevitably consumes natural resources (energy, water and material) and generates refuse in the forms of gaseous, liquid and solid waste. Aware of this ecological reality, their main concern focuses on minimizing environmental repercussions. Whether they are regional environmental coordinators, health/safety/environmental officers, plant maintenance chiefs, technical supervisors or managers/directors at various levels, the work of CSC's environmental professionals interfaces with many disciplines and functions, and includes an array of responsibilities, such as the following:

- tracking environmental compliance (legislation, regulations, directives);
- implementing the Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006);

- maintaining the Environmental Management System (EMS);
- measuring and conserving energy and water;
- responding to environmental emergencies;
- managing halocarbons (CFCs, HCFCs, HFCs);
- controlling hazardous materials and managing hazardous waste;
- managing wastewater treatment systems operated by CSC;
- measuring and managing solid waste (recycling and composting programs);
- monitoring petroleum storage tanks; and
- managing drinking water quality.

Commitment — A Measure of Success?

Since the 1990s, CSC has generated consistent achievements on this front, culminating in the emergence of a corporate culture focused on environmental safety in the above-mentioned areas. However, as with other CSC functions, we do not have unlimited resources, and this reminds us that, in spite of goodwill and commitment, the pace of progress often seems to be insufficient. We are confident that the recent implementation of environmental accountability structures at all levels of CSC will produce more tangible results. In fact, with the publication of the next SDS (December 2006), the accomplishment of environmental targets will, more than ever, be dependent on greater participation by staff at all levels of the organization.

Everyone should be concerned about environmental safety, both at work and at home. With a wide range of signs indicating that natural mechanisms to reduce ecosystem pollution are being depleted, let us ask ourselves seriously: How much longer can we allow ourselves to fall behind? If we truly believe in the ability of human beings to change for the better, the ultimate proof in the eyes of environmentalists is the solid establishment and maintenance of an environmental protection perimeter. It is no longer time for debate, but rather for action — actions that are incorporated into the way we live, so that our behaviours are always marked by respect for our environment and its safety.

For more information on CSC's environmental policies, visit the following Web site: http://infonet/tsb/env_policy_e.shtml. ♦