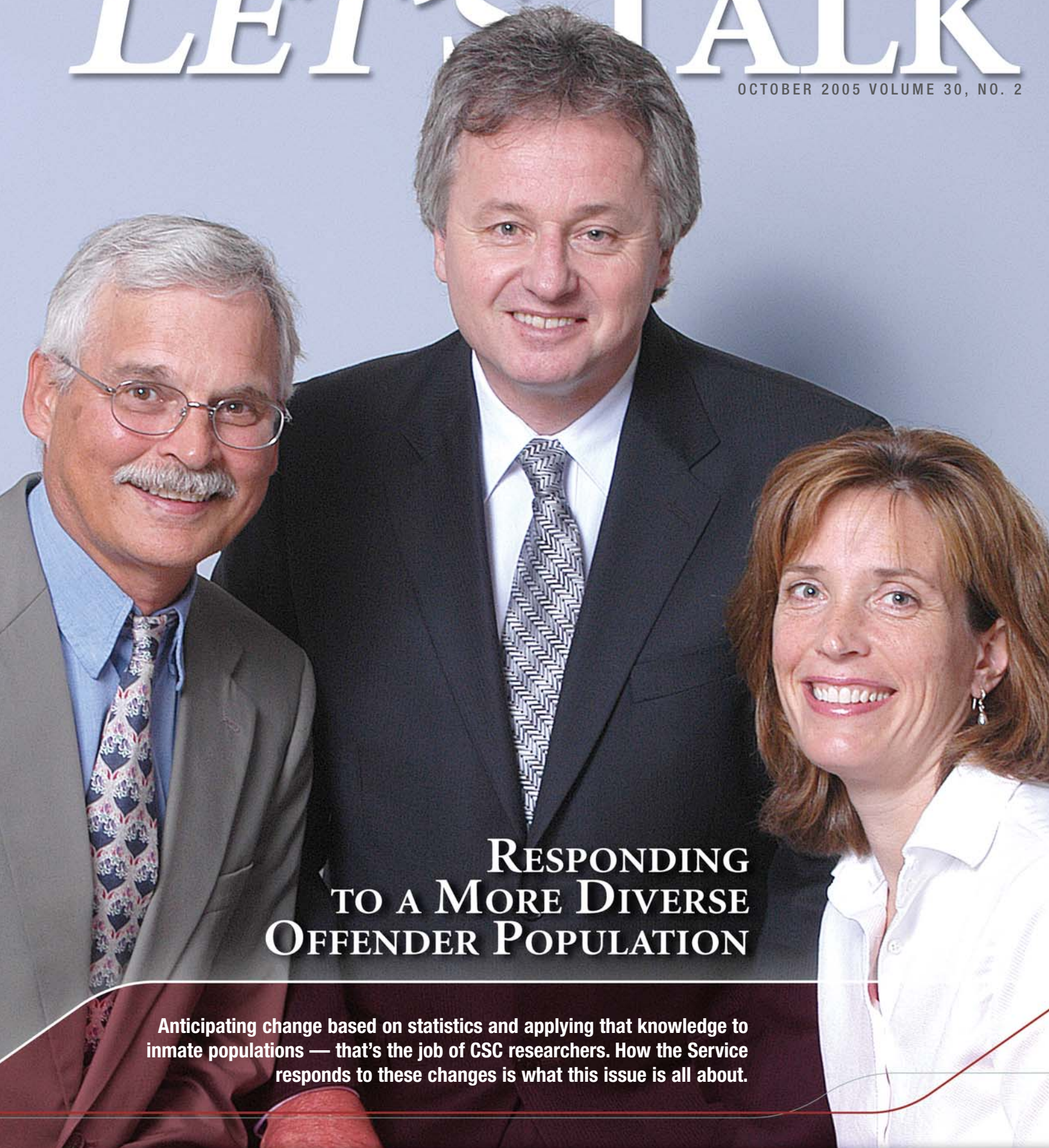


LET'S TALK

OCTOBER 2005 VOLUME 30, NO. 2



RESPONDING TO A MORE DIVERSE OFFENDER POPULATION

Anticipating change based on statistics and applying that knowledge to inmate populations — that's the job of CSC researchers. How the Service responds to these changes is what this issue is all about.



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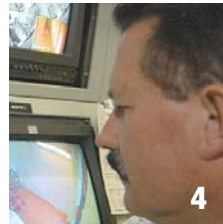


Research Director General Larry Motiuk (centre), Senior Statistician Roger Boe, and Director Kelley Blanchette, Women Offender Research, and their staff predict trends in corrections so that policy-makers, planners and front-line staff can prepare for future challenges.

Photo: Bill Rankin

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COMMISSIONER'S EDITORIAL



Meeting the Challenges

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this edition of *Let's Talk*. Having been appointed as Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada on September 8, 2005, I want you to know that I consider it a great honour to join an organization that plays such a critical role in keeping Canadian communities safe. In the coming months, a key focal point for me will be to help ensure we all work together – at national, regional and local levels – as a single dynamic team to deliver the best possible results.

This edition of *Let's Talk* addresses some of the issues we face in dealing with an ever increasing diversity of offender needs – from increasing numbers of offenders with mental health needs, to ethno-cultural diversity, to the challenges presented by organized crime. In all parts of our complex organization, we must ensure our programs and policies effectively address the needs of various offender populations while respecting the rule of law, actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens and exercising reasonable, safe, secure and humane control.

So, I would encourage you to read this issue of *Let's Talk* and do your part in helping work together, as a team, to meet challenges in this area.

