

**Evaluation of the
Aboriginal Community
Corrections Initiative**

Volume I

Final Report

January 31, 2001

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TECHNICAL APPENDIX – Volume II

1. NPB's ACCI Status Report [January 2001]
2. Progress Report on Recommendations from the Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [December 2000]
3. Cost-Benefit Analysis of Healing Models in Two First Nation Communities [December 2000]
4. Final Evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy [October 2000]
5. ACCI Synopsis of Funded Projects: April 1996 to July 2000
6. Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level [June 2000]
7. Evaluation of the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series [March 2000]
8. Evaluation of the National Parole Board's Elder Assisted Hearing Approach [March 2000]
9. Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [February 1999]

Executive Summary

Summary Statements

Did the ACCI make sense?

This initiative plays an important role in the overall corrections approach. In particular, it responds to the challenging needs of the Aboriginal population. The ACCI objectives are consistent with current government priorities and objectives and the particular role played by the ACCI is well considered within the Department of the Solicitor General's mandate. Further, the way in which the ACCI undertook to meet formal objectives provided an appropriate response to the needs identified.

We found that the achievement of ACCI objectives as stated was fully plausible given the parameters of the initiative, and that the manner in which the initiative was established and operated was reasonable. With this said however, there remain significant questions about the level of funding and about delivery and coordination issues.

What happened as a result of the ACCI?

In a complex environment, it can be difficult to achieve results in terms of concrete outcomes for the Aboriginal peoples involved with Canada's justice system. The ACPU has met the challenge by providing leadership in coordinating the effort, by strengthening key relationships and encouraging new ones. Notably, as part of the ACCI, the NPB has implemented new and more appropriate approaches such as the Elder Assisted Hearing program.

Did the ACCI achieve what was expected?

It is our conclusion that the ACCI did contribute to the development of new knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models, and that the initiative was able to disseminate that new knowledge in Aboriginal communities. It also appears that the ACCI has contributed in a meaningful way to the incorporation of this knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry.

Given alternatives, was the ACCI the most cost-effective way to achieve the objectives?

It is our sense that the ACCI was established in a cost-efficient manner, but that there might not be sufficient staff and financial resources identified to meet the administration and management requirements of the ACCI. In terms of comparative cost-effectiveness, it is difficult to assess at this point, but the available data indicate a favorable financial impact from some of the key components of the ACCI.

Methodology and Limitations

The methodology for the over-all evaluation consists of two inter-related approaches; a review of relevant documents, and interviews with selected federal and regional officials to clarify and expand on the contents of the documentation. We examined the relevant files, independent reports and statistical data identified and provided by the stakeholders to the evaluation. The strength of this final

report however relies totally on the efforts from the individual evaluative efforts that have taken place over the past five years, and each of the specific reports in Volume II - the Technical Appendix - should be consulted to fully appreciate the depth of this final report.

This report provides a roll-up of findings from the evaluative and reporting efforts related to the ACCI and includes the following:

- NPB's ACCI Status Report [January 2001]
- Progress Report on Recommendations from the Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [December 2000]
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The scope and methodology of this evaluation, and the evaluative efforts on which this report is based are not sufficient to determine conclusively the effects of other events. Partly as a result of this, two areas of typical concern for some evaluations are not dealt with directly by this study:

- Attribution (*To what degree can we say that the ACCI and not something else contributed to the achievement of the Initiative's objectives? And*
- Incrementality (*How much of the achievement of the Initiative's objectives can be said to have resulted directly from the ACCI?*).

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, both the strength and weakness of this evaluation lies in the quality and depth of work on which this roll-up report is based. This author accepts no responsibility for the nature of the previous work - either their strengths or shortcomings.

Recommendations

- 1. An objective assessment of the resources needed to continue to fulfill the intent of the ACCI (in particular the results expected for the Aboriginal stakeholders involved) should be undertaken and should include consideration for all of the roles and responsibilities related to the initiative.**
- 2. Funding should be earmarked, and a clear and over-all framework developed for, evaluating the continuing initiative and related components. The framework should include clear and concise performance measures and indicators and describe how that information would be collected. In particular, these efforts should focus on the results achieved in terms of the Aboriginal Stakeholders involved.**

The Initiative and its Environment ¹

Context

The Aboriginal Community Corrections Initiative (ACCI) was approved in April 1996 and is a component of the federal government's overall Strategy for Aboriginal Justice to build a foundation for a justice system that gives Aboriginal people greater responsibility for the administration of justice in their communities and which incorporates Aboriginal cultural values into the justice system. The Department of the Solicitor General (Department) and the National Parole Board (NPB) both received funding to implement elements of the ACCI.

Justice Canada's element of the Government of Canada's Strategy for Aboriginal Justice, commonly referred to as the Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS), was announced by the Minister of Justice in April 1996. It is intended, over its five-year mandate, to go beyond experimentation and is to build enduring cost sharing partnerships between provincial, territorial and federal governments that will lead to the development and sustainability of alternative justice projects.

While Justice Canada focused its resources on the development and implementation of fully operational justice programs in Aboriginal communities, the Department recognized that additional policy work was required both within and outside the federal government's Inherent Right of Self-Government policy. The overall

objective of the ACCI is to test and evaluate models of offender treatment in Aboriginal communities that are taking a holistic and healing approach to community wellness and to support the development of urban corrections strategies for Aboriginal offenders.

The overall objective of the ACCI is to test and evaluate models of offender treatment in Aboriginal communities that are taking a holistic and healing approach to community wellness and to support the development of urban corrections strategies for Aboriginal offenders.

When Justice Canada sought approval for a new AJS, the Department made the commitment to undertake a number of activities to support Justice Canada's Strategy as well as undertake a number of policy-related activities within the Department. Specific to Justice Canada's Strategy, the Department has agreed to:

- Participate in the selection of communities that will be funded by Justice Canada under the Aboriginal Justice Strategy;
- Participate in the development of the Aboriginal Justice Learning Network; and
- Support Justice Canada's activities in Saskatchewan to establish, with the province and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), an Indian-controlled justice system that

¹ The majority of this section is taken verbatim from either Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level [June 2000] or the Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [February 1999], both included in Volume II.

could act as a template for future self-government arrangements in the area of the administration of justice.

The Department also agreed to undertake a number of activities, building upon the results of the 1991-1996 Aboriginal Justice Initiative (AJI), including:

- Providing policy advice to the Solicitor General of Canada (Solicitor General), including the completion of existing projects;
- Participate in the negotiation of self-government agreements; and
- Support the development of community programs that could eventually be considered by the Correctional Service of Canada for support under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*.

Description of the ACCI

The ACCI was developed in response to past experience and information that the conventional justice and corrections systems in Canada had failed to meet the needs of Aboriginal people.

There have been substantial changes in the thinking of many Aboriginal people over the past several years about what role the existing justice and correctional systems should have in their communities, about what an Aboriginal “system” should look like, and about what relationships Aboriginal people should have with governments. In a growing number of cases, Aboriginal communities are no longer seeking structural improvements or changes to the system but are seeking to establish truly “Aboriginal” approaches to correcting unacceptable behavior through the creation of restorative approaches that do not necessarily rely on western corrections infrastructures and are not necessarily compatible with restrictive jurisdictional boundaries.

