



Department of Justice Ministère de la Justice
Canada Canada

EVALUATION DOCUMENT

**THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
CHILD SUPPORT INITIATIVE**

An Evaluation Framework Study

August 1997

**Evaluation Division
Policy integration and Coordination Section**

Canada 

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE INITIATIVE	1
1.1.1 <i>Guidelines</i>	2
1.1.2 <i>Enforcement</i>	3
1.2 THIS REPORT	6
2.0 COMPONENT PROFILE OF THE CHILD SUPPORT INITIATIVE	7
2.1 RATIONALE	7
2.2 PROGRAM COMPONENTS	8
2.2.1 <i>Policy Development And Coordination</i>	8
2.2.1.1 Component Objectives	10
2.2.1.2 Activities	11
2.2.1.3 Outputs	13
2.2.1.4 Expected Impacts	14
2.2.2 <i>Policy Implementation</i>	14
2.2.2.1 Component Objectives	15
2.2.2.2 Activities	16
2.2.2.3 Outputs	17
2.2.2.4 Expected Impacts	18
2.2.3 <i>Public Communications And Education Component</i>	18
2.2.3.1 Component Objectives	18
2.2.3.2 Activities	19
2.2.3.3 Outputs	20
2.2.3.4 Expected Impacts	21
2.2.4 <i>Management Of The Initiative</i>	21
2.2.4.1 Component Objectives	22
2.2.4.2 Activities	22
2.2.4.3 Outputs	23
2.2.4.4 Expected Impacts	24
2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	24
2.4 PROGRAM RESOURCES	28
2.5 PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL	28
3.0 EVALUATION ISSUES, PRELIMINARY INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES ...	31
3.1 EVALUATION ISSUES AND ASSOCIATED QUESTIONS	31
3.1.1 <i>Issues Of Relevance</i>	31
3.1.2 <i>Issues Of Success</i>	32
3.1.3 <i>Issues Of Alternatives/Cost Effectiveness</i>	35

3.2 PRELIMINARY INDICATORS 36

 3.2.1 *Indicators To Address Issues Of Relevance* 36

 3.2.2 *Indicators To Address Issues Of Success* 37

 3.2.3 *Indicators To Address Issues Of Alternatives/Cost Effectiveness* 38

3.3 DATA SOURCES 39

 3.3.1 *Ongoing Monitoring Information* 39

 3.3.2 *Departmental Research Studies* 40

 3.3.3 *Public Opinion Polling* 41

 3.3.4 *Key Informant Interviews* 41

 3.3.5 *Departmental Files* 41

4.0 RECOMMENDED EVALUATION APPROACH AND WORKPLAN..... 45

4.1 COMMUNICATIONS SUBSTUDY 45

4.2 FORMATIVE OR MID-TERM EVALUATION 45

4.3 PLEI SUBSTUDY 46

4.4 SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT SUBSTUDY 46

4.5 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION SUBSTUDY 46

4.6 SECOND COMMUNICATIONS SUBSTUDY 46

4.7 SUMMATIVE EVALUATION..... 47

LIST OF TABLES AND EXHIBITS

Table 1	Number of Divorces and Divorce Rate Selected Years, Canada	1
Exhibit 2.1	Child Support Team	26
Exhibit 2.2	Department of Justice Resources for the Initiative (\$Millions)	28
Exhibit 2.3	Program Logic Model of the Child Support Initiative	29
Exhibit 3.1	Matrix of Evaluation Issues, Indicators and Data Sources	42
Exhibit 4.1	Evaluation Plan for the Child Support Initiative	46

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents an evaluation framework of the Child Support Initiative. The purpose of this report is twofold. First, it is to describe the Initiative, pursuant to the pending legislation, including the inputs, planned activities and outputs, anticipated impacts and ultimate objectives. Second, it is to propose a plan for and recommendations concerning the evaluation of the Initiative.

1.1 Background to the Initiative

While the divorce rate has stabilized during the 1990s, Statistics Canada estimates that a couple marrying today has a 40 per cent chance of divorcing and that slightly more than half of those divorces will involve children. There is a large body of literature which indicates that the increased incidence of marital separation and divorce has had negative economic consequences, especially for dependent children and spouses and that this represents a serious risk to the well-being of children. For example, in 1974, the Law Reform Commission of Canada described the state of family support in Canada as a "national disgrace."

During the 1970s and 1980s, separation and divorce became much more common than in the past. Following Canada's first uniform divorce legislation in 1968, the divorce rate rose dramatically (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of Divorces and Divorce Rate Selected Years, Canada		
Year	Number of Divorces	Rate per 100,000 Population
1968	11,343	54.8
1970	29,775	139.8
1980	62,019	259.19
1987	90,985	355.1
1991	77,020	273.9
1995	77,636	262.2

Sources: Statistics Canada, Vital Statistics, Vol. II, Marriages and Divorces, 1979. Health Reports, 1990 and the Statistics Canada Information Line.

1.1.1 Guidelines

In 1990, the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Family Law Committee was given the mandate by Ministers of Justice to examine the issue of child support upon marital breakdown. The Committee released its first discussion paper in 1991 and identified three possible options:

- maintain the current system;
- supplement the current system by giving the courts data on the costs of children; or,
- adopt child support guidelines.

In 1992, the Family Law Committee released a second report entitled *The Financial Implications of Child Support Guidelines*. This report presented the results of the economic research that had been conducted to determine the average expenditures on children in Canada. Four economic models, based on different assumptions and seven possible methods of sharing these costs between the two parents, were outlined in the report.

Extensive consultations on the two reports were held until December, 1992. In general, the consultations found that there was strong public support for the concept of child support guidelines. However, the public, legal groups and other special interest groups had skeptical views of the economic models used in the Family Law Committee's report. The public also expressed widespread concerns about taxation and enforcement of support orders, suggesting that reforms in all three areas (i.e., determination, enforcement and taxation) had to be concurrent.

In response to these consultations, the Family Law Committee ruled out the various expenditure models that had been considered in the research report. Leading economists, officials from Statistics Canada, counsel from the Department of Justice and researchers agreed upon an approach to estimating the average costs of raising children in Canada. A new method of apportioning costs between the two parents was developed and received the support of the Family Law Committee (i.e., Revised Fixed Percentages Model). The Committee presented this approach along with related recommendations in a final report to the Ministers of Justice in January, 1995. The report recommends that governments consider introducing child support guidelines combined with a number of related amendments to child support legislation, improved support enforcement measures and tax reforms.

At the same time, in May, 1995, the majority decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (in *Thibaudeau*) suggested that there was a problem with the family law system of determining child support and left it to Parliament to make the necessary adjustments to the legislation. Since 1995, the federal and provincial/territorial governments have been consulting widely about reforms to the system of child support in Canada.¹ Public consultations with custodial and non-custodial parents, with women's groups, the legal profession and academics revealed strong support for reforms to the existing method of determining child support (i.e., the introduction of child support guidelines). As

¹ This work has been an extension of the proposals put forward by the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Family Law Committee in their 1995 report.

well, there has been widespread criticism of existing provisions of the *Income Tax Act* dealing with the tax treatment of child support payments. As a result of these consultations, modifications to the guidelines and related recommendations have been made.

Through the Family Law Committee, the Provinces and Territories have actively participated in the development of the proposed guidelines. The lengthy time required for development of the guidelines allowed for resolution of a wide variety of related issues. Consensus was required before any of the Committee's reports were released. One of the main objectives of developing the guidelines within the structure of the Family Law Committee was to encourage the jurisdictions to adopt the same or similar guidelines for those aspects of family law within their jurisdiction.²

1.1.2 Enforcement

It is generally recognized that improved support enforcement addresses, somewhat, the growing problem of child poverty and the poverty of single mothers.³ And although Parliament has specific constitutional jurisdiction for divorce, support enforcement is primarily a matter of administration of justice for the Provinces.

To date, the federal government has played the role of "catalyst" and "facilitator" in a nation-wide support enforcement effort. In this regard, federal government activities have been designed to support the jurisdictions' programs of support enforcement.

In the early 1980s, the Federal and Provincial/Territorial governments struck a committee with a mandate to propose solutions to the family support enforcement problem. This Committee (The Federal-Provincial/Territorial Committee on the Enforcement of Maintenance and Custody Orders) concluded that better enforcement could not be achieved through the traditional private law system. As a result of the Committee's recommendations, most jurisdictions created new procedures and programs and they streamlined administrative mechanisms for family support enforcement and skip tracing.

The federal government enacted legislation, introduced programs and services, and provided financial support to assist Provincial/Territorial governments in the enforcement of family support and custody orders. Some of the legislative improvements included: permitting garnishment of federal government employee's wages and pension payments (i.e. the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act*); permitting garnishment of certain federal payments such as income tax refunds, Goods and Services Tax refunds, unemployment insurance payments, agricultural stabilization payments, interest payments on Canada Savings Bonds, Cod Fisheries and Atlantic Ground Fish Strategy (i.e., the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*); and,

² Québec has been developing guidelines throughout the process. As well, there are indications that a number of jurisdictions will be introducing guidelines shortly.

³ The impact of unenforced orders falls mainly on the increasing number of single mothers, who already live on significantly less money than other Canadians. In 1990, 57 per cent of female-headed lone parent families lived below Statistics Canada's poverty level.

permitting the release of certain identifier information from federal files to assist in tracing family support debtors, (i.e., the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*).

In terms of services, the federal government created a "one stop" federal enforcement service administered by the Department of Justice Canada's Family Law Assistance Systems Section (FLASS). One unit of this section is called the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Unit (FOAEA).⁴ When Provincial/Territorial maintenance enforcement services garnish federal government payments they send a garnishee summons to this Unit, which then ensures that any payments made to the debtor are partially redirected to the Provincial/Territorial enforcement authority. The same procedure holds true for the release of identifier information. Certain designated courts, police forces, or maintenance enforcement programs send their application to the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Unit, which in turn, asks participating federal government departments to search their files for information on the debtor. This information is then sent to the designated originator.

Justice Canada also gave jurisdictions \$1.2 million over 5 years (i.e., 1984 to 1989) to develop and implement new support enforcement systems and to enhance existing systems. Many Provinces/Territories created enforcement programs based upon what is commonly called the "automatic support enforcement system model".⁵

The rationale for these policy initiatives was, in part, the fact that the Provinces would be shouldering a financial burden relating to the enforcement of federal support orders under the *Divorce Act*.

