

National Parole Board



2005-2006

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Solicitor General of Canada,
(Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada)

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Section I - Overview

.1 Chairperson's Message

Creation of the Portfolio of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness brings together numerous agencies with important responsibilities in the areas of criminal justice and security. The operational focus of these agencies varies considerably from security and counter terrorism to policing, law enforcement, crime prevention, corrections, conditional release, and border services but they are linked by a commitment to the pursuit of "safer communities".

From a public perspective, parole boards and parole are not often associated with public safety. In fact, media reports frequently depict these concepts as contradictory. The reality is, however, that the National Parole Board is well-positioned to contribute to the achievement of safe communities. Public safety is the top priority for the Board, as specified in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)*. The Board's Mission and Vision reinforce this commitment and ensure that public safety provides the foundation for NPB's policies, training and operations. Further, parole as a concept is grounded in public safety. It recognizes that most offenders return to the community after satisfaction of their sentence, and that the safest way to manage this process of community reintegration is through a program of gradual and controlled release.

In this context, concerns for public safety are clearly reflected in NPB's Plans and Priorities for 2005/06, which outline a range of measures designed to enhance quality in conditional release decision-making. Priorities will focus on: provision of more time for Board members to prepare for and conduct hearings; strengthened orientation and training which provides Board members with the latest information on risk assessment and risk management; and better information for decision-making through more effective staff support and a more responsive automated system for information management and sharing.

The Board works in an environment frequently characterized by low levels of public confidence and trust. In these circumstances, openness and accountability are crucial. In practical terms, the Board must "lead with the truth". Information must be shared in a timely and accurate manner, consistent with the law, in order to support meaningful public discussion and build support for the safe reintegration of offenders in the community. Efforts to strengthen NPB capacity for responding to the openness and accountability provisions of the CCRA must, therefore, remain a priority. Measures for improvement will focus on quality: information and assistance for victims of crime, observers at hearings, and those who seek access to the Board's registry of decisions; effective investigation and dissemination of findings related to tragic incidents in the community; and a strategic approach to public information and community outreach.

The Board's public credibility is also influenced by the efficiency with which it processes pardon applications. Plans and Priorities for 2005/06 identify the final stages of NPB's multi-year initiative for improvements in the area. Through process streamlining, policy refinement, and enhancements to the automated system which supports application processing, the Board expects to achieve major improvements in service delivery.

Quality decision-making, open and accountable processes, effective operations and productive use of technology provide the framework for NPB to enhance its contribution to public safety. Progress in this area presents real challenges, but I am certain that actions set-out in Plans and Priorities 2005-06 will result in continuing progress.

D. Ian Glen, Q.C.
Chairperson, National Parole Board

.2 Summary Information

Reason for Existence

Mandate

The National Parole Board is an independent administrative tribunal responsible for making decisions about the timing and conditions of release of offenders to the community on various forms of conditional release. The Board also makes pardon decisions, and recommendations respecting clemency through the Royal Prerogative of Mercy (RPM).

Legislation governing the Board includes the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)*, the *Criminal Records Act (CRA)*, and the *Criminal Code*. The *CCRA* empowers the Board to make conditional release decisions for federal offenders and offenders in provinces and territories without their own parole boards. Provincial boards currently exist in Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia. The *CRA* authorizes the Board to grant or revoke pardons for convictions under federal acts or regulations. The Governor General or the Governor in Council approves the use of the RPM for those convicted for a federal offence, following investigations by the Board, and recommendations from the Solicitor General of Canada.

Mission and Values

The National Parole Board, as part of the criminal justice system, makes independent, quality conditional release and pardon decisions and clemency recommendations. The Board contributes to the protection of society by facilitating, as appropriate, the timely integration of offenders as law-abiding citizens.

The Mission establishes four core values:

- dedication to the attainment of a just, peaceful and safe society;
- respect for the dignity of individuals and the rights of all members of society;
- commitment to openness, integrity and accountability; and
- belief that qualified and motivated individuals are essential to achieving the Mission.