Community healing approaches are inclusive. They do not differentiate in principle or practice between young and adult offenders, men and women, or those sentenced to provincial/territorial and federal terms. In many instances, the healing processes are the same for offenders, victims and their families.

There are three primary components of the ACCI:

- ***Policy Development and Support,***
- ***Coordination and Portfolio Management and***
- ***Community-based Project Funding.***

As the AJI was coming to a conclusion, it became evident that Aboriginal communities’ movement to healing and wellness posed a challenge for the Department. Communities did not define offender treatment in western corrections terms, yet they were effectively addressing the rehabilitative needs of offenders in these processes, leaving a need to define a role for the Department in community healing processes. That need became the primary purpose for implementing the ACCI.

The ACCI was developed in co-operation with Justice Canada and is considered part of the larger federal Strategy for Aboriginal Justice. Both the ACCI and the AJI were approved together. Further, the holistic nature of community healing opens opportunities for the Department and Justice Canada

to work collaboratively in some communities. For that reason, interdepartmental partnership is a key element of both strategies.

There are three primary components of the ACCI:

1. Policy Development and Support,
2. Coordination and Portfolio Management, and
3. Community-based Project Funding.

Policy Development and Support

The Department's Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit (ACPU) provides multidisciplinary policy advice and support, including analysis and development on Aboriginal corrections matters to the Solicitor General of Canada, Deputy Solicitor General, Ministry of the Solicitor General Agencies, negotiators and others in the federal government. Work includes:

- Responses to ministerial, departmental and agency information requests, briefing notes, correspondence, reports, questions and answers, speeches, etc.;
- Advice and policy support to federal self-government negotiators; and
- Recommendation and advice to the Solicitor General and Deputy Solicitor General.

Advice and recommendations are provided in matters relating to:

- Models of program options (healing and wellness strategies, post-release initiatives, etc.);
- Correctional law, law reform and other corrections initiatives that affect or may be affected by Aboriginal corrections;
- Emerging new and amended Aboriginal corrections policy and related matters;
- Interdepartmental and intergovernmental relations, institutional change, state of self-government negotiations and similar initiatives affecting Aboriginal corrections;
- Concerns and interests of Aboriginal women and, in particular, Aboriginal female offenders;
- Concerns about the integration of Aboriginal corrections concerns and solutions into Ministry policy and programs;
- The role for Aboriginal corrections in other government priorities (crime prevention, youth justice, healing strategy, etc.); and
- Ministry international activities affecting or affected by Aboriginal corrections issues.

The policy development and support component of the ACPU is also responsible for the implementation of the evaluation of the ACCI.

Co-ordination and Portfolio Management

A key responsibility of the ACPU is portfolio management. This is particularly critical in the area of Aboriginal corrections where the Ministry's two corrections agencies, Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and NPB are involved in Aboriginal issues and with Aboriginal communities.

CSC is responsible for administering sentences for adult offenders serving two years or more, and those transferred from provincial/territorial institutions under Exchange of Services Agreements,

within the framework of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA). In addition to providing a range of Aboriginal-specific programs and services to inmates, Inmate Liaison Workers and Elders working within the institutions provide valuable links to Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal-specific provisions of the CCRA include the capacity to negotiate agreements with Aboriginal communities for the care and custody of offenders (section 81) and to allow Aboriginal people to negotiate terms for the return of offenders to their communities (section 84). CSC's Aboriginal Advisory Committee also provides important links between the Service and Aboriginal communities.

NPB, as part of the criminal justice system, makes independent, quality conditional release and pardon decisions and clemency recommendations. The CCRA empowers the NPB to make conditional release decisions for federal offenders and offenders in provinces and territories without their own parole boards. NPB personnel of Aboriginal ancestry have increased over the recent past. As of February 18, 1998 there were 36 full-time Board members, and 49 temporary Board members. Of these, 10 are self-identified as being of Aboriginal ancestry (5 permanent and 5 temporary). As part of the ACCI, the NPB is testing and evaluating innovative models of parole decision-making for Aboriginal offenders, including Elder-assisted hearings and releasing circles.

Community-Based Project Funding Agreements

Three types of community-based projects were originally established under the ACCI. They were:

- *Restorative Approach in First Nations, Inuit and Northern Communities.* The Department is committed to negotiating agreements with Aboriginal communities to test and evaluate innovative approaches to community corrections and to enable Aboriginal Peoples and communities to assume greater responsibility for offenders after sentencing.
- *Restorative Approach In Urban Communities.* The Department is committed to negotiating with Aboriginal organizations in urban areas to enable Aboriginal communities to assume greater responsibility for offenders after sentencing. Agreements will be implemented to test restorative approaches to offender treatment that could emulate, to the extent possible, the principles of healing developed in certain First Nations communities, such as the Hollow Water First Nation. Healing may also be approached from a particular point of reference based on the urban realities.
- *Community Corrections In Saskatchewan.* The ACCI will build upon the findings of a tripartite strategic development planning project with the FSIN that will determine the most appropriate way to support the development of model(s) for testing and evaluation.

Resources

Federal contribution funding for community corrections initiatives under the ACCI is limited to 50 percent of the overall budget over a maximum term of five years. Provincial/territorial governments and/or Aboriginal governments or organizations must provide the balance of the funding. The ACCI community-based funding is available only to those provinces/territories that agree to be equal participants financially with the federal government or are in agreement that a contribution from Aboriginal sources would replace provincial/territorial contributions.

In addition to any financial contribution from Aboriginal governments or organizations, communities are expected to demonstrate support for the project through in-kind or voluntary services that demonstrate a wide-range of community support for the project.

The Department was allocated three hundred and twenty-five (\$325,000) dollars in each of the five years of the ACCI. These funds were weighted to increase the amount available to community-based initiatives over the five years while decreasing funding for operating and other expenses. In addition to those funds, the ACCI used additional Departmental funds subject to their availability.

| Summary of Operating and Contribution Expenditures for the ACCI | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Operating | | | | |
| Year | Approved O&M | Additional Departmental Allocation | Expenditures | % To Aboriginal People |
| 1996-1997 | \$ 225,000.00 | \$ 64,052.00 | \$ 289,052.00 | 31 % |
| 1997-1998 | \$ 150,000.00 | \$ 23,567.00 | \$ 173,567.00 | 42 % |
| 1998-1999 | \$ 100,000.00 | \$ 32,200.00 | \$ 128,930.00 | 20 % |
| 1999-2000 | \$ 80,200.00 | \$ 7,500.00 | \$ 87,616.00 | 45 % |
| 2000-2001 | \$ 80,200.00 | \$ 189,000.00 | \$ 270,000.00 ⁽¹⁾ | 20 % |
| Contributions | | | | |
| Year | Contributions Allocated | Departmental Allocation | Contributions Expenditures | % To Aboriginal Communities |
| 1996-1997 | \$ 100,000.00 | Nil | \$ 91,000.00 | 100 % |
| 1997-1998 | \$ 175,000.00 | Nil | \$ 121,806.00 | 100 % |
| 1998-1999 | \$ 225,000.00 | \$ 62,800.00 | \$ 287,800.00 | 100 % |
| 1999-2000 | \$ 225,000.00 | Nil | \$ 221,820.00 | 100 % |
| 2000-2001 | \$ 225,000.00 | \$ 136,000.00 | \$ 361,000.00 ⁽²⁾ | 100 % |
| Notes: | | | | |
| ⁽¹⁾ Projected to March 31, 2001. | | | | |
| ⁽²⁾ Funding in 2000-2001 was enhanced with resources coming from the Effective Corrections Initiative. | | | | |

In the first four years of operation, the ACCI acquired a total of \$127,319 from the Department to support the ACCI operational activities. These additional funds have enabled the ACPU to extend the ACCI term position, undertake additional information development activities and participate in self-government negotiations.