To give a sense of the magnitude of these support enforcement programs,⁶ in Alberta, the maintenance enforcement program collected more than \$4 million during the month of January, 1995 on an active case load of 28,000 cases. For the entire fiscal year 1994-95, the program collected \$83.2 million. In Manitoba, the maintenance enforcement program collected \$31.3 million in 1993 compared to \$23.6 million in 1990.

Ontario's maintenance enforcement program had 125,000 case files in 1994 up from 62,000 active files in 1991. In 1994, Ontario collected on average \$33 million dollars a month (i.e., \$396 million per year.) This is more than the \$260 million collected during the program's first three years of operation. In 1994, the program employed about 350 staff across Ontario and it was estimated that

⁴ Another unit, administers the garnishment of payments to public servants and contractors under the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act* (GAPDA) for the National Capital Region and responsible for administrative policy for Provincial and Territorial enforcement programs.

⁵ Under automatic enforcement, once an order is in the "system" it is enforced by the court and requires little further action by the support creditor. Typically, monies received from the debtor are paid into a trust account, and then dispersed to the creditor. Automatic enforcement does not mean automatic payment. The payment must be received before it is paid out. Only the creditor may opt out of the system. It has always been believed that the more efficient these systems are, the more the clientele will be satisfied and, perhaps, the more efficient will be the collection of outstanding support debts.

⁶ It is important to note that the number of orders subject to a jurisdiction's maintenance enforcement program is dependent on the nature of that program (i.e., whether or not the program is mandatory).

the program saved the province about \$3.1 million per month (i.e., about \$37 million per year) in welfare payments.

In 1996, the Department of Justice Canada Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Unit garnisheed more than \$60 million in federal funds on 90,000 files. This represents a 600 per cent increase in activity from 1989/90 when the service collected \$10.9 million on 19,800 cases. To date, over \$320 million has been garnisheed. To help cover federal government operating expenses the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Unit charges an administrative fee of \$81 per year. This fee is collected from the debtor after the financial terms of the summons have been satisfied. Between, February 1994 and March 1997, \$6.6 million in fees were collected.

Even with support enforcement programs, default continues to be a problem in Canada. Support and maintenance enforcement programs report default rates of anywhere from 50 to 75 per cent, depending on the jurisdiction and how default is defined. In addition, we note that, for example, the Alberta maintenance enforcement program calculates that as of 1995 more than \$97 million in arrears is owing to Alberta creditors since 1986. In Manitoba, the maintenance enforcement program estimates that as of 1995 \$28 million in arrears is owed to creditors while, arrears in Ontario totaled more than \$699 million in 1994.⁷

In the early 1990's, the Department of Justice consulted the Provinces and Territories to determine how the federal government could assist in further improving family support enforcement. It was concluded that financial support was required to further improve support enforcement mechanisms and various Provincial/Territorial needs were identified.⁸

In early 1991, the Department sought approvals for a number of policy initiatives designed to improve the fairness and effectiveness of federal family law, including contribution funding to Provinces/Territories. The proposal (including support guidelines) was approved in principle, however, funds were not approved to carry out the initiative. The proposals lay dormant until Health and Welfare Canada (now Health Canada) approached the Department of Justice in 1992 to formulate projects/initiatives for inclusion in the Interdepartmental Brighter Futures: Child Development Initiative. As part of its involvement in the interdepartmental Child Development Initiative (CDI) the Department of Justice included proposals for contribution funding in the area of support enforcement (the Family Support Enforcement Fund).⁹

⁷ One of the problems is that under the existing system, it is impossible to determine "unrecoverable arrears" that are a result of changing circumstances. The new Guidelines allow variations in support orders to take account of changes in circumstances and it is anticipated that this may make it more feasible to determine default.

⁸ The Department and Provinces/Territories discussed cost implications and concluded that \$20 million over 6 years (divided among the twelve jurisdictions) was required to make a significant impact on support enforcement. The minimum amount required was \$1 million per year.

⁹ For a detailed discussion of the Department's involvement in the CDI including the findings from an evaluation of Departmental activities, see: *Summative Evaluation of Justice Canada's Contribution to the Interdepartmental Child Development Initiative*, March, 1996.

The specific objectives of the Department's support enforcement activities in support of the CDI included: (i) to provide financial assistance to existing, new or enhanced jurisdictional support enforcement strategies with a view to improve their efficiency and effectiveness; and, (ii) to explore and demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of new and enhanced enforcement strategies.¹⁰ The total allocation for these funded activities under the CDI was approximately \$5 million over the period 1992-1996. The evaluation of the initiative suggested that there is much work yet to do in the area of support enforcement.

1.2 This Report

The remainder of this report provides a description of the Child Support Initiative with a focus on the following:

- presenting the inputs, activities and outputs, anticipated impacts and ultimate objectives of the initiative;
- describing the relationships between activities and outputs and the anticipated impacts and ultimate objectives;
- exploring the major issues which could be included in an evaluation; and,
- presenting an evaluation plan for addressing the evaluation issues and questions.

¹⁰ To attain these objectives, the Department provided financial assistance to the jurisdictions for the following: improve the jurisdictions support enforcement programs; enhance communications between the jurisdictions relating to support enforcement; develop new legislative remedies; develop new support enforcement projects; provide training; test innovative enforcement projects; and, carry out information campaigns to improve public awareness and attitudes regarding family support orders.

2.0 COMPONENT PROFILE OF THE CHILD SUPPORT INITIATIVE

As previously noted, the FP/T Family Law Committee released a report in January, 1995. The report concluded that maintaining the current child support system was not in the best interests of Canadian children. The report recommended comprehensive child support reforms along three lines: the introduction of child support guidelines; changes to the tax treatment of child support payments; and, stronger enforcement procedures with regard to child support orders. The Child Support Initiative is responsible for the implementation of Bill C-41 and as such will be responsible for the implementation of child support guidelines and enhanced enforcement measures.¹¹

2.1 Rationale

As noted in the previous chapter, there is a broad body of literature which clearly indicates that the increased incidence of marital separation and divorce has had negative economic consequences, especially for dependent children and spouses. Furthermore, there is ample evidence that failure to comply with family support provisions represents a serious risk to the well-being of children.

The ultimate goal of the Child Support Initiative is to establish and maintain fair standards of child support in Canada. Underlying this goal are a number of aims and objectives, including the following:

- to ensure that, in cases of marital breakdown, dependent children are supported by both parents in relation to their means;
- to ensure consistency in setting standards of child support across Canada;
- to reduce conflict relating to the determination of child support between spouses in marital breakdowns by standardizing the support calculation process;
- to improve the efficiency of legal processes in cases involving child support;
- to strengthen the national support enforcement strategy; and,
- to coordinate support enforcement improvements across Canada.

For the purposes of evaluation, these aims and objectives have been reformulated into three primary objectives: (i) **to establish fair and consistent standards of child support**; (ii) **to improve child support enforcement on a national level**; and, (iii) **to educate and inform the public and all stakeholders about the importance and standards of child support**.

The first of these objectives, establishing fair and consistent standards of child support is intended to address the first four aims, namely, to ensure that children are supported by both parents in

¹¹ The Department of Finance was responsible for changing the tax treatment of child support payments which are being implemented by Revenue Canada.

relation to their means, that there is consistency in standards of child support across Canada, to reduce conflict in the determination of child support, and to improve the efficiency of legal processes involving child support.

The second objective, improving child support enforcement on a national level relates to the last three aims identified above, namely, to improve the efficiency of legal processes in cases involving child support, strengthening the national support enforcement strategy and coordinating support enforcement improvements across Canada. The third objective, educating and informing the public and all stakeholders about the importance and standards of child support cuts across all six aims identified above.

2.2 Program Components

The Child Support Initiative contains a number of measures (legislative, regulatory and contribution funding) designed to implement the child support reforms, namely the guidelines, and improve support enforcement in Canada. The Initiative is comprised of a number of elements:

- development, implementation and monitoring of child support guidelines;
- enhancement and monitoring of federal enforcement measures including significant systems development activities;
- improvements to provincial/territorial enforcement services;
- ongoing research in the area of enforcement, especially default;
- development and dissemination of communications and public legal education;
- appointment and support for the Federal-Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Task Force and the Child Support Advisory Committee; and,
- evaluation of the Initiative.

Conceptually, we have divided the program (the Child Support Initiative) into a number of components. This facilitates description of a very complex program along functional lines. These include: policy development and coordination; policy implementation (i.e., program development, implementation and enhancement); public communications and education; and, management of the initiative.

2.2.1 Policy Development and Coordination

The policy development and co-ordination component revolves around activities designed to *develop, monitor and coordinate federal policies* in the area of child support, enforcement and guidelines. The overall purpose of activities in this category is to develop, coordinate and make any necessary amendments to federal child support policies. Policy development is not an event that takes place at one point in time, it is an iterative and sometimes circular process.

Policy development and co-ordination represents the driving force, or the heart, of federal efforts - policy development being one of the primary functions of the Minister of Justice. This program component relates to the Department's efforts to develop and modify as required federal child support and enforcement policies in close consultation with the jurisdictions (provincial and territorial) and other federal departments as required.

Co-ordination is a particularly important element of the policy development component of the Initiative due to the multi-jurisdictional nature of family law in Canada. To effectively develop and implement child support policies, the Department of Justice needs to consult and coordinate its efforts with the provinces and territories (plus other federal government departments.) For example, amendments to the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act* and to the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act* affect numerous federal government departments and all provincial/territorial Maintenance Enforcement Programs.

The policy development and co-ordination component can be conceptually segregated into three interrelated sub-components:

- policy development and co-ordination related to child support (including the guidelines);
- policy development and co-ordination related to support enforcement; and,
- research support for policy development.

The first sub-component revolves around Departmental activities to develop the "legal" policy tools (i.e. *Divorce Act* amendments and regulations) necessary for the implementation of child support guidelines and to coordinate these efforts with other jurisdictions.