Financial Resources

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
\$41,880,000	\$41,673,000	\$41,673,000

Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)

2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
459	459	459

.3 Departmental Priorities

Work Environment

NPB works in a complex environment, demanding effective support for government priorities, careful assessment of pressures within the justice system, thoughtful consideration of public issues and concerns in a dynamic and challenging community context, and rigorous pursuit of innovation and improvement to meet workload pressures.

The Board delivers two legislatively based programs – conditional release and pardons and clemency. The Board also has a corporate service function which provides critical support for program delivery. The conditional release area is, by far, the most complex and resource intensive, accounting for more than 80% of annual program expenditures.

Program delivery for the Board is labour-intense. Salary costs amount to about 80% of program expenditures each year. Most of the remaining expenditures cover essential operating costs such as Board member travel to parole hearings. The high proportion of resources used for legislative responsibilities, combined with the high proportion of resources devoted to salary costs seriously constrains resource flexibility. In this context, managing heavy and increasingly complex workloads presents a constant challenge.

NPB's workloads are, for the most part, driven by factors beyond its control. The legislative instruments governing the Board (*Corrections and Conditional Release Act, Criminal Records Act*) are prescriptive, specifying when and how the Board must conduct its business (e.g. when to conduct parole hearings). In addition, workloads are driven by the actions of offenders, victims and pardon applicants.

In concrete terms, this means that NPB must deal with high workload volumes in tight timeframes, amid intense public scrutiny. For example, each year, the Board must complete 22,000 to 25,000 conditional release reviews, respond to 15,000 contacts from victims, arrange for more than 1,000 observers at its hearing, and send out 5,000 decisions from its registry of decisions in response to requests from victims, the media, and interested citizens. The Board must also manage about 20,000 pardon applications each year.

In addition to high workload volumes, the Board must deal with the growing complexity of conditional release decision-making as reflected in two important trends. The first is the "hardening" of the federal offender population which is characterized by longer criminal histories, greater prevalence of violence, more gang affiliations, more serious substance abuse problems and more serious physical and mental health problems. The federal offender population is also becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse.

The second trend involves the need for innovative new decision processes such as elder-assisted and community-assisted hearings which recognize the needs of Aboriginal offenders, and the increasing numbers of offenders from ethnoracial communities. Complexity has also been influenced by greater involvement of victims and observers at hearings, media and community involvement, and the involvement of lawyers as offenders' assistants in the hearing process.

From a policy perspective, the Board must continue to deal with important challenges such as the information needs of victims of crime, the broad impacts of diversity, the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system and low levels of public confidence in parole and parole boards. All of these issues must be considered in the context of NPB's enduring commitment to public safety.

Priority: Effective management of legislative responsibilities related to conditional release decision-making.	Type	Planned Spending		
		2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
	Ongoing	\$33,079,000	\$32,872,000	\$32,872,000

NPB will focus on measures which strengthen NPB's capacity for quality decisions regarding the safe reintegration of offenders in the community. In developing plans for effective management of ongoing responsibilities related to conditional release decision-making, the Board considers the key factors which influence the volume and complexity of annual workloads (e.g. the current and projected size of the federal offender population, and the characteristics of this population). Similar, but less detailed information is collected for the provincial offender population in the provinces/territories in which the Board exercises parole decision-making responsibilities.

Offender population information is combined with legislatively-based information such as parole eligibility dates and the number of Board members required to make a decision in order to assess workload demands. In fact, the Board uses a detailed resource formula to forecast the number of conditional release reviews it expects to complete each year, and the numbers of Board members and staff required to complete these reviews. Based on data currently available, the Board expects to conduct the following numbers of conditional release reviews over the planning period.

Forecast	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Conditional Release Reviews	22,295	22,450	22,518

The Board is also developing plans to address the growing complexities of conditional release decision-making which will focus on the provision of more time for Board members to prepare for and complete conditional release reviews, enhanced orientation and training for Board members, and strengthened support for the decision-making process. Implementation of these plans is scheduled to begin in the 2005/06 fiscal year.