Due to the slower than expected selection of communities for the ACCI contribution funding, the Department lapsed approximately \$62,000 in the first two years of the ACCI. A Departmental contribution of \$62,800 in 1998-99 enabled the ACPU to meet its overall target for contribution funding to the end of that fiscal year.

The Federal Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy requires departments to target two percent of its operating budget for Aboriginal businesses. The ACPU has continued to surpass that target by using Aboriginal businesses to the greatest extent possible at the current time. Should government policy change with respect to government travel, and allow the ACPU to utilize the services of an Aboriginal travel agency, the overall allocation to Aboriginal businesses would increase dramatically.

National Parole Board (NPB)

Seventy-Five Thousand dollars was approved for use by the NPB in each of the five years of the ACCI. Funding is to be used to explore innovative approaches to parole decision-making, including the expansion of Elder-assisted parole hearings. The following is a summary of NPB allocations and spending.

| ACCI - Summary of NPB Resource Allocation and Spending (\$ 000) | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| | 1996/97 | 1997/98 | 1998/99 | 1999/2000 | 2000/01 |
| Allocation | 75.0 | 116.6 | 123.2 | 168.0 | 143.0 |
| Actual Expenditure | 33.4 | 68.4 | 30.2 | 102.0 | 143.0 ⁽¹⁾ |
| Carry-Forward | 41.6 | 48.2 | 93.0 | 68.0 | Nil |
| Note: ⁽¹⁾ Includes actual expenditures to December 31, 2000 and planned expenditures to March 31, 2001. | | | | | |

The NPB continues its efforts to identify projects for funding. Delays have been encountered with implementation and, as a result, expenditures have at times fallen short of the NPB's allocation. For example, in 1997-98, the NPB recommended that unused resources be carried-over for use in subsequent fiscal years.

The Role of the Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit (ACPU)

The ACPU is responsible for the ACCI, self-government negotiations and other policy-related activities respecting corrections and Aboriginal people. The Unit is headed by the Chief, Aboriginal Corrections, who reports to the Director, Corrections Research and Development, and through him to the Director General, Corrections Directorate, and the Assistant Deputy Solicitor General, Corrections and Aboriginal Policing.

The ACPU is located within the Department. The Department provides advice and support to the Solicitor General with respect to his responsibility for the provision of direction to the Ministry's Agencies; his accountability to Parliament for the Agencies; for his national leadership role in the federal activities in policing, security, corrections and conditional release.

In addition to the Chief, Aboriginal Corrections, the ACPU has one policy analyst whose responsibility includes policy advice, consultations, co-ordination, support to self-government negotiations, project development and evaluation and one junior term analyst to support this work. Because of fiscal pressures, this junior position was not staffed during the latter part of the Initiative. The Unit also includes one support staff.

The Structure and Logic of the Initiative

Goals and Objectives of the ACCI

The stated objectives of the ACCI are as follows:

- To develop knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models,
- To disseminate the knowledge in Aboriginal communities, and
- To incorporate this knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard to correctional programs.

The enhanced framework and logic that follows includes the formal objectives stated above (shown in *italics* below) plus the refinements that the operational approach of the ACCI has brought by broadening the description of the aims of the ACCI:

Goals:

- To reduce the reliance on the use of incarceration for Aboriginal offenders;
- To reduce recidivism of Aboriginal offenders;
- To accommodate the need for and rights of Aboriginal people to assume greater control over community corrections;
- To increase the credibility of decisions and outcomes arising out of corrections policies and processes involving and affecting Aboriginal people and communities;
- To focus on corrections objectives which resonate with the values and culture of Aboriginal people;
- To promote external coordination and liaison in Aboriginal corrections matters;
- To reduce the costs of corrections.

Objectives:

- *To develop knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models;*
- *To incorporate this knowledge into the policies' and practices of the Ministry, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard to all phases of correctional activities;*
- To support innovative community corrections project development and evaluation;
- *To disseminate the knowledge gained from project evaluations and other sources to Aboriginal communities and organizations;*
- To test new and more effective models of parole decision-making;
- To ensure accountability mechanisms in community corrections projects.

| Summary Logic Model for the ACCI | | |
|---|---|--|
| Description of the ACCI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ACCI was approved in April 1996 and is a component of the federal government’s overall Strategy for Aboriginal Justice to build a foundation for a justice system that gives Aboriginal people greater responsibility for the administration of justice in their communities and which incorporates Aboriginal cultural values into the justice system. The Department and the NPB both received funding to implement elements of the ACCI. | |
| The ACCI Purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To test and evaluate models of offender treatment in Aboriginal communities that are taking a holistic and healing approach to community wellness and to support the development of urban corrections strategies for Aboriginal offenders. ▪ To accommodate the need for and rights of Aboriginal people to assume greater control over community corrections; and ▪ To focus on corrections objectives which resonate with the values and culture of Aboriginal people by testing new and more effective models of parole decision-making. | |
| The ACCI Components | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Community-Based Project Funding</u> to test and evaluate innovative community corrections approaches. ▪ <u>Coordination and Portfolio Management</u> of the ACCI initiatives delivered through CSC and NPB (for example; NPB's Elder Assisted Hearing Approach and the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Policy Development and Support</u> through multi-disciplinary policy advice and support. |
| The ACCI Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To develop knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models. ▪ To disseminate the knowledge in Aboriginal communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To incorporate the knowledge gained into the policies and practices of the Ministry, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard to correctional programs. |
| The ACCI Key Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support innovative community corrections project development and evaluation. ▪ <i>Disseminate knowledge gained from project evaluations and other sources to Aboriginal communities and organizations.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote external coordination and liaison in Aboriginal corrections matters. |

| Summary Logic Model for the ACCI | | |
|--|---|---|
| Outputs / Potential Immediate Impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Increased knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models;</i> ▪ <i>Accountability mechanisms for community corrections projects.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Policies and practices of the Ministry that incorporate the knowledge gained, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard correctional programs.</i> |
| Potential Ultimate Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved outcomes resulting from corrections policies and processes that involve and affect Aboriginal people and communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced reliance on the use of incarceration for Aboriginal offenders; - Reduced recidivism of Aboriginal offenders. | |
| Potential Downstream Effects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased credibility of decisions arising out of corrections policies and processes involving and affecting Aboriginal people and communities; ▪ Reduced cost of corrections. | |

Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

Purpose

Funding for the ACCI in July 1996 included a requirement for an evaluation of the activities, impact and effectiveness of the ACCI within five years. This proposal is in response to the need for such an evaluation. The evaluation will also be particularly useful in making decisions about future directions and funding options for the initiative.