The second sub-component revolves around departmental efforts to develop "legal" and other policy tools (such as funding and operational programs) to improve support enforcement.¹²

The third sub-component refers to departmental efforts to integrate the findings of socio-legal research into policy development (i.e. guidelines and support enforcement). Research is not an end in itself, its purpose is to inform and support policy development. Monitoring and feedback activities such as project evaluations and impacts studies are also included as their purpose is to inform policy development. As well, this subcomponent involves co-ordination and liaison with the activities of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

¹² Co-ordination and consultation on support enforcement follow a separate track from co-ordination on child support guidelines. This is due to the operational nature of support enforcement policy. Federal support enforcement policies have significant impacts on federal and provincial support enforcement programs. Co-ordination issues and concerns range from legal policy issues to more operational issues (e.g., the development of standardized national computer software programs).

2.2.1.1 Component Objectives

Overall, the objectives of this component are: (i) to establish fair and consistent standards of child support; (ii) to reduce the conflict in the determination of child support; (iii) to improve the efficiency of the associated legal processes; and, (iv) to provide federal leadership and co-ordination.

At a more operational level, the objectives for this component can be broken down by sub-component as follows.

Child Support Guidelines

- In close consultation with the Family Law Committee, FPT Task Force on Child Support Guidelines and the Child Support Advisory Committee, develop and review child support policy. Where required, manage the legislative and/or regulatory process to implement the policy.

Child Support Enforcement

- Promote federal leadership and co-ordination in the area of support enforcement. Seek the co-operation of the provinces and territories in an attempt to ensure that efforts are managed in a coordinated fashion.

Research

- Provide the Child Support Initiative with high quality research-based information and analysis to:
 - guide and inform ongoing child support policy development and policy implementation;
 - ensure timely and accurate refinements and updates to the table of awards;
 - monitor the intended and unintended impacts of the guidelines and legislation;
 - monitor and evaluate demonstration projects;
 - monitor the implementation of support enforcement measures;
 - advise and participate in research as required to support Communications work and public legal education and information (PLEI) packages; and,
 - ensure effective and efficient planning, co-ordination, integration and dissemination of research results.
- Coordinate and liaise with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics in the development and implementation of the national annual survey of Maintenance Enforcement Programs.

2.2.1.2 Activities

The following identifies, by subcomponent, the planned activities associated with the policy development and co-ordination component of the Initiative.

Child Support Guidelines

- Monitor implementation of Federal Child Support Guidelines and relevant *Divorce Act* provisions
- Identify key research requirements
- Identify and respond to emerging policy issues
- Provide ongoing monitoring, analysis and development of policy options to respond to outstanding and emerging issues
- Provide briefings and recommendations on the issues
- Articulate policy (drafting process for regulations and legislation)
- Manage legislative and regulatory processes through the Family Law Committee
- Coordinate consultations with federal departments, jurisdictions, Advisory Committee, FPT Task Force and other groups/committees
- Provide expertise and advice on communications initiatives (e.g., publications, information line, etc.)
- Assist in the development of training tools and in the delivery of training on the reforms
- Assist provinces and territories in developing their own guidelines (adopting federal guidelines) and coordinate Order-In-Council process for designation (where required)
- Provide litigation support for cases challenging the legislation/regulation
- Write briefing notes, question period briefing notes, ministerial correspondence and legal opinions as needed.

Support Enforcement

- Coordinate new federal enforcement strategy, assist in administering new federal activities
- Develop any further amendments to the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act (FOAEA)* and the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act (GAPDA)* and regulations in consultation with relevant Departments.
- Manage legislative process, assist in the passage of the legislation.
- Coordinate implementation and assist operationalization of new enforcement policy: *GAPDA Act* and *FOAEA Act* amendments (e.g. license denial scheme, Revenue Canada data, legal agents/judges policy, training payroll staff etc.) with jurisdictions and relevant federal departments.
- Coordinate operating policy relating to the \$13.6 contribution fund.
- Monitor enforcement related research activities (CCJS, Department of Justice New Hires study, study on reasons people comply with/default on support orders, etc.).
- Monitor implementation of federal legislation (*FOAEA*, *GAPDA*).

- Coordinate legislative review of *GAPDA*.
- Consult with relevant departments regarding potential amendments to Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Forces, *Canada Shipping Act* and other related legislation (*Public Service Superannuation Act*, *Canadian Forces Superannuation Act*, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act*).
- Work closely with jurisdictions to develop/promote uniform enforcement initiatives
- Assist provinces/territories to implement any REMO enhancements.
- Identify and help to develop new initiatives.
- Identify new licenses to add to *FOAEA Act, Part III*, new data bases for *Part I*.
- Develop possible amendments to the *Bank Act*.
- Follow-up with Revenue Canada regarding disclosure of financial information from data banks (in addition to tracing information).
- Identify and respond to emerging legislative policy issues (i.e. monitor case law)
- Promote exchange of information between jurisdictions.
- Assist in developing international reciprocity agreements.

Policy Research

Substantive research

Support Guidelines:

- Finalize table of awards for inclusion in the regulation to the *Divorce Act*.
- Review table of awards at least every two years by monitoring changes to tax parameters
- Prepare and carry out research plan to monitor intended and unintended impacts of guidelines and legislation
- Conduct project evaluations (re Guidelines Implementation Fund)

Enforcement:

- Coordinate/liaise with CCJS to implement national survey on support levels and enforcement
- Conduct national in-depth study on factors associated with default/compliance
- Conduct feasibility study into creating "New Hires" data base for tracing and interception
- Monitoring of licence denial scheme
- Conduct project evaluations (re Support Enforcement Fund)

PLEI/Communications:

- Research PLEI needs and information delivery methods for general public and intermediaries

- Conduct environmental scan of PLEI research and evaluation materials from other jurisdictions
- Provide support/advice on public opinion polling/focus testing

Broader Family Law Issues:

- Monitor broad family law research issues as they relate to child support and provide information/briefings
- Monitor existing data sources (e.g., Statistics Canada surveys, etc.)

Managing Research Activities

- Plan, develop and implement program of research
- Plan, coordinate, consult other interested parties (Task Force, Advisory Committee, jurisdictions, CCJS, other research bodies)
- Establish publication and dissemination strategies
- Disseminate results
- Integrate results into policy development process

2.2.1.3 Outputs

The policy development and co-ordination component will produce the following outputs:

- Legislation and regulations (including amendments)
 - *Divorce Act amendments, Federal Child Support Guidelines, Order-in-Council Designations of Provincial/Territorial Guidelines, Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act, Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act, Canada Shipping Act.*¹³
- Legal opinions
- Briefing notes, Question Period Notes
- Policy documents (Memorandum to Cabinet, Discussion Papers)
- Research reports and fact sheets
- Memoranda of understanding (Transport/External Affairs)
- Correspondence (including Ministerial correspondence)

¹³ Consultations are also ongoing with relevant federal departments concerning possible amendments to Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Forces, , *Public Service Superannuation Act, Canadian Forces Superannuation Act, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act, Bank Act.*

2.2.1.4 Expected Impacts

The policy development and co-ordination program component has a number of expected impacts, including:

Support Guidelines

- More consistent treatment of child support in Canada in the long term¹⁴
- Adoption by some provinces of child support guidelines

Support Enforcement

- Strengthened federal-provincial/territorial partnerships.

Research

- Useful information that will guide and inform enforcement and child support policy development and implementation.

2.2.2 Policy Implementation

Policy implementation refers to the transformation of policy to programming. With regard to the Child Support Initiative, this second component revolves around Departmental efforts to assist provincial and territorial governments to develop and implement support guidelines and enhance support enforcement programs. This component is distinct from the policy development component in that it relates exclusively to programming.

This program component consists of efforts (both Federal and Provincial/Territorial) to implement new enforcement techniques or to develop or enhance child support programs. In this case the word "program" refers to Provincial/Territorial child support guidelines and enforcement programs and Department of Justice Canada enforcement programs and contribution funding. Most programming occurs at the Provincial/Territorial level, however, the federal government is involved in some programming (the federal support enforcement program¹⁵ and contribution funding to assist programming).

¹⁴ Medium term impacts may be affected by the delayed implementation date resulting from the Senate hearings.

¹⁵ Family law is an area of divided jurisdiction and the Provinces/Territories are responsible for the bulk of programming efforts - they create programs to implement provincial/territorial and federal policies. The federal government plays a limited programming role in the area of support enforcement (i.e., the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*, the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act*).

As well, other federal government departments (e.g., Revenue Canada) are involved in support enforcement programming. However, these departments' activities fall outside the scope of this evaluation.¹⁶

This component can be conceptually subdivided into three subcomponents: guideline contribution funding; support enforcement contribution funding; and, enhancement of Department of Justice enforcement mechanisms (*Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act* and the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*).

2.2.2.1 Component Objectives

Child Support Guidelines

The overall objective of this subcomponent is to promote consistency of approach by establishing fair and consistent standards of child support and assisting provinces/territories to implement the child support guidelines (\$50 million dollar fund).¹⁷

The specific operational objective of the contribution fund, negotiated by the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Deputy Ministers responsible for Justice is:

- To allow the Provinces/Territories to collaborate with the federal government to develop, pilot and implement innovative, efficient and cost-effective techniques that will assist parties in obtaining original child support orders and variations to existing orders and to develop mechanisms that could be used for the regular updating of orders.

Support Enforcement

The overall objectives of this subcomponent are to: (i) assist Provinces and Territories to enhance programs and enforcement mechanisms for the collection of support orders (\$13.6 million dollar contribution fund); and, (ii) to improve the federal support enforcement program (garnishment, tracing and licence denial).¹⁸

The specific operational objective of the contribution fund, negotiated by the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Deputy Ministers responsible for Justice is:

¹⁶ The Department's evaluation will not examine the activities of partner departments. Where possible, we will incorporate into the evaluation reporting the outputs and some indicators of the success of partner departments' activities (e.g., number of licenses denied).

¹⁷ It is also recognized that changes to the Divorce Act may cause higher demand on resources in the Provinces and Territories. As a result, the fund is intended to help defray these increased costs.

¹⁸ At the present time, it is virtually impossible to distinguish between what is collected in child support and what is collected in spousal support.

- To improve the collection of child support orders by supporting innovative, strategic, and effective enforcement measures that allow the federal government to partner with the provinces and territories to develop, pilot and implement timely and cost-effective enhancements to existing maintenance enforcement programs.

2.2.2.2 Activities

Below we outline activities to be undertaken as part of this component. We begin with activities under the two contribution funds. There are two types of activities: activities undertaken by the Department to manage the funds, plus the types of activities that can be funded under the two contribution funds.