Performance indicators in this area include:

- the outcomes of release for parole (successful completion, revocation for a breach of conditions of release or for a new offence);
- numbers and rates of conviction for violent offences for parolees; and
- post-warrant expiry reoffending resulting in return to a federal penitentiary.

Priority: Effective management of legislative responsibilities related to open and accountable conditional release processes.	Type	Planned Spending		
		2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
	Ongoing	\$5,961,000	\$5,961,000	\$5,961,000

Priority activities will include: information for victims of crime; observers at hearings; requests for access to the Board's registry of decisions; public information and outreach; and investigation of tragic incidents in the community.

Planning in this area must address the realities of heavy and steadily increasing workload demands involving the public, victims and the media. For example, the annual number of NPB contacts with victims has almost tripled since 1995/96, rising from about 5,900 to 15,300. Plans must position the Board for quality program delivery in a number of areas such as public information and community engagement, timely and professional sharing of information with victims and other interested parties, consistent with the provisions of the CCRA, and effective investigation of serious incidents in the community.

A key aspect of NPB's plans will focus on measures to address the results of a survey of victims carried-out by

the Board in 2003/04. The survey, which sought feedback from victims on the quality of information and assistance provided by NPB, will set the stage for review of a range of measures to introduce more inclusive processes for victims including policy, training, the use of technology to enhance information sharing, and legislation.

Performance measurement in this area focuses on the timeliness and quality of information and assistance provided, and the results of surveys of users and key stakeholders.

Priority: Improved information management in support of NPB's conditional release responsibilities through development and implementation of the Conditional Release System (CRS).	Type	Planned Spending		
		2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
	Previously Committed	To be determined	To be determined	Nil

Current plans call for development and implementation of CRS to be completed in 2006. NPB and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) work in close partnership in the delivery of the conditional release program. CSC provides information for NPB decision-making, supervises offenders in the community when NPB makes decisions to release offenders and informs NPB when the level of risk changes for offenders in the community. In this environment, timely sharing of accurate information is essential for the effective operations of both agencies. As a result, CRS will be developed in parallel with the renewal of CSC's Offender Management System. This approach will ensure consistency and interoperability.

Priority: Effective management of legislative responsibilities related to the processing of pardon applications, including measures to enhance productivity.	Type	Planned Spending		
		2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
	Ongoing	\$2,840,000	\$2,840,000	\$2,840,000

NPB is in the midst of a multi-year plan to enhance productivity in the processing of pardon applications. The initial phases, now completed, dealt with policy refinement and process streamlining. The current phase, scheduled for completion in June 2005, will involve modernization of the automated system used to support pardon application processing along with the training necessary to support effective use of the system. Based on these improvements, the Board expects to reduce the average process time for pardon applications in a significant manner (e.g. the target for cases involving summary convictions is two weeks, on average).

When productivity targets have been achieved, the Board plans to review its approach to user fees for pardons, and in particular, the cap of \$410,000 that has been placed on the revenues that the Board can use annually. Plans to review user fees will include public consultations, as required by Treasury Board policy. Consultations may, however, be limited, given the reluctance of pardon applicants or recipients to identify themselves. The key performance measures for the pardon area are the average time required to process applications, and the numbers and rates of pardons revoked annually.

Section II - Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Analysis by Program Activity

The Program Activity Architecture for the National Parole Board reflects the key aspects for the Board's legislative framework (*Corrections and Conditional Release Act, Criminal Records Act*), and the areas of performance in which Parliament and the public most frequently express interest. In this context, the Board's strategic outcomes are the cornerstones of its public accountability.

Strategic Outcome: Conditional release decisions which contribute to public protection through safe reintegration of offenders in the community.

Program Activity Name: Conditional Release Decisions.

Program Activity Description: Case review and quality decision-making; provision of support for decision-making; provision of appropriate training to ensure professionalism in all aspects of decision-making; and policy development to guide decision-making and operations.

Through this program activity, the Board works to provide quality decisions on the timing and conditions of release of offenders to the community on various forms of release. Effectiveness is assessed through the monitoring of the outcomes for release of offenders on parole. Monitoring of outcomes addresses violent reoffending as a priority. This program activity provides direct support for the Board's priority dealing with effective management of ongoing responsibilities for conditional release decision-making.