The focus of the evaluation is on the ACCI; the focus is not on other federal or provincial government departments or Aboriginal organizations. An important consideration with regard to other departments and organizations however, is the extent to which the Department has been effective in implementing coordinating mechanisms, promoting collaboration and in collecting the information it needs to report back to Cabinet.

Objectives and Scope

Current Treasury Board guidance states that evaluation is expected to deliver timely, relevant and credible information on the continued relevance of government policies and programs; on the impacts they are producing; and on opportunities for using alternative and more cost-effective policy instruments or program delivery mechanisms to achieve objectives. Evaluation is expected to produce timely and pertinent findings that managers and other stakeholders can use with confidence. This evaluation of the ACCI provides stakeholders with appropriate information to enable judgments relative to design, delivery, and performance issues.

Design issues are addressed in the evaluation by assessing whether the ACCI has met its objectives:

- To develop knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models,

- To disseminate the knowledge in Aboriginal communities, and
- To incorporate this knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard to correctional programs.

Program delivery information indicates whether the outputs expected have been delivered in a cost-effective manner, and in a manner consistent with the intent of the Treasury Board Decision. In terms of performance, the evaluation provides information regarding the types and levels of activities, the number, quality and type of outputs and the nature and extent of the results (short-term, individual outcomes and longer term collective impacts) that may be attributed to the initiative. This information allows for an informed assessment of the degree to which results are attributable to the activities and outputs of the initiative.

Methodology

The methodology for the over-all evaluation consists of two inter-related approaches; a review of relevant documents, and interviews with selected federal and regional officials to clarify and expand on the contents of the documentation. We examined the relevant files, independent reports and statistical data identified and provided by the stakeholders to the evaluation. The strength of this final report however relies totally on the efforts from the individual evaluative efforts that have taken place over the past five years, and each of the specific reports in Volume II - the technical Appendix - should be consulted to fully appreciate the depth of this final report.

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As mentioned, each of these reports is included in the technical appendix to this report and constitutes Volume II of this report.

Limitations of the Methodologies

The scope and methodology of this evaluation, and the evaluative efforts on which this report is based are not sufficient to determine conclusively the effects of other events. Partly as a result of this, two areas of typical concern for some evaluations (in this case less so) are not dealt with directly by this study:

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- Incrementality (*How much of the achievement of the Initiative's objectives can be said to have resulted directly from the ACCI?*).

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, both the strength and weakness of this evaluation lies in the quality and depth of work on which this roll-up report is based. This author accepts no responsibility for the nature of the previous work - either their strengths or shortcomings.

Treasury Board Guidance for Evaluation

Within the limitations of the methodologies used, this evaluation will cover the issues suggested by the Treasury Board guidance in force at the time of this evaluation:

- Does the policy, program or initiative continue to be consistent with departmental and government-wide priorities and does it realistically address an actual need? (*relevance*);
- Is the policy, program or initiative effective in meeting its objectives, within budget and without unwanted outcomes? (*success*); and
- Are the most appropriate and efficient means being used to achieve objectives, relative to alternative design and delivery approaches? (*cost-effectiveness*).

Keeping in mind the limited resources available for data collection, and other time and resource constraints, the research design utilized for the evaluation was intended to meet the needs of key stakeholders. The evaluation reflects current Treasury Board policies for review and evaluation, and applies the approach and methodologies suggested:

- Measurement and Analysis - The evaluation of the ACCI has produced timely, pertinent and credible findings and conclusions that managers and other stakeholders can use with confidence. The evaluation is based on practical, cost-effective and objective data collection and analysis.
- Data Gathering and Analysis of Findings - Data Gathering and analysis has produced documented evidence on performance. The evidence is sufficient in relation to the decision-making context. Evaluation findings are relevant to the issues addressed and follow from evidence.
- Conclusions - Conclusions are consistent with, and clearly distinguished from the evaluation findings.
- Government Information Policies - In planning and conducting the ACCI evaluation, the evaluator has ensured compliance with government policies related to information collection, use, preservation and dissemination.
- Reports - The ACCI evaluation report presents the findings and conclusions in a clear and balanced manner and indicates their degree of reliability.
- Use by the Department - It is expected that evaluation findings will be used, and that the conclusions and recommendations will help to improve, modify or confirm initiatives such as the ACCI initiative, as well as help meet accountability requirements.

Evaluation Issues in the ACCI Context

This roll-up of evaluation reports and other information related to the ACCI provides much of the input needed to provide an assessment against the general guidance on conducting evaluations provided by Treasury Board. Using the methodology outlined, this report considers the rationale (or relevance), the success, and the cost-effectiveness of the ACCI while taking into account several factors that may have had a bearing on the ACCI's achievement on those fronts.

Rationale for the ACCI

The rationale question asks whether the ACCI was consistent with departmental and government-wide priorities and realistically addressed an actual need. Here the issues are:

- How does the ACCI fit into the overall corrections approach?
- Does the ACCI respond to an identified need?
- Is the role played by the ACCI within the Department's mandate?

Part of the understanding of the rationale of the initiative has been developed by comparing activities with those mandated and by examining the plausibility of the links between the initiative's outputs and both its objectives and intended impacts and effects.

The ACCI's Success

Success issues address two questions:

- First, success must be considered in terms of the initiative's impacts and effects by asking the question; "*What has happened as a result of the Initiative?*" For the ACCI, we would be interested in what has happened as a result of the initiative. Thus, the evaluation will look at the results attributed to the initiative - both short and long term, regardless of the stated or claimed objectives of the ACCI.
- Second, success is assessed in terms of the accomplishment of initiative objectives; "*Has the Initiative achieved what was expected?*" For the ACCI then, we want to know if the initiative contributed to the objectives as agreed to with Treasury Board.

The ACCI's Cost Effectiveness

Cost-effectiveness issues revolve around whether the most appropriate and efficient means are being used to achieve the Initiative's objectives; particularly relative to alternative design and delivery approaches. This area of investigation also takes into consideration the possibility that the same services might be better provided by another program.

The questions for the ACCI then are:

- Given the impact of the initiative and the cost, was the ACCI good value for money?
- Could the resources have been used in a more effective way?
- Could and should the ACCI have been delivered in a different manner?