Contribution Funds

- Fund Management
 - Develop and implement program parameters for the two funds (Guideline Fund, Support Enforcement Fund) in consultation with jurisdictions, Task Force, Maintenance Enforcement Directors.
 - Develop and seek approval for allocating funds by jurisdiction.
 - Develop standard agreements.
 - Develop, implement proposal review mechanisms.
 - Monitor fund activities and impacts.
 - Develop mechanisms to share project information and results.
 - Develop standard reports.
 - Compile "Lessons Learned" report.
- Support Guidelines Implementation Fund - Project Activities
 - Feasibility studies.
 - Administrative mechanisms (develop and pilot), including services linked to enforcement offices, mediation services, community justice centres, legal information centres.
 - Implementation models to encourage early dispute resolution, non adversarial mechanisms.
 - Project evaluations focusing on implementation models, existing administrative mechanisms.
 - Community action through public legal education and information and training activities.
 - Staffing actions to assist in guideline development and implementation.

- Support Enforcement Fund - Project Activities
 - Develop and introduce federal licence withholding strategy.
 - Promote wage withholding strategy.
 - Promote REMO (reciprocal enforcement of maintenance orders).
 - Test and pilot innovative approaches to improve collection.
 - Public legal education and information projects intended to improve public awareness and understanding.
 - Training.
 - Project evaluations (new projects, existing mechanisms).

Improvements to Federal Enforcement Programs

In improving federal support enforcement programs, there are two areas of activity: improvements to the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*; and, improvements to the *Garnishment Attachment and Pension Diversion Act*.

Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act

- Develop, implement and operate the Licence denial scheme.
- Develop, implement systems to permit Revenue Canada data banks to be added to the federal Tracing Service.
- Develop and implement a computer link-up with provincial/territorial Maintenance Enforcement Programs.
- Monitor and assess impacts of the Initiative on the federal Family Law Assistance Service (FLASS) - e.g. on workload.

Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act

- Develop, implement amendments to GAPDA (replacing two step procedure with a one step procedure).

2.2.2.3 Outputs

The following represent the expected outputs from this component:

Contribution Funding

- Programming models
- Pilot projects
- New enforcement mechanisms/tools
- Research/evaluation reports
- Contribution agreements
- Training programs

Improvements to Federal Enforcement Programs

- New garnishment mechanism under GAPDA
- New source of federal tracing information
- License suspension service
- Technical amendments under GAPDA and FOAEA
- On-line communication with all jurisdictions via computer hook-up
- Significantly re-engineered processes and upgraded technological platform for processing tracing and garnishment requests
- Recommendations for enhanced Reciprocal Enforcement Maintenance Orders (REMO)

2.2.2.4 Expected Impacts

Since this portion of the Initiative will be delivered primarily through contribution funding (with the exception of changes to federal enforcement legislation), the Department of Justice has less direct ability to exercise control over the degree to which impacts can be achieved than with direct operational funding. Nevertheless, this program component has a number of expected impacts:

- Development/enhancement of national system for obtaining new support orders and variations to existing orders;
- Articulation of a national support enforcement strategy; and,
- Enhancement of support enforcement, including REMOs at the national level.

2.2.3 Public Communications and Education Component

The third component of this initiative revolves around Departmental efforts to publicize the initiative and to assist the public and justice system officials (federal, provincial, territorial) to better understand and educate themselves about the new guidelines and the enhancements to the enforcement mechanisms. The mechanisms used to achieve these goals include: contribution funding, production and distribution of training and information materials, and a public awareness campaign.

This component can be conceptually broken down into three subcomponents: Public Communications; PLEI and Intermediary Training; and Professional Education and Training.

2.2.3.1 Component Objectives

Overall, the objective of this component is to raise public, stakeholder and professional awareness and understanding of the child support reforms. Below we list the more operational objectives for each of the three sub-components.

Public Communications:

- To provide timely and accurate information to the *public and other target groups* regarding the Child Support Initiative.

PLEI and Intermediary Training:

- Provide (or assist in the provision of) legal education, information and training with consistent and accurate content and messaging that meets the needs of:
 - special groups (the blind, minority language groups etc.);
 - community based education/information via PLEI Network; and,
 - intermediaries (paralegals, mediators, family counsellors, court workers etc.).

Professional Education and Training:

- To facilitate the provision of timely and accurate information on the Child Support Initiative that meets the needs of professionals (judges, lawyers) by providing:
 - training material that meets the needs and facilitates the training of professionals (e.g. judges, Canadian Bar Association family law sub-section);
 - ongoing support to continuing legal education programs across Canada; and,
 - contribution funding to assist organizations to train professionals.

2.2.3.2 Activities

The following outlines the activities to be completed under this program component.

Public Communications

- Develop, implement communications strategy.
- Produce news releases, distribute miscellaneous information materials and information kits.
- Release draft guidelines
- Tabling and Proclaiming Bill
- Deliver Public Awareness Campaign
 - Develop an advertising plan
 - Propose message
 - Focus testing and production
 - Media placement
 - Identify research needs (public opinion research)
 - Develop appropriate messaging
- Establish and maintain toll free information line

PLEI and Intermediary Training

- Develop, test, refine, produce and disseminate legal information products for special groups (child support, guidelines, divorce).
- Develop, test, refine and distribute community based education/information materials via PLEI network.

- Develop, test, refine and distribute intermediary training materials through PLEI network and other training bodies.
- Develop, test and refine electronic information, education, communications tools using electronic dissemination tools.
- Produce kit for unrepresented clients on divorce and child support guidelines.
- Develop interactive CD Rom education module. Distribute electronically.
- Develop framework for contribution program in consultation with stakeholders (e.g. PLEI Network).
- Develop project review process for contribution funding.

Professional Education and Training

- Identify training needs (Continuing Legal Education, judges, lawyers).
- Prepare material for training kit/binder based on results of consultation and identification of needs.
- Participate upon request in training and information sessions.
- Develop, implement contribution program.

2.2.3.3 Outputs

The public communication and education component will produce the following outputs:

Communications

- Communications strategy
- Public awareness campaign
 - informing people
 - influencing attitudes
- toll free information number (1-888 telephone number)
- Support Guidelines pamphlet (1,000,000 copies), Guide and Workbook
- Quarterly Newsletter targeted to general public, legal community and stakeholders
- Miscellaneous background materials (brochures, fact sheets)
- Internet information on initiative
- Exhibits
- Responses to newspaper/magazine articles
- Ministerial Speeches
- joint mail out with Revenue Canada
- media relations

Public Legal Education and Information

- PLEI work plan
- PLEI materials (information, training materials) including special groups
- Kit for unrepresented clients

- CD-ROM on Child Support
- Contribution agreements (PLEI network/other groups)

Professional Education and Training

- Training kit/binder
- Contribution funding agreements

2.2.3.4 Expected Impacts

The public communications and education program component has a number of expected impacts:

- Informed public regarding changes to federal legislation related to child support guidelines.
- Informed justice professionals and intermediaries.
- Informed public regarding FOAEA.
- A coordinated strategy and approach to communications, PLEI and professional training that meets the information needs of the public and professionals in an efficient and effective manner.

2.2.4 Management of the Initiative

The fourth component revolves around Department of Justice efforts to implement the Child Support Initiative. The purpose of this function is to manage government resources in a sound manner while achieving Initiative objectives. While the main thrust of the Initiative is to develop and deliver policy, the manner in which this effort is conducted is also an important function.

An evaluation of the Child Development Initiative (completed during fiscal year 1995-96) raised concerns about the Department's management of that initiative. In particular, that evaluation noted:

- there was a lack of an overall policy project management structure or framework in place to ensure co-ordination of Departmental activities in support of the initiative;
- there was a need to improve the level of communications and consultations between those responsible for policy development and those responsible for policy implementation; and,
- there were no mechanisms in place to monitor on an ongoing basis the progress of Departmental activities in support of the initiative.

Some of the recommendations from that evaluation have been incorporated into the development of the management framework for the Child Support Initiative. In particular, the management framework for the Child Support Initiative identifies one single individual (apart from the DM, the Senior ADM, Policy and the Director, FLASS) as the accountable official for the success of the initiative. Second, the current initiative is incorporating a different approach to the management of a complex initiative than has been used in the Department in the past by bringing together functional specialists from across the Department to work in a coordinated initiative-

based team.¹⁹ As a result, there is a great deal of interest in the Department in learning lessons with regard to benefits and/or drawbacks of this new approach.

2.2.4.1 Component Objectives

The objectives of this component are as follows:

- To manage the Initiative so as to ensure it is implemented in an integrated, coordinated and holistic fashion²⁰;
- To provide leadership and direction to ensure achievement of Initiative objectives;
- To obtain the necessary resources (FTE's, money, decisions) to achieve the objectives of the Child Support Initiative;
- To ensure the sound management of Initiative resources;
- To (re)align resource expenditures to best meet Initiative objectives;
- To provide substantive policy direction as required; and,
- To ensure overall co-ordination of the Child Support Initiative (within the Team, within the Department, with other federal government departments, with the jurisdictions).

2.2.4.2 Activities

Below we list program component activities:

Develop/review Initiative strategy and implementation

- Adjust project management structure (establish reporting relationships, delegated authorities)
- Produce Treasury Board submission, Business Plans
- Review and realign work plans
- Establish, review and realign priorities and resources as required
- Monitor project implementation
 - Co-ordinator meetings
 - Child Support Team retreats
 - Initiative Management Committee
 - Child Support Advisory Committee
 - FPT Task Force
- Conduct five year review and report

¹⁹ This is discussed in greater detail in section 2.3 of this report.

²⁰ From the Memorandum of Understanding, Child Support Team.

Manage Initiative Resources (Human, physical, dollars)

- Produce budgets, work plans
- Staff Project Team
- Issue contracts
- Purchase materials, physical space, communications materials
- Develop and maintain computer and paper filing systems
- Produce standards and procedures
- Approve expenditures
- Ensure links with Functional managers so that work is carried out in a manner consistent with applicable Departmental and governmental policies
- Management training and professional development
- Coordinate Project Team activities (e.g. contracting process, etc.)

Coordinate, communicate, consult with other significant players

- Develop communication, co-ordination mechanisms and monitor efficiency/effectiveness.
- Integrate Team activities into the broader activities of the Department of Justice Canada (Initiative Management Committee, Executive Committee etc.)
- Establish, chair Advisory Committee.
- Coordinate with Federal Provincial Territorial Family Law Committee.
- Chair Task Force.
- Monitor review work of Task Force sub-committees.
- Coordinate departmental efforts with federal government partners (e.g. Revenue Working Group).