Financial Resources:

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
\$30,425,000	\$33,079,000	\$32,872,000

Human Resources:

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
301	360	360

Strategic Outcome: Open and accountable conditional release processes that ensure active involvement and engagement of victims of crime and the public, before and after conditional release decisions are made.

Program Activity Name: Conditional Release Openness and Accountability.

Program Activity Description: Provision of information for victims and assistance for observers at hearings and those who seek access to NPB's decision registry; public information strategies; and investigation of tragic incidents in the community.

This program is designed to ensure that the Board operates in an open and accountable manner, consistent with the provisions of the CCRA, that it shares information effectively in support of public safety and effective conditional release. Work in this area recognizes that NPB operates in a difficult environment in which timely

sharing of accurate information is fundamental for effective partnership and public trust. Results for this program are assessed by monitoring of the timeliness of information shared and selected surveys of those who receive information and assistance from the Board (e.g. victims). This program activity relates directly to NPB's priority for open and accountable conditional release processes.

Financial Resources:

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
\$5,828,000	\$5,961,000	\$5,961,000

Human Resources (FTE):

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
61	65	65

Strategic Outcome: Pardon decisions and clemency recommendations which contribute to public protection and support the process of rehabilitation.

Program Activity: Pardon Decisions/Clemency Recommendations.

Program Activity Description: The review of pardon applications and the making of quality decisions to grant or deny pardons; provision of support for pardons decision-making; development of pardons and clemency policy; the collection of pardon revenues; and development of recommendations for clemency.

This program is designed to remove the stigma of a criminal record for those found guilty of a federal offence who, after satisfying their sentence and a specific waiting period, have shown themselves to be responsible citizens. A pardon is, therefore, a means to facilitate safe reintegration in the community. Results are assessed through ongoing review of the average time required to process pardon applications, and the rates of revocation of pardons granted.

Financial Resources:

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
\$5,526,000	\$2,840,000	\$2,840,000

Human Resources (FTE):

2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
47	34	34

This program activity relates directly to NPB's priority for effective management of ongoing responsibilities related to pardon decisions and clemency recommendations.

Section III - Supplementary Information

.1 Management Representation Statement

I submit for tabling in Parliament, the 2005/006 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) for the National Parole Board.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide to the preparation of Part III of the Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities*.

- It adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in the TBS guidance;
- It uses an approved program activity architecture (PAA) structure;
- It provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to it; and
- It reports finances based on approved planned spending numbers from the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Name: D. Ian Glen

Title: Chairperson, National Parole Board.

.2 Organizational Information

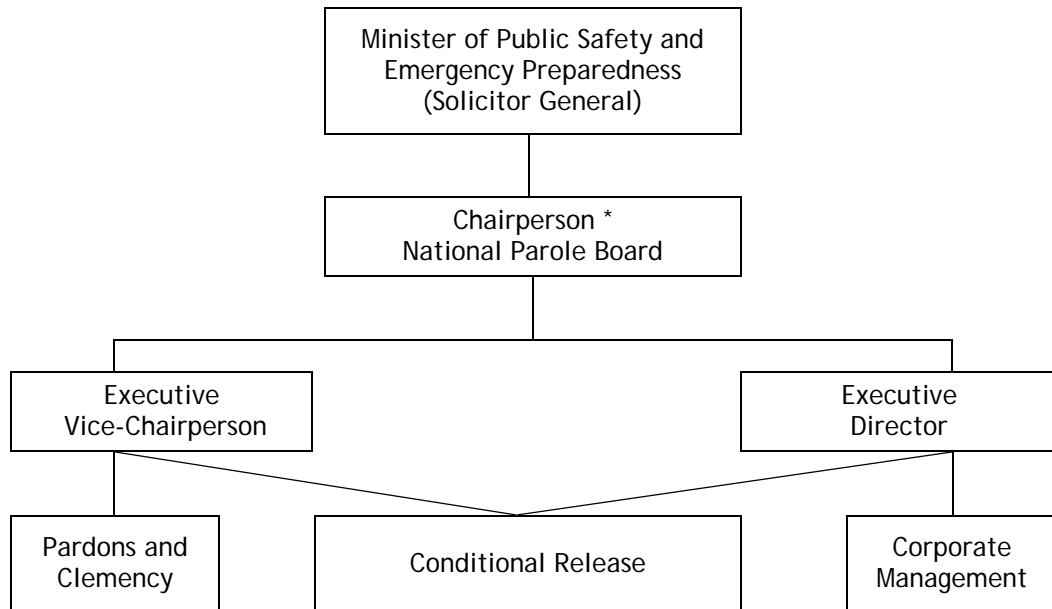
The National Parole Board is an agency within the Portfolio of the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. The Board works in partnership with Portfolio agencies in pursuit of priorities such as safer communities, but NPB is unique in many ways. It is an independent administrative tribunal responsible for conditional release decisions for federal offenders and for provincial offenders in provinces and territories without their own parole boards, and for pardon decisions and clemency recommendations. Board members work within a legislative framework involving the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* and the *Criminal Records Act*, and related policies, but are independent in their decision-making responsibilities.