Findings By Issue for the Studies Conducted

Issue Coverage by the Studies

As mentioned, this report represents a roll-up of the information that exists in the reports and evaluation efforts related to the ACCI over the past two years. The table below provides a sense of how each document primarily contributes to the assessment of the ACCI from an evaluative standpoint - in terms of the broad issues that Treasury Board policy expects to see addressed.

| ACCI Related Studies and Reports | Evaluation Issues | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | Relevance | Success | Cost-Effectiveness |
| NPB's ACCI Status Report [January 2001] | | ✓ | |
| Progress Report on Recommendations from the Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [December 2000] | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cost-Benefit Analysis of Healing Models in Two First Nation Communities [December 2000] | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Final Evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy [October 2000] ² | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level [June 2000] | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Evaluation of the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series [March 2000] | | ✓ | |
| Evaluation of the National Parole Board's Elder Assisted Hearing Approach [March 2000] | | ✓ | |
| Mid-Term Evaluation of the ACCI [February 1999] | | ✓ | ✓ |

² Included questions about ACCI in their methodology. These are referred to as "Provincial Consultations".

Issue One - Rationale: Does the ACCI Make Sense?

Summary

Clearly, the ACCI makes sense. It fits within government and departmental direction and policy and meets actual needs that are left unmet by conventional program delivery. Within the framework of the Federal Strategy for Aboriginal Justice, the ACCI represents an opportunity to explore innovative approaches that seek to address the pronounced over-representation of Aboriginal peoples currently involved with Canada's criminal justice system.

Considerations

The report on the Final Evaluation of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy (the AJS Evaluation) was produced in October 2000 by the Evaluation Division, Policy Integration and Coordination Section at the Department of Justice. This report contains an excellent overview of the existing and continuing relevance of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy (see pages 30-39), presenting a statistical and demographic overview of the over-representation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada's criminal justice system. It cites among other facts that Aboriginal offenders are less likely to be granted parole, and recognizes the particular challenges this population faces in the corrections environment (page 35).

The AJS Evaluation recognized the important role the ACCI plays in the Aboriginal Justice Strategy, stating that:

The AJS was developed in co-operation with other federal departments, including the Solicitor - General Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Privy Council Office and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, provincial and territorial governments, and Aboriginal people, and this work has continued. For example, the Aboriginal Community Corrections Initiative developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General, continues to undertake a range of policy activities to examine offender treatment and services within restorative justice and healing processes being established in Aboriginal communities. As much as possible, the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Department of Justice collaborate with each other, and other federal and provincial/territorial departments, to identify common issues and develop community-based projects. However, in general, the Ministry of the Solicitor General is concerned with the "output" end of the justice continuum' incarceration, corrections, release" and reintegration. The mandate of the MS is focused on the "input" end of the continuum (pre and post-charge diversion, mediation, sentencing circles and advice to courts and adjudication by justices of the peace), however, as community justice programs develop, they often incorporate "output" services. (page 17)

Clearly, the ACCI makes sense. It fits within government and departmental direction and policy and meets actual needs that are left unmet by conventional program delivery.

To make its contribution to the AJS, the ACCI developed and carried out a clearly defined action plan that consisted of three parts: Policy Development and Support; Coordination and Portfolio Management; and Community-based Project Funding. Each of these was described earlier in this report (pages 4 to 6), as were the goals and objectives for the action plan (pages 9 to 11). In addition to Treasury Board acceptance of the approach, the report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level completed in June 2000 by Harvey McCue & Associates working for the ACPU, found that the rationale and strategy of the ACCI appears to have been accepted and understood by all federal participants and they are clearly linked to the underlying issues of Aboriginal community corrections and healing (page 10).

As further evidence to the reasoned manner in which the ACCI has been placed to address the objectives stated for the initiative, the logic model (presented on pages 10 and 11 of this report) has described the approach of the ACCI in assuring that expectations are met. Thus, the components of Policy Development and Support; Coordination and Portfolio Management; and Community-based Project Funding - their activities and results - are well-placed to ensure the achievement of the desired results of developing and disseminating knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models to Aboriginal communities, and incorporating that knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry.

Issue Two - Part One - Success: What happened as a result of the ACCI?

While success is typically focused on whether an initiative achieves its stated objectives, we also consider success in terms of the ACCI's impacts and effects by asking the question; "*What has happened as a result of the ACCI?*" This means results that can be directly attributed to the initiative - intended and unintended, short and long term - regardless of stated objectives of the ACCI. This sometimes represents a more real assessment of the success of the initiative for management and staff.

Summary

The challenge of achieving results in terms of concrete outcomes for Aboriginal peoples involved with Canada's justice system can only be met by providing an innovative approach that can to address those needs. The ACPU has met the challenge by providing leadership for the ACCI by coordinating the effort, by strengthening key relationships and encouraging new ones, and by helping to ensure that more appropriate and new approaches - such as the Elder Assisted Hearing program - are available.

Coordination and Portfolio Management

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level observed that one aspect of the ACCI is to provide policy advice to the Solicitor General based on a sound understanding of the environment in which Aboriginal corrections activities are occurring. Similarly, the Initiative ensures that activities are in keeping with the priorities of Aboriginal people and provincial/territorial governments. It has been, therefore, important to maintain and further develop the partnerships within the Ministry, with other federal departments, other jurisdictions and Aboriginal Peoples.

There are a number of interdepartmental issues identified for the ACCI and the ACPU. These issues arise from the five major strategic themes for the ACPU, which are: (a) exploring corrections within the context of healing and wellness, (b) improving corrections for Aboriginal people in urban communities, (c) negotiating the corrections provisions of the Self-Government Policy, (d) supporting the implementation of Aboriginal Justice Strategy projects by Justice Canada, and (e) supporting the development of the Aboriginal Justice Learning Network. To exercise these issues, the ACPU have established formal working relationships with the Ministry of the Solicitor General Canada, Justice Canada, the Privy Council Office, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), several other Federal Department, and Provincial as well as Territorial Governments. In addition, the ACPU maintains a Coordinating Committee that provides strategic advice and general direction to the ACCI and other Ministry Aboriginal corrections activities. The Director General, Corrections Directorate or designate chairs the Committee (see the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level, pages 12-16).

Strengthening Relationships

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (pages 30 to 32) observed that relationships with other departments, agencies and sectors were fostered out of necessity because of the limited funding. The conclusion is that the results have been positive and beneficial:

- Stronger relationships with the participating departments and sectors have emerged;
- ACPU staff have a broader knowledge base that translated into communities being better informed about ACCI and related opportunities for community Justice and Corrections projects; and
- An increased awareness of the importance and necessity of project cost sharing.

The same report indicates an interest at the federal level for a more vigorous and proactive coordination of the ACCI; extending the effort beyond internal coordination to external issues. This could result in a number of benefits:

- Minimize or eliminate duplication and overlap in existing and future initiatives and projects in Aboriginal community corrections and healing;
- Enable federal officials to strengthen and reinforce their vision of the whole picture as it relates to Aboriginal community corrections;
- Encourage and stimulate the expansion of partnerships among federal departments, programs and agencies in the area of Aboriginal community corrections;
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the various federal interests and funds in Aboriginal community corrections by providing community representatives with ‘one stop shopping;’
- Increase the number of Aboriginal community proposals and projects; and
- Stimulate the progress of community projects through leadership and on-going support.