Program Evaluation

- Establish evaluation framework
- Follow-up and monitoring
- Undertake evaluation sub-studies
- Provide feedback on the initial phase of initiative activities and successes
- Make recommendations on possible courses of action to fine-tune activities
- Undertake summative evaluation and report on impacts of the initiative

2.2.4.3 Outputs

This program component will produce the following outputs:

- Budget forecasts for salary and O&M expenditures
- Planning documents (strategic plans, operational plans, work plans, project planning documents)
- Budget documents (Treasury Board submissions, Business Plans)
- Project Management tools (timelines, factsheets etc.)
- Standards, procedures, performance targets
- Organizational (re)design

- Records keeping systems (automated, hard copy)
- Management Reports
- Five Year Monitoring Report/Document intended for Parliament
- Program evaluation studies and recommendations

2.2.4.4 Expected Impacts

This program component has the following expected impacts:

- A performing, results-oriented Project Team.
- Good communication and co-ordination both internally (within the Team and the Department) and externally (outside the Department of Justice.)
- Strengthened partnerships. (A co-operative/consultative approach to implementation (within the department and at the federal-provincial/territorial level.)

2.3 Organizational Structure

In this section we discuss the organizational structure of the Initiative, especially the Child Support Team and its organizational relationships within and outside the Department. Exhibit 2.1 graphically portrays the organizational structure of the Child Support Team.

The organizational structure outlines the accountability and decision-making framework, which in the case of this Initiative is quite complex. The organizational structure reflects:

- respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- reporting relationships (both line and functional);
- FTEs dedicated to the Initiative;
- decision-making patterns;
- advisory relationships; and,
- the degree of formalized co-ordination, consultation with other parties (formalized partnerships).

The Deputy Minister of Justice is responsible for the overall management of the Initiative. The Senior ADM, Policy is the responsible Sector Head for the Initiative, except in matters concerning the Family Law Assistance Systems Section (FLASS) and legal advice provided by Corporate Counsel (for which the Associate Deputy Minister of Civil Law and Corporate Management is responsible.)

The Senior ADM, Policy and the Associate DM, Civil Law and Corporate Management fulfil their responsibilities in consultation with each other and with the Director General, Communications and Executive Services.

Implementation of the Initiative is the responsibility of the Child Support Team Leader who reports to the Senior ADM, Policy. The Team Leader heads a matrix type organization made up of specialists from various responsibility centres throughout the Department.

Essentially, the Child Support Team is a multi-disciplinary team of specialists. Team members report to the Team Leader through supervisors called Co-ordinators. As indicated on the chart, many team members also have a functional reporting relationship to a Unit manager. These specialists report to the Co-ordinators and Team Leader with respect to their responsibilities in implementing the Initiative and they report to their responsibility centre manager with respect to adhering to functional issues (e.g., departmental policies, practices and quality standards).

Child Support Team Leader

The Team leader provides leadership in the implementation of the Initiative in order to ensure the achievement of both Initiative and management objectives. The Team Leader has overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the Initiative and associated resources including all team members.

Co-ordinator Policy Implementation

The Team Leader is supported by the Co-ordinator of Policy Implementation. The Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating all aspects of the development and implementation of the Initiative. The Co-ordinator exercises functional authority with regard to all aspects of the Initiative, however, line authority for the Initiative rests with the Team Leader.

In addition to the support provided by the Co-ordinator of Policy Implementation, there is also an administrative officer who is responsible for the effective and efficient administration for the Team Leader, administrative management of the team, and supervision of the secretarial pool.

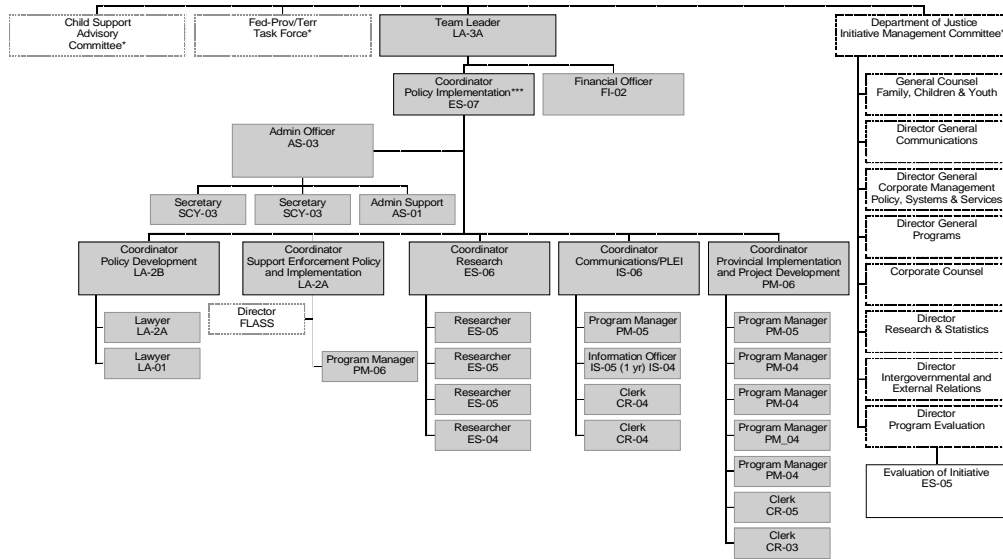
Functional Co-ordinators²¹

The Child Support Team is a multi-disciplinary team drawing upon the expertise of functional specialists from a number of different responsibility centres across the Department. In order to integrate and coordinate these activities and resources in an effective manner, the Child Support Team includes five functional Co-ordinators who report to the Team Leader. There are Co-ordinators for each of the following: policy development; support enforcement; research; communications and public legal education and information; and, Provincial implementation and project development.

²¹ The specific roles and responsibilities of each Co-ordinator are articulated in detail in Memoranda of Understanding between the Child Support Team Leader and the senior managers responsible for specific functional areas (e.g., Programs Directorate, Research and Statistics Section, etc.).

Although part of the Initiative, responsibility for implementing changes to FLASS, falls under the responsibility of the Director of FLASS. The Director coordinates this work with the enforcement co-ordinator (Office of Support Enforcement Policy Co-ordination and Implementation.)²²

Exhibit 2.1: Child Support Team



- * These are external bodies which will assist/advise the Team Leader
- ** This is an advisory Departmental committee consisting of the functional leaders from the various responsibility centres that have seconded individuals to the Child Support Team plus the Director Intergovernmental and External Relations Division and the Corporate Counsel
- *** The Coordinator Policy Implementation exercises functional authority but not line authority
- **** The Director of FLASS does not have a direct reporting relationship with the Child Support Team.

22

Given the Accountability Framework for the Initiative, the Director of FLASS, not the Child Support Team Leader, maintains responsibility and accountability for the changes to the FLASS system even though the changes are largely (i.e., 70%) being funded by the Child Support Team Leader.

Within the Department of Justice, the Team Leader is also assisted by the Child Support Initiative Management Committee. This committee is made up of the Unit Heads (such as the Director Research and Statistics, the Director General Programs as outlined on the organizational chart.) The purpose of this committee is to ensure adequate consultation, support the Team Leader, review the Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, Budgets, Staffing Strategy and review the evaluation of the Initiative. Essentially, this Committee plays an advisory role to the Team Leader, as it is not accountable for the implementation of the Initiative.

Outside the Department, the Team Leader is assisted by three groups - the FPT Task Force, the Family Law Committee and the Child Support Advisory Committee.

In 1996, the Minister of Justice approved the creation of a FPT Task Force for the implementation of child support reforms. The purpose of the Task Force is to co-manage the introduction of child support guidelines to ensure efficient and effective implementation. There are 28 representatives on the Task Force.

Four sub-committees of the Task Force were established to implement the reforms: Implementation Sub-Committee; Communications (Public Awareness) Sub-Committee; Research Sub-Committee; and the Enforcement Sub-Committee. At this time, two of the Sub-Committees have been folded back into the Committee of the whole (i.e., Implementation and Communications while the Research and Enforcement Sub-Committees have developed work plans approved by the Task Force and the Deputy Ministers of Justice.

Where the Task Force (or its subcommittees) cannot arrive at a joint decision, the issue may be taken to the Deputy Ministers of Justice for resolution. For example, the Task Force could not come to consensus on the funding allocations associated with the Initiative and thus the Deputy Ministers were asked to decide on a funding allocation option for the \$13.6 million dollar Enforcement Fund and the \$50 million Guidelines Implementation Fund.

In addition to the Task Force, the Team Leader is also assisted by the Child Support Advisory Committee. Essentially, the mandate of the committee is to assist in monitoring the implementation of the *Divorce Act* amendments and the guidelines - to play an advisory role to the Team Leader. The Advisory Committee consists of approximately fifteen individuals with representation from the legal community and related professions, the judiciary, and the academic community. It meets twice a year to discuss implementation issues and to provide guidance and advice to the Department.

2.4 Program Resources

Exhibit 2.2 presents the resources devoted to the Department of Justice's activities with regard to the Child Support Initiative. In addition to the resources listed below, a further allocation has been made to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics in support of the initiative. Vote 1 resources include salaries for 32 individuals and associated overhead costs and contracted goods and services, while Vote 5 refers to the financial agreements with the Provinces and Territories.

EXHIBIT 2.2: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESOURCES FOR THE INITIATIVE (\$Millions)											
	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01		Total
Activity	Vote 1	Vote 5	Vote 1	Vote 5	Vote 1	Vote 5	Vote 1	Vote 5	Vote 1	Vote 5	
Policy Development	.287		1.356		1.351		1.156		1.037		5.186
Policy Implementation	1.025	.419	1.746	17.19	1.315	20.33	1.135	14.51	1.158	11.01	69.837
Communications and PLEI	.533	.051	4.860		2.319		.814		.600		9.177
Management and Co-ordination	1.385		1.56		1.638		1.604		1.689		7.873
TOTALS	3.23	0.47	9.522	17.19	6.623	20.33	4.709	14.51	4.484	11.01	92.073

2.5 Program Logic Model

Exhibit 2.3 presents a program logic model of the Child Support Initiative, which summarizes the linkages between broad objectives, sub-objectives and operational objectives, program components, activities and expected impacts identified previously in this chapter.