Structure for Program Delivery

The Board carries-out its work through six offices across the country, and a national office in Ottawa. The national office makes clemency recommendations and pardon decisions and develops related policies. It is also responsible for a range of activities related to conditional release, including: investigations of tragic incidents in the community; appeal decisions; policy development; and coordination of Board member training. As well, the national office provides leadership and coordination for corporate management activities such as strategic and operational planning, resource management, communications, performance reporting, human resource services, security, and information management.

Conditional release decisions are made by Board members in the regions (except appeal decisions). Board members are supported by staff who schedule hearings, provide access to information for decision-making, ensure sharing of information with the offender, provide policy advice, and communicate conditional release decisions to the offender, CSC representatives, and others as required. Regional staff also provide information for victims, make arrangements for observers at NPB hearings, and manage requests for access to the Board's decision registry.

Program Accountability



* *The Chairperson and the Executive Vice-Chairperson work as a team, sharing roles and responsibilities. The Executive Vice-Chairperson has been shown separately in this chart to illustrate management responsibility for pardons and clemency.*

Table 1: Departmental Planned Spending and Full Time Equivalents

(\$ millions)	Forecast Spending 2004-2005	Planned Spending 2005-2006	Planned Spending 2006-2007	Planned Spending 2007-2008
Conditional Release Decisions	26.8	25.5	25.5	25.5
Conditional Release Openness and Accountability	5.0	4.3	4.3	4.3
Pardons Decisions/Clemency Recommendations	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	33.8	31.8	31.8	31.8
Non-Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	0	0	0	0
Less: Respendable revenue	0	-	-	-
Total Main Estimates	33.8	31.8	31.8	31.8
<i>Adjustments:</i>				
Supplementary Estimates:				
Carry-forward from 2003-04	1.4			
Recovery of Pardon User Fees	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Effective corrections and Citizen Engagement	-	1.4	1.4	1.4
Program sustainability	.9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Enhanced Conditional Release Services	.4	1.6	1.4	1.4
Critical Resource Shortfall	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Total Adjustments</i>	7.9	10.1	9.9	9.9
Total Planned Spending	41.7	41.9	41.7	41.7
Less: Non-Respendable revenue	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	4.3	5.5	5.5	5.5
Net cost of Program	45.3	46.7	46.5	46.5
Full Time Equivalents	409	459	459	459

Table 2: Program by Activity

2005-2006						
	Budgetary		Non-Budgetary			
Program Activity		Operating		Total Main Estimates	Adjustments (planned spending not in Main Estimates)	Total Planned Spending
Conditional Release Decisions		25,501		25,501	7,578	33,079
Conditional Release Openness and Accountability		4,314		4,314	1,647	5,961
Pardon Decisions/Clemency Recommendations		1,952		1,952	888	2,840
Total		31,767		31,767	10,113	41,880