As Justice Canada currently holds the primary responsibility for Aboriginal Justice policy, the Aboriginal Justice Directorate within Justice Canada may be a suitable body for the coordination of activities and initiatives related to the ACCI. The ACPU should be prepared to support any effort by the Directorate to provide a leadership role in expanding the coordination of Aboriginal Justice projects, activities and initiatives.

Community-Based Project Funding

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (pages 18 to 25) reported that several projects had emerged during the ACCI. They include corrections projects with Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, the Waseskun Community Network and the Aboriginal Alternative Dispute Resolution Certificate Program offered by the Native Counseling Services of Alberta.

Two community-specific healing projects have been sponsored, as well. They include Biidaaban: The Mnjikaning Healing Model at the Mnjikaning (Rama) First Nation in Ontario and a post-release healing process for provincial and federal offenders in Winnipeg operated by the Winnipeg Native Alliance.

To facilitate community-based evaluation in these projects, the ACPU produced a guide outlining the steps for planning and evaluating community corrections and healing projects. This guide has been distributed to 646 Aboriginal communities and agencies and was intended to act as a resource for communities working with the ACPU as well as others with a need to address evaluation issues.

To ensure that the ACCI funded projects were well monitored, and to facilitate community evaluations, steering committees were established for each project. These committees included representation from the ACPU, other interested federal departments and agencies, the relevant provincial or territorial government departments and the community. The committees usually meet on a quarterly basis to review progress to date, share information to improve the project, monitor expenditures and address obstacles that inhibit the community from advancing its healing agenda.

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level found that each of the funded projects is consistent with the goals and objectives of the ACCI. The stakeholders involved in the negotiations for the projects were directly and consistently involved in the negotiation process and project negotiations occurred at a rate that was determined by the local and community participants.

Evidence from the evaluation interviews indicated that:

- The funded projects had goals and activities that were consistent with the goals and objectives of the ACCI;
- The funded projects were implemented successfully, according to plans;
- It is too early to determine the degree to which the funded projects successfully accomplished their goals, although the preliminary evidence points to success, both in accomplishing goals and benefits to the respective communities;
- There is considerable evidence to support the perception of satisfactory coordination and communication with the affected provinces and the Aboriginal communities throughout the negotiations of agreements.

National Parole Board's (NPB) Elder Assisted Hearing (EAH) Approach ³

Elder Assisted Hearings create an environment that facilitates a culturally sensitive hearing process for Aboriginal offenders (Indian, Inuit and Métis) being reviewed by the NPB. Offenders other than those officially identified as Aboriginal may choose to have an Elder assisted hearing. The role of the Elder is to provide Board members with information about Aboriginal cultures, experiences and traditions, and, when possible, the specific cultures and traditions of the Aboriginal population to which the offender belongs, or may return. The Elder also often offers wisdom and guidance to the offender. The NPB arranges for the presence of the Elder who provides this service and participates in the hearing process.

The NPB document, Evaluation of the National Parole Board's Elder Assisted Hearing Approach Final Report [March 2000] reported on many of the specific aspects of the program (see the summary on pages 36-40). And while it noted several opportunities for the program to improve, it is worth noting some of the specific successes of the effort:

- The Board's policy on Elder assisted hearings and the Pacific region's procedures for Elder assisted hearings create an environment that facilitates a more culturally sensitive hearing process for Aboriginal offenders.
- The presence of the Elder, in addition to the ceremonial aspects of Elder assisted hearings, helps to create a more respectful and comfortable environment that aids the decision-making process because it provides Board members with a more appropriate understanding of Aboriginal offenders and their risk factors.
- Board members feel that the Elders provide insights into the offender's progress in healing and potential for growth in the future, which helps them make better decisions.

The evaluation in the Pacific and Prairies regions was extremely valuable in that each region was able to follow-up on identified weaknesses in their respective approaches. For example, the Pacific region has since incorporated West Coast Salish traditions into their hearings and the Prairies region is now holding Elder assisted hearings in a circle format with the NPB Elder leading the hearing. It should be noted that, prior to doing so, the Prairies had noted a significant decrease in requests for Elder-assisted hearings. This is no longer the case.

The evaluation also provided the Quebec, Atlantic, and Ontario regions with valuable information with regards to their own developing models and provided a framework for future requirements once their models were launched. As of December 2000, Assisted Hearings are available to Aboriginal offenders in all regions.

³ Content for this section is based on the NPB Report: Evaluation of the National Parole Board's Elder Assisted Hearing Approach Final Report [March 2000]

Issue Two - Part Two - Success: Did ACCI achieve what was expected?

Summary

Did the ACCI accomplish what was expected? This is a complex question. And, given the limitations of this evaluation, as well as the limitation that insufficient passage of time presents, answering this question beyond reproach is simply beyond the scope of this evaluation. With those limitations noted, we will guide this section of the report by restating the formal objectives of the ACCI:

- To develop knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models,
- To disseminate the knowledge in Aboriginal communities, and
- To incorporate this knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry, in correctional law and in self-government negotiations having regard to correctional programs.

On all counts, our assessment, based on the information at hand, is that the ACCI did accomplish what was expected. We find strong support for the notion that the initiative contributed in a positive and significant manner to the development and dissemination of Aboriginal-specific community corrections models and information about their effectiveness. As well, it would appear clear that the initiative has been successful in moving the policy agenda of the Ministry in a direction that should benefit Aboriginal offenders in both the short and long term. ACCI achievements as reported in the documents we have reviewed against each of the stated objectives will be considered in the sections below.

Contribution To The Development Of New Knowledge

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (page 31) reported on achievements with regard to coordinating efforts for the purpose of providing strategic advice and general direction to the ACCI and other Ministry Aboriginal corrections. A Ministry Aboriginal Community Corrections Coordinating Committee was established and has met on an *ad hoc* basis since 1996.

Membership includes representatives from the ACPU, Correctional Services Canada and the National Parole Board. In recognition of the linkages between policing and corrections initiatives in Aboriginal communities, the RCMP, the Department's Communications Group and the Department's Aboriginal Policing Directorate also participate on the committee.

Recently, the Aboriginal Justice Directorate, Justice Canada, and DIAND have also been asked to participate on the committee. This is in response to a Ministry need for information about justice and social issues in Aboriginal communities. No initiative can exist in a community in isolation, and with the move towards holistic approaches to justice and corrections, there is a greater need to build upon and complement existing initiatives. The Committee has:

- Kept members informed about the implementation of the ACCI and other initiatives relating to Aboriginal community corrections;
- Acted as an information forum for Aboriginal policing and corrections activities in the Ministry;

- Supported the development of complementary strategic approaches to corrections in Aboriginal communities for the Department and other agencies;
- Provided opportunities for roundtable discussions on emerging issues and priorities such as urban Aboriginal gangs, the review and comments on Departmental strategic plans;
- Explored mutual support on a number of topics as well as areas of potential conflict.