Exhibit 2.3: Program Logic Model of the Child Support Initiative

Component	Policy Development and Coordination Component	Policy Implementation Component	Communications and Public Legal Education Component	Management of the Initiative Component
Operational Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and review policy with regard to child support guidelines - Assist jurisdictions to implement child support guidelines - Allow jurisdictions to collaborate with the federal government to develop, pilot and implement innovative, efficient and cost-effective techniques to assist parties in obtaining child support orders or variations to existing orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote federal leadership and coordination in the area of support enforcement - Enhance systems for the collection of child support orders - Improve the collection of child support orders by supporting innovative, strategic and effective enforcement measures that allow the jurisdictions and federal government in partnership to develop, pilot and implement timely and cost-effective enhancements to existing maintenance enforcement programs - Improve federal support enforcement programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide timely and accurate information regarding the Child Support reforms that meets the needs of the public, stakeholders and professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide leadership and direction - Ensure sound management of initiative resources - (Re-)align resources to meet Initiative objectives - Manage initiative activities and resources so as to ensure integrated, co-ordinated implementation
Activities	<p><u>Guidelines</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop legislative policy - Manage legislative/regulatory process - Ongoing monitoring and analysis of policy options - Coordination and consultation with stakeholders - Provision of legal opinions - Assist jurisdictions with development of legislative policy instruments - Monitor case law - Undertake research to support policy development and monitor implementation <p><u>Support Enforcement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinate federal support enforcement strategy - Develop amendments to FOAEA and GAPDA and regulations - Manage legislative process - Coordinate new policy - Monitor implementation of federal legislation - Coordinate legislative review - Provide legal advice - Promote uniform enforcement initiatives - Monitor case law - Promote interjurisdictional cooperation - Undertake research to support policy development and monitor implementation 	<p><u>Manage Contribution Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop contribution funding strategies with jurisdictions - Develop standard agreements - Develop funding review mechanisms - Develop information sharing mechanisms <p><u>Guidelines Implementation Fund</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund staffing actions - Fund feasibility studies - Fund development of administrative mechanisms - Fund models to encourage early dispute resolution - Fund project evaluations - Fund public legal education, information and training <p><u>Support Enforcement Fund</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund licence withholding strategies - Fund wage withholding strategies - Fund testing of innovative approaches to collection - Fund legal education and information projects - Fund training - Fund project evaluations <p><u>Improvements to Federal Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop, implement and operate licence denial strategy - Develop, implement and operate enhancements to tracing capabilities - Develop/implement computer links with P/T enforcement programs 	<p><u>Public Communications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement communications strategy - Produce information materials - Deliver communications campaigns - Establish/maintain toll free information line <p><u>PLEI and Intermediary Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop, produce and disseminate legal information products - Provide community-based education/information - Develop and implement intermediary training - Develop electronic information, education and communication tools - Develop and distribute interactive CDROM education module - Develop framework for and implement contribution funding <p><u>Professional Education and Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify training needs - Develop training materials - Participate in training and information sessions - Develop and implement contribution funding program 	<p><u>Develop and review initiative strategy and implementation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish and adjust project management structure - Establish and adjust priorities and resources - Monitor project implementation <p><u>Manage Initiative Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and adjust budgets, workplans, standards and procedures - Coordinate Child Support Team activities - Ensure links with functional managers <p><u>Coordinate, Communicate and Consult with Key Players</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop communication and consultation mechanisms - Integrate CST activities into broader Departmental activities - Coordinate with Advisory Committee, Family Law Committee, FPT Task Force - Coordinate Departmental efforts with government wide efforts <p><u>Program Evaluation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess performance
Anticipated Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent treatment of child support in Canada (in the longer terms) - Adoption of child support guidelines in some provinces - Strengthened federal-provincial/territorial partnerships - Provision of useful information that will guide and inform policy development in terms of support enforcement and support guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancement of the national systems for obtaining new support orders or varying existing ones - Articulation of a national support enforcement strategy - Enhancement of the national system of support enforcement, including REMOs at the national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed public - Informed justice system professionals - Coordinated strategy and approach to communications, public legal education and information, and professional training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A performing, results oriented Child Support Team - Good communication both internally and externally - Enhanced ability to coordinate effectively both internally and externally
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish fair and consistent standards of child support - Reduce conflict in the determination of child support - Improve efficiency of the legal processes associated with the determination of child support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide federal leadership - Improve federal support enforcement activities - Strengthen federal-provincial/territorial partnerships - Provide assistance and coordination in improving the national system of support enforcement - Coordinate enforcement improvements which have international dimensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise public, stakeholder and professional awareness and understanding of the child support reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced departmental accountability for success of the initiative
Goals	Improve Determination of Child Support, Improve Enforcement of Child Support, and Communicate the reforms to the Public and all Stakeholders			

3.0 EVALUATION ISSUES, PRELIMINARY INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCES

This chapter outlines the broad evaluation issues to be addressed over the course of the Child Support Initiative, some corresponding evaluation indicators and likely data sources. Exhibit 3.1 at the end of this chapter presents a matrix detailing the issues, indicators and data sources.

3.1 Evaluation Issues and Associated Questions

The evaluation issues are divided into three categories: issues of relevance; issues of success; and, issues of alternatives/cost effectiveness. Appended to this document is a more comprehensive list of evaluation research questions.

3.1.1 Issues of Relevance

Issues of relevance are focused on whether or not a program, initiative or set of activities continue to be relevant. In particular, the focus of the following evaluation issues is on the extent to which the Child Support Initiative continues to be relevant to government priorities and perceived need. Four broad issues of relevance have been identified, including:

1. To what extent are the objectives and mandate of the Child Support Initiative relevant? Is the Initiative properly targeted?
 - Is there a demonstrated need for a child support initiative?
 - What are the broad and operational objectives of the Initiative? Have these objectives evolved substantially since 1996?
 - Are the range of activities, goods and services in support of the Initiative consistent with these objectives?

2. Given the shared jurisdiction for administration of justice relating to marital breakdown and support enforcement, what role does the federal government fulfill? Is this role appropriate? What should be the purpose and scope of federal involvement in this area of shared jurisdiction?
 - What is the role of the federal government under this Initiative?
 - What are the roles of the Provinces and Territories?
 - Are the respective roles consistent with legislated responsibilities?
 - Is there a need for federal involvement in this area?
 - Should other federal departments play an increased role in this area?

3. Is there a need to continue all of the activities funded under the Child Support Initiative given current priorities of both levels of government? Do some areas require more or less attention?
 - What activities are carried out under the Initiative?
 - What outputs have been produced under the Initiative?
 - What are the costs associated with these activities and outputs?
 - Have targets been defined, attained?

4. Is there a continuing need for a coordinated intergovernmental initiative to aid in meeting federal objectives vis-à-vis child support and enforcement issues?
 - What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the coordinated intergovernmental approach to these issues?
 - What are the costs associated with this approach?

3.1.2 Issues of Success

Issues of success are focused on the results achieved by a program, initiative or set of activities. In particular, the focus of the following evaluation issues is on the extent to which the Child Support Initiative is effective in meeting its objectives, within budget and without causing significant unwanted results. Four broad issues of success have been identified, including:

5. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the determination of child support? Have fair and consistent standards of child support been established? What impacts have the standards had in terms of levels of conflict in the determination of child support? What impacts have the standards had in terms of the efficiency of legal processes associated with the determination of child support?
 - What changes have there been in the levels of child support awards?
 - What changes have there been in the methods and mechanisms for determining child support? What are the perceptions of participants and stakeholders with regard to these changes?
 - Are the table awards perceived to be adequate?
 - Are awards made with the guidelines perceived to be equitable for custodial and non-custodial parents?
 - In what proportion of cases are orders computed consistently with guidelines? Are there differences across jurisdictions or by other characteristics (e.g., urban/rural)?
 - In what proportion of cases are awards based on table amounts only?
 - In what proportion of cases are awards based on table amounts and special expenses?
 - In what proportion of cases are awards increased because of undue hardship?
 - In what proportion of cases are awards decreased because of undue hardship?

- Are courts complying with the legislated provision to specify reasons for deviations from the guidelines? What are the most frequently cited reasons?
 - What proportion of cases involve application of undue hardship re: high level of debts reasonably incurred prior to marital breakdown; high level of expenses related to access; legal duty under court order; and/or, child support from other marriage/situation? How is reasonably incurred being defined? Is there consistency on a national basis?
 - In cases of shared custody, how is forty per cent being defined? Is there consistency on a national basis?
 - What levels of compliance / non-compliance are there with regard to obligations to provide income information?
 - What has been the volume of variations of existing orders in line with the guidelines? Was the system able to handle the volume? Were estimated targets accurate/appropriate? In what proportion of variations were support payments increased/decreased? Are there differences across the country?
 - Has federal financial assistance assisted the jurisdictions to implement the federal support guidelines?
 - What proportion of funding was used for undertaking feasibility studies, pilot projects, ADR projects, project evaluations, community action projects and staffing actions? What were the targets for each of these areas? Were these targets appropriate and realistic?
 - Has the Initiative resulted in information sharing across jurisdictions regarding the relative effectiveness of different models or practices with regard to implementation of parallel models, results of funded projects, status of developing projects about innovative ADR approaches and community communication projects?
 - Have the guidelines helped parents to resolve child support issues without going to court?
6. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the enforcement of child support orders? Have federal support enforcement activities been improved? What has been the result of federal assistance in improving the national system of support enforcement?
- Has there been a change in the default rate since the implementation of the Child Support Initiative? Can these changes be attributed to the Initiative?
 - In what proportion of cases is regular payment being made by non-custodial parents? What changes have there been over time? Are any observed changes related to the Child Support Initiative?
 - What changes have there been in the volume of tracing, garnishment and license denial activities by the Federal government? Have these activities enhanced the levels of support enforcement across Canada?
 - Are there case backlogs (Federal and Provincial/Territorial)? Have there been any changes since the implementation of the Child Support Initiative? Are any observed changes related to the Initiative?
 - Has federal financial assistance improved the interjurisdictional communications capacities? What impacts have any changes in capacity had for the enforcement of support orders?

