



Management Response and Action Plan
Evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy

Department of Justice Canada

Management Response and Action Plan

Project Title: Evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS)

Responsibility Centre: Policy Sector (Aboriginal Justice Directorate (AJD))

Conclusions	Recommendations	Management Response	Action Plan	Responsible Manager (Title)	Planned Completion Date
<p>The evaluation found a number of factors in Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS)-supported communities that limit access to effective alternative programming. One is that the community-based justice programs rely heavily on referrals from police and Crown to enable offenders to take advantage of their programs, and referrals vary greatly from community to community. In some communities, there is a strong, trust-based relationship between the mainstream justice system (MJS) and the community-based justice programs. In others, those relationships do not yet exist because of the predisposition of MJS officials, their lack of awareness of the community-based justice programs or concerns over their quality.</p>	<p>The AJD work with the MJS to increase awareness of and confidence in the AJS to ensure referrals are being made when appropriate.</p>	<p>Agreed. The AJD acknowledges that a collaborative relationship that results in referrals from MJS officials (e.g. Police and Crown) is the cornerstone of success of the AJS. However, referrals have frequently been cited as an ongoing challenge resulting from lack of awareness or confidence in community-based justice programs. Police and Crown confidence in community-based justice programs is largely based on the knowledge and experience of the Community Justice Worker (CJW) responsible for delivering the community-based justice program. Consecutive short-term mandate and long-standing program integrity issues have resulted in high turnover in CJWs in AJS programs, which has led to instability in the program delivery and inconsistent referrals from the MJS.</p> <p>The AJD has already begun working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to help increase referrals to community-based justice programs. It will also pursue opportunities to support awareness building activities focused on developing partnership and building confidence in referral agencies, which is essential to the community-based justice program model.</p>	<p>The AJD Regional Coordinators, together with our provincial and territorial partners, will liaise with MJS officials to increase confidence in the AJS and referrals through targeted awareness campaigns.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD, together with our provincial and territorial partners, will work with the RCMP to develop and implement protocol agreements to increase pre-charge diversions across the country that build on the lessons learned from two pilots, which are currently underway.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD will develop and update its communication documents, in particular social media tools, to further educate MJS officials about the work of AJS programs from prevention to reintegration.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD will update the AJS' statistical reporting tool to ensure that data collected from funding recipients is relevant and future evaluations are based on the best available evidence.</p>	<p>Karolyn Lui (Director, AJD)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Spring 2017 (Pilot Reports)</p> <p>Spring 2018 (Draft protocol developed)</p> <p>Spring 2019 (Draft protocol implemented)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Updated communication products completed by summer 2017; new communication products developed by March 2019</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Statistical reporting tool finalized and implemented in Year 1 (2017-2018) by the end of March 2018</p>

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<p>The capacity of some community-based justice programs is also impacting the level of access to alternative programming. This relates to both human resources and training. AJS funding enables communities to hire minimal staff to operate programs along with volunteers or other staff paid through other sources. CJWs are reportedly underpaid compared to mainstream counterparts, and have relied in many cases on annual renewals of the AJS for continued employment. Staff turnover is considered high for these reasons.</p> <p>AJD staff have encountered similar issues due to an extended period of short-term renewals of the program and staff and operating budget cutbacks. The regional presence of the program is viewed by AJD, provincial and territorial partners and CJWs as a key value. In recent years, reduced staff complements and travel restrictions have meant that much of the on-site work has not taken place. At national headquarters, considerable time and energy has been expended preparing for frequent program renewals instead of further developing the initiative, as well as a much needed cross-departmental collaboration to recognize and act on the multidimensional nature of Indigenous overrepresentation.</p>	<p>The AJD seek stability of funding for the AJS to address program integrity issues in community-based justice programs and to enable effective collaboration within the Department and with the MJS</p>	<p>Agreed. The AJD will pursue opportunities to address program integrity issues as well as the need for new community-based justice programs.</p> <p>The AJD will continue to foster and improve horizontal partnerships within the Department, for example, with the Aboriginal Courtwork Program (ACW). Joint opportunities for collaboration and research with provinces and territories and other government departments (i.e. Public Safety) will continue to be identified.</p>	<p>The AJD will implement multi-year funding agreements where appropriate to provide recipients with the stability and predictability they need.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD will engage with its provincial/territorial colleagues and recipients to develop an inventory of skills and competencies for CJWs that will address capacity needs identified as priorities within AJS programs.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD will identify areas for collaboration and implement memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with federal partners/funding programs.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD will support joint project funding opportunities, such as a new AJS/ACW Capacity-Building call for proposals, where feasible.</p>	<p>Karolyn Lui (Director, AJD)</p>	<p>Starting in year 1 (2017-2018)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Spring 2017 (Engage to develop inventory on skills and competencies for CJWs)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>March 2018 (Prioritize and develop an implementation plan)</p> <p>March 2019 (Begin implementation of plan)</p> <p>Ongoing/pilot Justice program MOU for March 2018</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Pilot joint AJS/ACW call for proposal in Year 2 (2018-2019) by March 2019</p>

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<p>The AJS has attempted to address capacity issues through its Capacity-Building Fund. However, the impact has been limited in terms of resources, the ability of Regional Coordinators to provide support and mentoring to build capacity at the community level, and the one-time contributions or grants from the Capacity-building Fund that are accessible to a small number of communities each year.</p> <p>There is a perceived value among CJWs and FPT justice officials in bringing CJWs together for training and information exchange, especially to enable less developed programs to learn from more experienced ones. This can be done through regional training events, webinars or online forum that increase access to training.</p>	<p>To enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities, the AJD focus Capacity-Building Fund resources on supporting activities that promote the development of a community of practice and have the greatest reach/impact on community-based justice programs.</p>	<p>Agreed. The AJD is committed to taking a more strategic approach to utilizing its capacity-building funding to maximize its funding and reach the maximum number of recipients. Regional training opportunities, for example, provide jurisdictions with opportunities to bring community-based justice programs and other justice stakeholders together and focus on provincial/territorial priorities or emerging justice issues.</p>	<p>The AJD will engage recipients and provincial and territorial partners to explore new opportunities for CJWs to share success stories, best practices, knowledge exchange and build and develop/support a community of practice for CJW.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The AJD Capacity-Building Fund will support proposals for training, knowledge exchange and learning, in particular e-learning and online training modules.</p>	<p>Karolyn Lui (Director, AJD)</p>	<p>Engage recipients, provincial/territorial funders and develop inventory of potential activities in Year 1 (2017-2018); prioritize and develop implementation plan in Year 2 (2018-2019); implementation beginning in Year 3 (2019-2020) March 2021</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Ongoing; beginning March 2017</p>