Dissemination Of New Knowledge To Aboriginal Communities

The document ACCI: Synopsis of Funded Projects is included in the technical appendix to this report. The summary covers the period April 1, 1996 to July 1, 2000 and provides a valuable listing of the major efforts co-ordinated by the ACPU as it applies to the ACCI. These successes occurred in spite of the difficult context that the report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level described in which as the initiative continued, lack of knowledge in the Aboriginal communities about project details made it difficult to move from interest in the ACCI to active projects. The success of the Aboriginal People's Collection (APC) enabled the ACPU to provide interested communities with a collection of corrections and corrections-related information and materials designed to increase the awareness of the essential of community projects in healing and restorative justice. The APC allows the ACPU to continue conversations with community representatives that began in focus groups, community visitations and a variety of information sessions (page 29).

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level also reported (pages 17 and 18) that the ACPU has undertaken numerous activities to enhance the knowledge base of Aboriginal communities, organizations and other key stakeholders about corrections. These efforts include the publication of reports, development of information on the Department's web site, informational CD-ROMs, handbooks of advice to and for community resources and inmates, support to the production and distribution of film and video products relating to Aboriginal healing and corrections, sponsorship of focused consultations with Aboriginal community representatives, researchers and corrections officials, provision of information and advice to federal negotiators and Aboriginal people wishing to explore possible correctional strategies under the Inherent Right Policy, contribution to research projects FSIN to examine correctional needs and priorities in First Nations communities. By 2000, ACCI recorded 4200 filled requests for publications - up from 1000 requests in 1996. In addition, ACCI staff has engaged in numerous conferences and symposia with a corrections and healing focus.

In addition to the direct project related information, the ACPU produced a guide outlining the steps for planning and evaluating community corrections and healing projects. This guide has been distributed to 646 Aboriginal communities and agencies and is intended to act as a resource for communities working with the ACPU as well as others with a need to address evaluation issues.

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level detailed the efforts and activities of the ACPU to inform Aboriginal communities and organizations about the ACCI in their report (pages 56 to 58). It was felt that there is considerable evidence that the ACPU has met this responsibility.

The report on the Mid-Term Evaluation of ACCI [February 1999] provided information on a broad set of efforts by the ACPU to enhance the knowledge base of Aboriginal communities, organizations and other key stakeholders about corrections (pages 17 to 20). While too numerous to mention in this summary document they include efforts such as contributions to the Aboriginal Peoples Collection,

the *Getting Out* handbook series for inmates preparing for release to urban areas, support to the production and distribution of film and video products relating to Aboriginal healing and corrections, sponsorship of focused consultations with Aboriginal community representatives, researchers and corrections, provision of information and advice to federal negotiators and Aboriginal people wishing to explore possible correctional strategies under the Inherent Right Policy, and contribution to a research project with the FSIN to examine correctional needs and priorities in First Nations communities.

In 1996 an independent review of the *Getting Out* handbook series showed that they were widely used by offenders, correctional officials and urban voluntary sector agencies. It was recommended that the handbooks be expanded to include information pertaining to health, youth and victims services. This was felt to be beyond the scope of the handbooks. By 2000 the ACCI database that recorded the number of requests for publications that had been filled had risen to more than 4,200 from approximately 1000 requests in 1996. These publications are available on the Department's web site. In addition to the preparation and distribution of the ACCI information materials, the staff has engaged in numerous conferences and symposia with a corrections and healing focus.

An Evaluation of the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series - based on a survey research approach - was conducted by the ACPU to determine whether recipients found the publications useful and informative. The results were conclusive. An overwhelming majority of respondents supported their usefulness with almost forty percent of respondents ranking the publications as very useful.

The majority of respondents indicated that they used the publications in their area of employment and that their various organizations worked with Aboriginal people (75% and 90% respectively). The majority of respondents use the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series for multiple purposes. The most frequently identified purpose was to use the publications as a reference tool. However, using the publications to obtain factual information and to increase one's understanding of Aboriginal people were also repeatedly identified. The majority of respondents agreed, or strongly agreed, with the statement that the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series is a valuable source of information (50% and 34% respectively).

Most of the respondents also agreed that the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series assists Aboriginal communities and organizations in developing positive responses to justice and correction related problems (44%) and that the publications respond to issues identified by Aboriginal communities (49%). In regards to publication format, the most popular choice was, by far, to receive the publications in hard copy (70%). However, a similar amount of respondents indicated that they would like to be notified by email when a new report was available. Respondents found the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series a useful and informative resource for information regarding Aboriginal-related issues.

The Evaluation of the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series concluded that it was obvious that the Aboriginal Peoples Collection and Technical Series has been a successful venture. Respondents felt that the publications cover a wide variety of important topic areas, and were diverse when choosing a favorite.

Incorporating Knowledge In The Policies And Practices Of The Ministry

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (page 25) reported that after a review of the ACCI documents considered for the evaluation, there was a clear indication that:

- Past and current Aboriginal corrections projects, research and evaluation findings have impacted policy positions, advice and recommendations; and that
- Aboriginal and mainstream justice experts are consulted as necessary in the information-gathering process about the needs of communities and the corrections system.

The report went on to cite many examples of this contribution, and detail the activities undertaken by the ACPU and ACCI to promote this agenda. There are many examples of contributions by the ACPU to self-government negotiations and of the involvement of the ACPU with Aboriginal communities and organizations in the report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (Appendices G and H of that document).

Issue Three - Cost-Effectiveness: Given alternatives, was ACCI the most cost-effective way to achieve the objectives?

Summary

It is extremely difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness, efficiency or benefit of an effort such as ACCI; and even more difficult to find meaningful comparative information. When we consider the limited information at hand however; interesting - and very positive - results are apparent.

It is clear the resources allocated to the effort are small by comparison to a measure of the needs to which the initiative wishes to respond. There also seems to be a consensus that ACCI could benefit from the use of greater resources in attempting to fulfill its mandate.

Considerations

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level concluded that the human resources (3) assigned to the ACCI were being stretched to their limits to maintain the array of activities, responsibilities and duties that are part of the initiative. The report also stated that additional staff would (a) encourage greater and wider contact with existing community contacts and (b) lead to an increase in the number of Aboriginal communities, both urban and rural, as potential participants in the ACCI (page 11).

A report on costs and financial benefits of the Circle Healing Program was commissioned by the Department in July 2000 (Cost-Benefit Analysis of Healing Models in Two First Nation Communities). It is an Aboriginal community justice program designed for the prevention, intervention and healing of victims, offenders, families and communities from the effects of sexual abuse and family violence. The analysis compares the cost of circle healing versus the traditional criminal justice system to serve victimizers, victims and families, and provide community

development services. The estimate took into account the costs of running the program for the past ten years, serving a total of 107 victimizers. The author concluded that for each provincial dollar spent on this program, it would otherwise have to spend approximately \$3.13. For each dollar the federal government spends on this program, it would otherwise have to spend between \$1.86 and \$8.35 depending on the security level of the penitentiary. Combined, each dollar spent by both governments to support circle healing, governments would otherwise have to spend between \$2.50 and \$5.70. Over the ten years that the program has been operating, the savings to the federal government have been between \$1 million and \$8 million and the saving to the provincial government is estimated at \$2.5 million (see page 77 of the report).

