



**The police experience inefficiencies when interacting with prosecution, defense and the courts.
Most sources of inefficiency are amenable to mutually developed solutions.**

BACKGROUND

In 2013, all Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Ministers responsible for Justice and Public Safety approved the “Shared Forward Agenda,” a strategy for the future of policing in Canada. This strategy is built upon three pillars, one of which focuses on efficiencies within the larger criminal justice system. Police believe their current interactions with the criminal justice system (i.e., the courts, prosecutions) result in inefficiencies in the processing of criminal offences.

A number of recent committee reports (Kramp, 2014) and academic panels (Goudge, 2014) have started to examine the economics of policing with a particular focus on how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policing in Canada. The objective of the present study was to contribute to an understanding of the interactions between the police and the larger justice system, to record perceptions of the justice system, and to identify those initiatives that have been taken in an attempt to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the police.

METHOD

A consultation guide was developed by Public Safety Canada which consisted of eight questions. The sample (N=40) was a purposive sample. The respondents were selected for their position and their geographic representation and included police officers at the senior management level, mid-management, and line levels who are involved in policing in a variety of settings from large urban centres to remote, fly-in communities; civilian managers in police services; provincial and federal Crown; court administrators; persons in research and policy positions in police

services and in the courts; and senior provincial/territorial justice officials.

In addition to conducting interviews, the project team reviewed a number of recent reports and investigations into the delivery of policing services that have been conducted as part of the larger discussion of the economics of policing. An attempt was also made to document initiatives that had been taken, both successful and unsuccessful, to improve the efficiency of the police. In addition, one focus group was held with police experts at a national conference.

FINDINGS

The respondents identified a number of areas in the interaction between police and prosecution, defense or the courts that affected the efficiency of the police. The most-frequently mentioned were: 1) unique challenges in policing in northern and remote communities; 2) disclosure; 3) scheduling officers for court; 4) the lack of collaborative relationships between police and Crown; 5) the absence of standardized practices; 6) the activities of defence counsel; 7) issues surrounding court facilities; and 8) the use of technology. Other issues mentioned included: justices of the peace; the transport of prisoners; the downloading of costs; and structural problems in police organizations.

A table on the next page reveals that the majority of the issues are the result of external or internal policy and/or a lack of training and supervision. These areas would be most amenable to reform and to the implementation of standardized practice.

Respondents to the study identified a number of initiatives taken in jurisdictions across the country intended to decrease police inefficiencies. Some have been replicated; others are “one-offs,” even within the

same jurisdiction. A number of the initiatives are specific to a municipality; others are examples of jurisdiction-wide efforts to increase efficiency. In some cases critical events and/or the failure of the justice system were the catalysts for reform and innovation. Few of the initiatives have been subjected to independent evaluation or to cost-benefit analysis which makes it difficult to determine their effectiveness in reducing inefficiencies.

The respondents in this study and the numerous reports that have been produced on various facets of the economics of policing have documented the interconnectedness of the police and the criminal justice system. Efforts to address police inefficiencies cannot be taken in isolation from an examination of the activities of Crown, defence, and the judiciary.

SOURCE

Griffiths, Curt T., Murphy, Joshua J., and Tatz, Mark. (2015). *Improving Police Efficiency: Challenges and Opportunities*. 2015-R021. Ottawa, Ontario: Public Safety Canada.

OTHER SOURCES

Kramp, D. (Chair). Parliament of Canada. 2014. *Economics of Policing: Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security*. Ottawa: Parliament of Canada.

Goudge, S. Hon. (Chair). 2014. *Policing Canada in the 21st Century: New Policing for New Challenges*. Ottawa: Council of Canadian Academies.

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Police Inefficiencies and Their Source, as Identified by Study Respondents

Inefficiency	External / Internal Policy / Procedure	Legislation	Training / Supervision	Case Law / Charter
Electronic court briefs	X			
Incomplete briefs			X	
Officer scheduling	X			
Bail hearings	X			
Show cause reports	X		X	
Video editing			X	
Standardization of court brief	X			
Disclosure				X
Tele-warrants		X		
Scheduling of police officers for court	X			
Electronic disclosure	X	X		
Court security	X	X		
Case management	X			X
Lengthy trials		X		X
Witness management	X			X
Custody management	X			
Video remands	X			
Bail remands	X			
Judicial pre-trials	X			
Adoption of technology	X			
Bail hearings late in the day	X			
Preliminary hearings				X
Court time	X			
Search warrants				X
Release from locations other than court	X			
PPSC downloading costs	X			
MHA assessments	X			
Video statements	X			X

a copy of the full research report, or to be placed on our distribution list, please contact:

Research Division, Public Safety Canada
340 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P8
PS.CSCCBResearch-RechercheSSCRC.SP@canada.ca

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