- What proportion of funds were used for systems enhancements and innovations and what proportion for supporting services? Are these results in line with targets? Were the targets appropriate and realistic?
 - Has the Initiative resulted in information sharing across jurisdictions regarding the relative effectiveness of different enforcement models or practices?
7. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in communicating legislative and programming changes to the public, various stakeholders and professionals? Have public, professionals', and stakeholder levels of awareness and understanding of the new guidelines been enhanced? What has been the influence of the activities of the Initiative been in terms of the general public's attitudes regarding guidelines and support enforcement issues?
- What benefits have Communications, PLEI and Training activities had for clients/target groups? Who is the intended primary client or target group? Is there a direct or indirect relationship with the primary client (or target group), or is there an intermediary group? Have primary (and, if appropriate, intermediary) groups' needs been identified? Have target markets been identified? Have specific needs been assessed for target markets? What goods have been delivered or services produced?
 - What feedback has been obtained from clients regarding Communications, PLEI and training activities? Have primary (and, if appropriate, intermediary) groups been involved in the program design and development of goods delivered or services provided? What feedback has been obtained from intermediary groups, client groups, end-users? Has feedback been incorporated into program design and/or delivery mechanisms?
 - To what extent have target groups been provided with Communications, PLEI and training? What is the take-up rate for Communications, PLEI and training materials? Are there gaps between targeted rates and actual take-up rates?
 - To what extent has the program provided timely, consistent and accurate Communications, PLEI and training to target groups? Do levels of service meet standards set with regard to timeliness, consistency and accuracy of Communications, PLEI and training?
 - What difference have the Communications, PLEI and training activities made? Have there been changes in the attitudes of targeted groups? How do clients (and, if appropriate, intermediary groups) rate the effectiveness of Communications, PLEI and training activities and materials?
 - To what extent do PLEI and Communications activities support the achievement of Initiative objectives? What measures and level of resources are used to identify client groups? What measures and level of resources are used and to identify and assess client needs? What measures and level of resources are used to track the distribution of PLEI materials and services?
 - Are there corrective or feedback mechanisms in place to fine-tune PLEI activities? What measures are used to assess the ongoing appropriateness and relevance of PLEI materials and services?

8. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative implemented in an integrated, coordinated and holistic fashion?
 - What coordination mechanisms exist to ensure Initiative activities under the policy development, implementation and communications/PLEI components complement one another as well as other Departmental and jurisdictional program activities? Have these mechanisms been effective?

3.1.3 Issues of Alternatives/Cost Effectiveness

Issues of alternatives/cost effectiveness are focused on whether or not a program, initiative or set of activities represent the best alternative. In particular, the focus of the following evaluation issues is on the extent to which the Child Support Initiative involves the most appropriate, efficient and cost effective method to meet objectives. Five broad issues have been identified, including:

9. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative managed successfully in terms of the overall coordination of federal government and partners' activities?
 - Was this the most appropriate, efficient and cost-effective way to meet the objectives of the Initiative?
10. To what extent did the activities of the Child Support Team, other federal departments, the jurisdictions and other partners complement and supplement one another?
11. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken to address child support and enforcement issues?
 - Was there a net cost-benefit that can be attributed to the coordinated, intergovernmental approach?
12. Were appropriate systems established to coordinate, monitor and evaluate Departmental activities under the Child Support Initiative?
 - Are activities carried out with regard for efficiency? What measures are used to track the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery mechanisms?
13. What lessons have been learned as a result of the Child Support Initiative?

- What lessons can the Department learn from the team model used to implement the Initiative?
- What lessons are transferable to other initiatives or ongoing programs?

3.2 Preliminary Indicators

At this stage, indicators to address the identified evaluation issues are still being developed and will be further fleshed out during the course of evaluation activities. This section outlines some preliminary indicators.

3.2.1 Indicators to Address Issues of Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives and mandate of the Child Support Initiative relevant? Was the Initiative properly targeted?
 - National statistics relating to divorce, child support, child poverty, annual income, etc.
 - Consistency of initiative activities with objectives and mandate
 - Targets for initiative activities
 - Degree to which targets met
2. Given the shared jurisdiction for administration of justice relating to marital breakdown and support enforcement, what role does the federal government fulfill? Is this role appropriate? What should be the purpose and scope of federal involvement in this area of shared jurisdiction?
 - Range of federal and jurisdictional activities
 - Legislated and customary roles and responsibilities of federal and Provincial/Territorial governments
 - Perceptions of roles
3. Is there a need to continue all of the activities funded under the Child Support Initiative given current priorities of both levels of government? Do some areas require more or less attention?
 - Level of effort and costs (inputs) associated with initiative based activities
 - Outputs from initiative based activities
 - Benefits and drawbacks associated with initiative based activities
 - Cost-benefits of specific initiative based activities
 - Perceptions regarding activities

4. Is there a continuing need for a coordinated intergovernmental initiative to aid in meeting federal objectives vis-à-vis child support and enforcement issues?
- Level of effort and costs associated with co-ordinating initiative activities
 - Benefits and drawbacks of co-ordinating activities
 - Cost-benefits of co-ordinating activities
 - Perceptions of whether or not there is a continuing need

3.2.2 Indicators to Address Issues of Success

5. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the determination of child support? Have fair and consistent standards of child support been established? What impacts have the standards had in terms of levels of conflict in the determination of child support? What impacts have the standards had in terms of the efficiency of legal processes associated with the determination of child support?
- Proportion of support orders compliant with standards established in the Guidelines
 - Consistency of support orders
 - Change in processes for determining levels of child support
 - Increased use of alternatives to court based determination of child support
 - Changes in length of time to obtain support orders
6. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the enforcement of child support orders? Have federal support enforcement activities been improved? What has been the result of federal assistance in improving the national system of support enforcement?
- Decreased rates of default
 - Increased voluntary compliance with support orders
 - Improved tracing and garnishment capabilities
 - Perceptions of tracing and garnishment capabilities
 - License denial scheme has resulted in monies collected
 - Increase in Provincial/Territorial enforcement mechanisms over time
 - Improved interjurisdictional information transfer (particularly for REMOs)
 - Decreased time lag between application and processing (Province to Federal)
7. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in communicating legislative and programming changes to the public, various stakeholders and professionals? Have public, professionals', and stakeholder levels of awareness and understanding of the new

guidelines been enhanced? What has been the influence of the activities of the Initiative been in terms of the general public's attitudes regarding guidelines and support enforcement issues?

- Level of awareness and understanding of Child Support Guidelines
 - Accuracy of information materials/products
 - Timeliness of information
 - Extent of referrals from 1-888 inquiry line
 - Extent to which information needs of target groups met
 - Level of awareness of new FOAEA enhancements
 - Feedback from participants in professional training
8. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative implemented in an integrated, coordinated and holistic fashion?
- Implementation processes
 - Coordination mechanisms
 - Perceptions of implementation processes and coordination mechanisms

3.2.3 Indicators to Address Issues of Alternatives/Cost Effectiveness

9. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative managed successfully in terms of the overall coordination of federal government and partners' activities?
- Level of coordination of federal and partner activities
 - Level of duplication/overlap of activities
 - Impacts of coordination
 - Perceptions of coordination

10. To what extent did the activities of the Child Support Team, other federal departments, the jurisdictions and other partners complement and supplement one another?
 - Level of duplication/complementarity of activities
 - Perceptions of duplication/complementarity of activities

11. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken to address child support and enforcement issues?
 - Examples of strengths and weaknesses
 - Perceptions of strengths and weaknesses

12. Were appropriate systems established to coordinate, monitor and evaluate Departmental activities under the Child Support Initiative?
 - Comprehensiveness of monitoring systems, coordinating mechanisms, etc.
 - Extent of use of monitoring systems and coordination mechanisms for decision-making
 - Perceptions of systems and mechanisms

13. What lessons have been learned as a result of the Child Support Initiative?
 - Examples of lessons learned
 - Perceptions regarding lessons learned

3.3 Data Sources

There are a five classes of data sources which will be used to evaluate the Child Support Initiative: ongoing monitoring information; Departmentally sponsored research projects; public opinion polling; key informant interviews; and, Departmental files.

3.3.1 Ongoing Monitoring Information

Ongoing monitoring information is gleaned from a variety of sources. Some of the systems are currently being developed, while others are already well-established. Some of these systems are identified below.

- **Project Information System for Departmentally Funded Projects**

Information relating to the inputs, outputs and outcomes of Departmental funding for projects (Discretionary Grants Contributions and Public Legal Education and Information)

National Annual Survey of Maintenance Enforcement Programs (default rate statistics, etc.)
National database being put together by Statistics Canada's Centre for Justice Statistics based on data from a survey of Provincial/Territorial Maintenance Enforcement Programs. Data is not currently available, however, the system for data collection is being tested in one jurisdiction and will be available for all jurisdictions in the year 2000.

- **Information/Enquiries Line Tracking Reports**

Ongoing tracking of the volume, nature and results from the 1-800 information/inquiries line.

- **Current Awards database**

Data base which will track the levels of court ordered child support awards at a sample of courts across Canada.

- **National Statistics from the Central Divorce Registry**

Basic information from each divorce granted in Canada is collected and stored in the Central Divorce Registry

3.3.2 Departmental Research Studies

- **Court Monitoring Studies**

These studies will involve the collection of primary data concerning key variables associated with the legislative changes introduced as part of the Child Support Guidelines (e.g., compliance with Guidelines, volume of variations, cases involving undue hardship or special expenses, etc.) from child support orders contained in family court files. Selected Family Court sites across Canada will be requested to participate on an ongoing and consistent basis over the next four years to provide this information.

- **Case Law Review**

The case law review will involve the review of cases reported through legal research services (e.g., Quick Law) in order to collect information on the interpretation and application of various sections of the new Guidelines (e.g., the determination of income, use of special expenses, etc.). The case law review will

provide important contextual information for understanding the data collected from the court monitoring studies.

- **National Study on Support Order Compliance**

This one time research study will involve in-depth interviews with a sample of payors and recipients of child support. The study will involve the collection of detailed information on the payment history on support orders. The primary objective of this study will be to gain a better understanding of the various reasons people comply with (and default on) their support order obligations.

- **Review and Monitoring of External Data Bases**

Over the next four years, data related to family law will be obtained from existing external data bases at Statistics Canada, Revenue Canada and legal research data bases. In addition, ad-hoc academic studies will be reviewed to determine what information can be gleaned from them.