The report on the [Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level](#) offered that there was ample evidence to indicate the importance and value of investing time and energy in community projects - beginning with preliminary discussions, through the conceptual and other stages to the time when the project takes shape and finally emerges. One of the strengths of the ACCI is that the ACPU staff can and do provide more time and energy to the emergence of projects than other departments and sectors but not without some cost to other responsibilities. This value-added activity of the ACPU staff should be recognized and encouraged.

ACPU's commitment to timely and appropriate information sharing with Aboriginal communities and related departments combined with the recognition of the importance of nurturing relationships with Aboriginal communities increases the pressures on its limited resources, both financial and human. These factors ultimately figure in the number of projects that the ACCI support.

Factors to Consider

The Nature of the Context for ACCI

There are challenges for ACCI in that while many of the initiative's principal clientele, Aboriginal communities, have an interest and need for community corrections programs, conditions such as geographic isolation or inexperience with government agencies may impede their ability to respond to that interest and need. ([Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level](#), page 10)

The report on the [Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level](#) noted (pages 34-35) that any ACCI project or activity is community driven, whether it is a rural or urban Aboriginal community. In most of these settings, the residential population is:

- Small, probably fewer than 2500 residents (in urban settings, the Aboriginal community is even smaller and considerably fragmented);
- Marked by education levels well below the national norm;
- Accustomed to dealing with one government and bureaucracy - the band or settlement council;
- Wary and suspicious of the Justice and Corrections system;
- Constrained by traditional values that influence communication and interaction with outsiders, particularly those who are perceived to hold power.

When the fact that many of the trained and educated members are already engaged in either leadership or administrative positions that have been created during the past five or more decades is factored in, the availability of personnel for community corrections projects is minimal or non-existent. These conditions impose severe challenges for the development of ACCI projects. They are also the ingredients that contribute to the fragility of Aboriginal communities that may emerge at any time in a project process, from the outset to its conclusion.

To work successfully with Aboriginal communities requires patience, time, effective and continuous contact and communication and, above all, trust. Any effort, be it exploratory or extended, particularly in the area of Justice and Corrections, that ignores any one of these conditions reduces immeasurably any chance of success.

Capacity and Capacity-Building

An essential element in any ACCI project at the community level is the development of capacity. And Aboriginal communities often lack the capacity to move easily and quickly into projects that address corrections and healing issues. The effort that ACPU has put into the development of community capacity is important to the overall success of the ACCI, and much of the effort by ACPU in this area concentrates on assisting communities to explore and to implement treatments and programs in corrections and healing that are based on, or at least, involve, traditional Aboriginal healing methods.

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level identified at least four levels of capacity that are involved in the challenge of building capacity at the community level:

1. The first level addresses the preparation of a community/group to consider a corrections or healing project;
2. A second level of capacity emerges once project has begun and moves toward satisfying objectives and skills and training are lacking;
3. A third level of capacity involves the maintenance of a project and the ability of a community to keep a project moving forward and building on what it has learned; and
4. A fourth and final level of capacity building emerges when a project successfully achieves its objectives, and there is an expectation to share the knowledge and lessons learned from the project.

Often the skills and confidence that are required to share the valuable knowledge and experience gained from a project, particularly with an audience at conferences or large gatherings are lacking in project staff. To maximize the sharing of information and knowledge from any Aboriginal community corrections project, some attention should focus on the preparation and training of community spokespersons.

Conclusions

Summary Statements

The report on the Evaluation of the ACCI at the Federal Level (pages 39-40) concluded that under the management of the ACPU, the ACCI has been a welcome and positive addition to the development of strategies and responses to the general area of Aboriginal justice topics and issue and to the specific area of Aboriginal corrections and healing. The Initiative has been well managed by the ACPU as this evaluation has demonstrated. The requirements as set out in the Evaluation Framework (ACCI: Evaluation Framework and Performance Indicators October 1997, ACPU) have been met or exceeded at the Federal Level.

The renewal of the ACCI will enable the ACPU to continue its commitment to work closely with its Federal and Provincial colleagues and partners and to expand its vigorous schedule of contact and information-sharing activities with Aboriginal communities.

Issue One - Rationale: Did the ACCI make sense?

Based on the findings and conclusions of the evaluations and reports produced with regard to the ACCI, we conclude that the initiative plays an important role in the overall corrections approach, and in particular that it responds to the challenging needs of the Aboriginal population. The ACCI objectives are consistent with current government priorities and objectives and the particular role played by the ACCI is well considered within the Department's mandate. Further, the way in which the ACCI undertook to meet formal objectives provided an appropriate response to the needs identified.

We found that the achievement of the ACCI objectives as stated was fully plausible given the parameters of the initiative, and that the manner in which the initiative was established and operated was reasonable. With this said however, there remain significant questions about the level of funding and about delivery and coordination issues.

Issue Two - Part One - Success: What happened as a result of the ACCI?

In a complex environment, it can be difficult to achieve results in terms of concrete outcomes for the Aboriginal peoples involved with Canada's justice system. The ACPU has met the challenge by providing leadership in coordinating the effort, by strengthening key relationships and encouraging new ones. Notably, as part of the ACCI, the NPB has implemented new and more appropriate approaches such as the Elder Assisted Hearing program.

Issue Two - Part Two - Success: Did the ACCI achieve what was expected?

It is our conclusion that the ACCI did contribute to the development of new knowledge about effective Aboriginal-specific community corrections models, and that the initiative was able to disseminate that new knowledge in Aboriginal communities. It also appears that the ACCI has

contributed in a meaningful way to the incorporation of this knowledge in the policies and practices of the Ministry.

Issue Three - Cost-Effectiveness: Given alternatives, was the ACCI the most cost-effective way to achieve the objectives?

It is our sense that the ACCI was established in a cost-efficient manner, but there may not be sufficient staff and financial resources to meet the administration and management requirements of the ACCI. In terms of comparative cost-effectiveness, it is difficult to assess at this point, but the available data indicate a favorable financial impact from some of the key components of the ACCI.

Recommendations

Based on this roll-up of evaluative and other information on the ACCI, and against the criteria that Treasury Board expects policies, programs and initiatives to be weighed against; the ACCI has proven to be a reasonable, effective and efficient manner to achieve the objectives set out for the initiative. This report will nonetheless make two recommendations that fall out of the course of examining the documentation and from speaking to stakeholders:

- 1. An objective assessment of the resources needed to continue to fulfill the intent of the ACCI (in particular the results expected for the Aboriginal stakeholders involved) should be undertaken and should include consideration for all of the roles and responsibilities related to the initiative.**
- 2. Funding should be earmarked, and a clear and over-all framework developed for, evaluating the continuing initiative and related components. The framework should include clear and concise performance measures and indicators and describe how that information would be collected. In particular, these efforts should focus on the results achieved in terms of the Aboriginal Stakeholders involved.**