Table 3: Voted and Statutory Items listed in Main Estimates

2005-2006			
Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	Current Main Estimates	Previous Main Estimates
50	Operating expenditures	27,506	29,076
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	4,261	4,772
	Total National Parole Board	31,767	33,848

Table 4: Net Cost of Department for the Estimates Year

(\$ millions)	2005-2006			Total
	Conditional Release Decisions	Conditional Release Openness and Accountability	Pardon Decisions/Clemency Recommendations	
Total Planned Spending	33.1	6.0	2.8	41.9
<i>Plus: Services Received without Charge</i>				
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC)	2.1	.4	.2	2.7
Contributions covering employers' share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures paid by TBS (excluding revolving funds)	1.7	.3	.2	2.2
Worker's compensation coverage provided by Social Development Canada	.1	-	-	.1
Salary and associated expenditures of legal services provided by Justice Canada	.5	-	-	.5
Total Cost of Program	37.5	6.7	3.2	47.4
<i>Less: Non-responsible Revenue</i>	-	-	.7	.7
2005-2006 Net cost of Program	37.5	6.7	2.5	46.7

Table 5: Source of Non-Respendable Revenue

(\$ millions)	Forecast Revenue 2004-2005	Planned Revenue 2005-2006	Planned Revenue 2006-2007	Planned Revenue 2007-2008
<i>National Parole Board</i>				
Pardon Decisions/Clemency Recommendations				
Pardons user fees	.7	.7	.7	.7
Total Non-Respendable Revenue	.7	.7	.7	.7

Table 6: Horizontal Initiatives

Over the next three years, The National Parole Board will be involved in the following horizontal initiative as a partner:

2005-06

Implementation of Firearms Legislation

2006-07

Implementation of Firearms Legislation

2007-08

Implementation of Firearms Legislation

Introduction of the Firearms legislation and related changes to the Criminal Code created longer sentences for offences involving the use of a firearm or an imitation firearm. Longer sentences generate the need for more conditional release reviews which, in turn, increase NPB's program delivery costs (salary and non-salary).

As a result, the Board received a permanent increase to its funding base. The increase was incremental, rising from \$437,000 in 1999/2000 to \$858,000 per year in 2004/05 and future years, consistent with projected workload growth. Workload data indicate that the Board now carries-out 1,800 to 2,000 reviews annually for offenders with firearms convictions. The estimated total cost for these reviews is \$1.6 million, of which \$868,000 is covered by funding provided specifically as a result of changes in Firearms legislation.

Section IV - Other Items of Interest

Legislation Administered by the National Parole Board

The Minister has sole responsibility to Parliament for the following Acts:	
<i>Corrections and Conditional Release Act</i>	S.C. 1992, c.20, as amended by S.C. 1995, c.42, S.C. 1997, c.17 and its regulations
<i>Criminal Records Act</i>	
The Minister shares responsibility to Parliament for the following Acts:	
<i>Criminal Code</i>	R.S. 1985, c. C-47
<i>Prisons and Reformatories Act</i>	R.S. 1985, c. P-20
<i>Letters Patent constituting the Office of Governor General of Canada (1947)</i>	Canada Gazette, 1947, Part I, Vol. 81, p. 3104, reprinted in R.S. 1985, Appendix II, No. 31

Corporate Management Costs Included in Costs For Strategic Outcomes

Key Service Description: The provision of a range of management policies and services (financial, human resources, information management, security, planning) to support the Board's strategic outcomes. The proportion, and amounts of corporate service resources used to support NPB's strategic outcomes in 2005/06 will be as follows:

Strategic Outcome	Application of Corporate Management Support
• Quality conditional release decisions	75% (\$4,513,000)
• Open, accountable conditional release processes	14% (\$843,000)
• Quality pardon decisions/clemency recommendations	11% (\$663,000)

Contacts

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Quebec Region	Regional Director 200 René-Lévesque Blvd. W. 10 th Floor, Suite 1001 - West Tower Montreal QC H2C 1X4 Phone: (514) 283-4584 Fax: (514) 283-5484
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The National Parole Board's internet site address is: <http://www.npb-cnlc.gc.ca/>