3.3.3 Public Opinion Polling

Public polling provides snap shots of levels of awareness and attitudes at various points in time over the course of the Initiative. A baseline of attitudes has been established with regard to public attitudes toward child support issues. A public survey was undertaken during the month of March, 1997 and the baseline will be tracked to determine what changes occur in public attitudes over the course of the initiative.

3.3.4 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews provide a rich source of qualitative information necessary to provide the context for understanding quantitative information collected from other sources. A wide variety of key informants will be consulted during the course of evaluation activities, including the following groups:

- Key actor interviews with lawyers, judiciary, mediators, etc.
- Participant interviews with divorcing couples regarding their perceptions of the process
- Provincial and federal government policy and program officials
- Interviews with Advisory Committee members
- Stakeholders including women's and men's groups

3.3.5 Departmental Files

A review of departmental files and documents will provide background data and information on the Initiative including its environment. This will provide further context for understanding results from the Initiative and in some cases may identify specific areas where data collection may be needed to complete the evaluation. Some of the Departmental records files to be reviewed include the following:

- Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions and records of decisions
- MOUs with Departmental groups participating in the Initiative
- Financial records including operational plans and budgets
- Minutes of meetings
- Project files including project plans, status reports, participant information, outcome information, etc.
- Administrative records including personnel changes, training, etc.

Exhibit 3.1: Matrix Of Evaluation Issues, Indicators And Data Sources		
Evaluation Issue	Indicators	Data Sources
1. To what extent are the objectives and mandate of the Child Support Initiative relevant? Was the Initiative properly targeted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National statistics relating to divorce, child support, annual income, etc. • Consistency of initiative activities with objectives and mandate • Targets for initiative activities • Degree to which targets met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics Canada • Program Files, Interviews • Ongoing Performance Monitoring
2. Given the shared jurisdiction for administration of justice relating to marital breakdown and support enforcement, what role does the federal government fulfill? Is this role appropriate? What should be the purpose and scope of federal involvement in this area of shared jurisdiction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of federal and jurisdictional activities • Legislated and customary roles and responsibilities of federal and Provincial/Territorial governments • Proportion of jurisdictions adopting support guidelines • Perceptions of roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing performance monitoring • Document review • Interviews
3. Is there a need to continue after 2001 all of the activities funded under the Child Support Initiative given current priorities of both levels of government? Do some areas require more or less attention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of effort and costs (inputs) associated with initiative based activities • Outputs from initiative based activities • Benefits and drawbacks associated with initiative based activities • Cost-benefits of specific initiative based activities • Perceptions regarding activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing performance monitoring • Program files • Project evaluations • Financial systems • Interviews
4. Is there a continuing need for a coordinated intergovernmental initiative to aid in meeting federal objectives vis-à-vis child support and enforcement issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of effort and costs associated with coordinating initiative activities • Benefits and drawbacks of coordinating activities • Cost-benefits of coordinating activities • Perceptions of whether or not there is a continuing need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timekeeping system • Program documents • Financial systems • Interviews

Exhibit 3.1: MATRIX (CONTINUED)		
<p>5. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the determination of child support? Have fair and consistent standards of child support been established? What impacts have the standards had in terms of levels of conflict in the determination of child support? What impacts have the standards had in terms of the efficiency of legal processes associated with the determination of child support?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of support orders compliant with standards established in the Guidelines • Consistency of support orders • Change in processes for determining levels of child support • Increased use of alternatives to court based determination of child support • Changes in length of time to obtain support orders • Perceptions of key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National study on support order compliance • Court monitoring studies • Case law review • Ongoing monitoring interviews • Tracking of external databases (Stats Can)
<p>6. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in improving the enforcement of support orders? Have federal support enforcement activities been improved? What has been the result of federal assistance in improving the national system of support enforcement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased rates of default • Volume of notices under s. 67 of FOAEA • Increased voluntary compliance with support orders • Improved tracing and garnishment capabilities • Perceptions of tracing and garnishment capabilities • Improved interjurisdictional information transfer • Decreased time lag between application and processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of Maintenance Enforcement Programs • National study on debtor tracing • Interviews • Ongoing monitoring
<p>7. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative successful in communicating legislative and programming changes to the public, various stakeholders and professionals? Have public, professionals', and stakeholder levels of awareness and understanding of the new guidelines been enhanced? What has been the influence of the activities of the Initiative been in terms of the general public's attitudes regarding guidelines and support enforcement issues?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of awareness and understanding of Child Support Guidelines • Accuracy of information materials/products • Timeliness of information • Extent of referrals from 1-888 inquiry line • Extent to which information needs of target groups met • Level of awareness of FOAEA enhancements • Feedback from participants in professional training sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public opinion polling • Review of program files • Ongoing monitoring • Interviews /surveys • Post-workshop evaluations
<p>8. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative implemented in an integrated, coordinated and holistic fashion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation processes • Coordination mechanisms • Perceptions of implementation processes and coordination mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Ongoing monitoring • Interviews
<p>9. To what extent was the Child Support Initiative managed successfully in terms of the overall coordination of federal government and partners' activities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of coordination of federal and partner activities • Level of duplication/overlap of activities • Impacts of coordination • Perceptions of coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Interviews

Exhibit 3.1: MATRIX (CONTINUED)		
10. To what extent did the activities of the Child Support Team, other federal departments, the jurisdictions and other partners complement and supplement one another?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of duplication / complementarity of activities • Perceptions - duplication/complementarity of activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Interviews
11. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken to address child support and enforcement issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of strengths and weaknesses • Perceptions of strengths and weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Interviews
12. Were appropriate systems established to coordinate, monitor and evaluate Departmental activities under the Child Support Initiative?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensiveness of monitoring systems, coordinating mechanisms, etc. • Extent of use of monitoring systems and coordination mechanisms for decision-making • Perceptions of systems and mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Ongoing monitoring systems • Interviews
13. What lessons have been learned as a result of the Child Support Initiative?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of lessons learned • Perceptions regarding lessons learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File review • Interviews

4.0 RECOMMENDED EVALUATION APPROACH AND WORKPLAN

The Child Support Initiative is complex, involving a number of different components. It is therefore recommended that the evaluation of the Initiative be completed in stages, using a number of sub-studies to address issues relevant to each of the specific components identified in this report. Exhibit 4.1 graphically portrays the proposed evaluation plan and includes proposed dates for deliverables.

As a starting point, the Evaluation Section will work with Child Support Team Coordinators and officers to identify concrete performance indicators and to devise the means for collecting relevant performance information relating to the Initiative. The collection of this type of information serves two purposes: first, it provides management with information on an ongoing basis which can be used to finetune activities or redirect efforts to address issues that may not have been previously anticipated; second, it provides evaluators with information from a variety of points in time to better enable assessments of the degree to which anticipated impacts can be attained and thus whether overall objectives can be achieved.

4.1 Communications Substudy

As noted, it is recommended that the evaluation efforts associated with this Initiative include a number of evaluation substudies. The rationale is that rather than finding out how we have done at the end of the initiative, the Department can better use evaluative information on an ongoing basis to redirect efforts if needed. In this light, the first substudy, to be undertaken during fiscal year 1997-98, will relate to the planned public communications activities including information provision. This substudy will provide an initial (independent) assessment of the effectiveness of the communications activities in reaching target audiences and provide a baseline for assessing shifts in public awareness / attitudes over time. As part of this substudy, we will address in a preliminary manner the effectiveness of the 1-800 hotline.

4.2 Formative or Mid-Term Evaluation

A formative or mid-term evaluation is intended to provide lessons learned to date from the Initiative. It is recommended that the focus of the mid-term evaluation be on process and management issues with an emphasis on providing recommendations (if necessary) to finetune activities during the remainder of the Initiative. It is anticipated that the mid-term will provide some preliminary information on the Department's ability to achieve stated program objectives. However, it must be emphasized that these results are tentative in nature given the timing of the mid-term evaluation (i.e., during fiscal year 1998-99).

Exhibit 4.1: Evaluation Plan For The Child Support Initiative				
Evaluation Activity	FY 97-98	FY 98-99	FY 99-2000	FY 2000-01
Assistance Developing Performance Measures	X			
Communications Substudy	X			
Formative (Mid-term) Evaluation		X		
PLEI Substudy		X		
Systems Development Substudy		X	X	
Policy Development and Implementation Substudy			X	
Follow-up Communications Substudy				X
Summative Evaluation				X

4.3 PLEI Substudy

It is also recommended that a PLEI evaluation substudy focusing primarily on the training and education elements be undertaken in fiscal year 1998-99 in order to obtain a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of the PLEI activities undertaken during the first two years of the initiative. Again the focus will be on what lessons have been learned that could be used to improve activities over the remainder of the initiative.

4.4 Systems Development Substudy

As part of this initiative, there are plans to improve the federal systems for tracing (debtors) as well as to improve the capacity for interjurisdictional electronic communications. It is therefore recommended that an evaluation substudy be undertaken to examine the systems development process and assess the degree to which the systems have enhanced the implementation process. It is planned that this substudy be undertaken at the end of fiscal year 1998-99.

4.5 Policy Development and Implementation Substudy

In order to address issues revolving around the overall coordination of the initiative, national leadership, and strategic decision-making as well as issues revolving around the specific team model adopted as the accountability framework for the Child Support Team, it is planned that a policy development and implementation substudy be undertaken during fiscal year 1999-2000. As part of the focus of this evaluation substudy, we will follow-up on the findings and management response from the evaluation of the support enforcement component of the Child Development Initiative.

4.6 Second Communications Substudy

During fiscal year 2000-01, it is anticipated that a second communications substudy will be undertaken. This substudy will follow-up on the earlier substudy (see Section 4.1) tracking changes with the aim of assessing the impacts of communications activities on levels of public, professional and stakeholders' levels of awareness and attitudes.

4.7 Summative Evaluation

The final, summative stage of evaluation activities will involve a roll-up of all of the evaluation substudies undertaken during the course of the initiative as well as supplementary data collection plus the results of ongoing monitoring activities, research reports and stakeholder views in order to provide an overall independent assessment of the degree of success of the Initiative. The summative evaluation will be completed during fiscal year 2000-01.²³

²³ The Treasury Board Secretariat has requested that the summative evaluation be completed by February, 2001.