Canada is internationally recognized as having one of the best correctional systems in the world. That success is the result of the professionalism of CSC staff, volunteers, and stakeholders. I look forward to working with you in the coming months and years as we continue this proud tradition. ♦

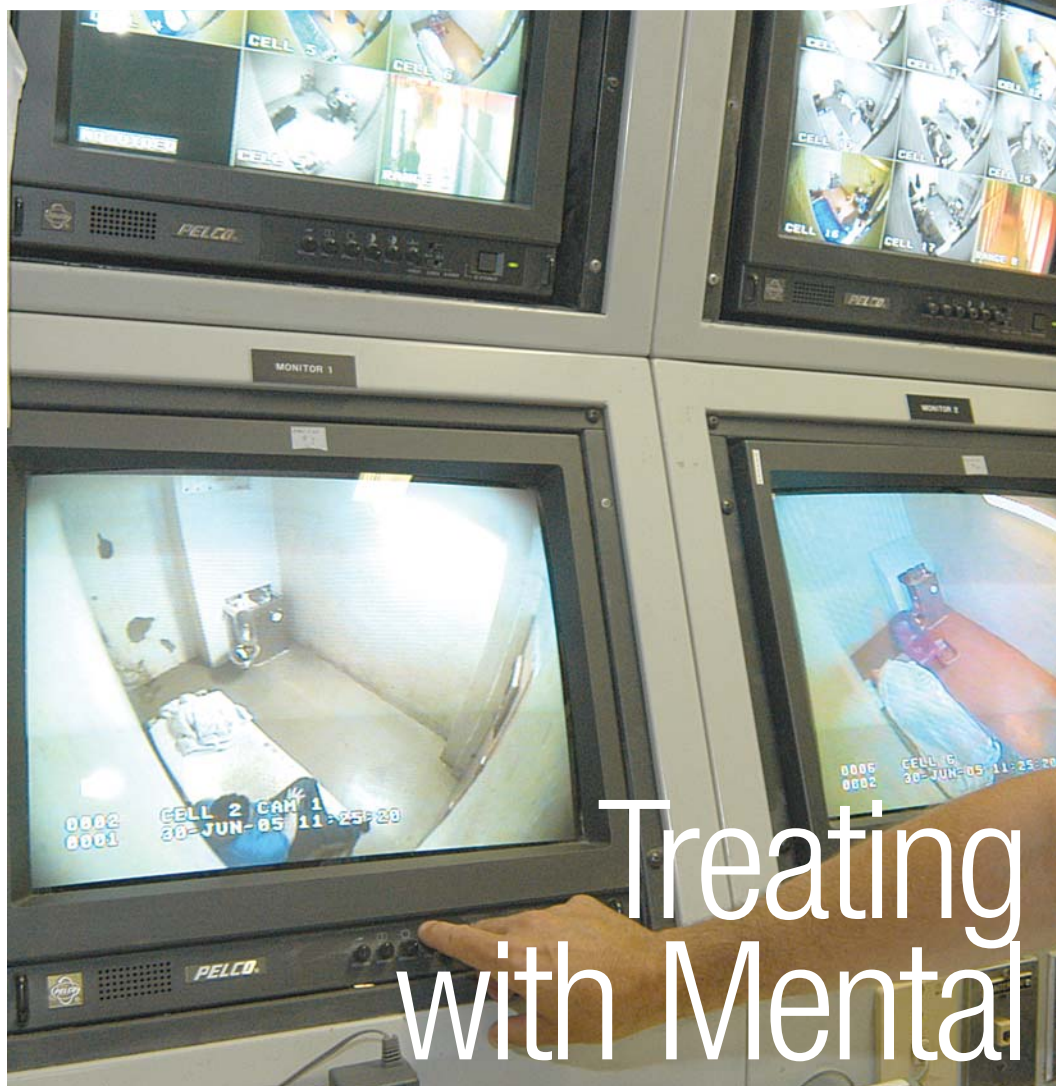
Keith Coulter
Commissioner
Correctional Service of Canada

Responding TO A More Diverse Offender Population

To get a look at the big picture, *Let's Talk* writers consulted with Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) researchers who analyze criminal justice statistics and monitor changes in the composition of the federal offender population.

Since the mid-90s falling rates of violent crime, declining new admissions and successful reintegration efforts have resulted in a general decline in the Canadian federal offender population. Albeit there are regional variations that need to be considered, correctional challenges remain as the federal population of women in custody has increased and Aboriginal people remain disproportionately represented in the federal offender population.

To raise our awareness about the changing composition of the federal offender population, Dr. Larry Motiuk, Director General of Research, and his staff have been producing timely and comprehensive profiles of selected characteristics such as substance abuse, gang affiliation and mental health. As a result, CSC now has more information on how the institutional and community supervision populations are changing. So far, the researchers are telling us we are facing some unprecedented challenges in managing a more diverse federal offender population.



Treating with Mental

While crime and prisons are never far from the minds of the media, many dimensions of prison life are little known and often distorted in the eye of the public. Perhaps no other segment of the prison population is as poorly understood as those who suffer from mental illnesses. Typically, they are men and women with major psychiatric disorders – schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression, for example. An array of developmental disabilities frequently compounds their illnesses and, all too often, they bear the physical and psychic wounds of family violence. Add to these disadvantages substance abuse and you have a formula for individuals who occupy the lowest rungs and maintain the feeblest grasp on our social ladder.

BY Bill Rankin, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photos: Bill Rankin

Some offenders with mental disorders are incarcerated in the federal correctional system rather than in provincial mental health facilities because they have been judged responsible for their crimes despite their illnesses. Their histories of abuse often fill the records of social agencies, police, courts and prisons. They can

be dangerous, mostly when not treated; they are often unpredictable and, for the majority, reintegration potential is low. These are the inmates that CSC employees — psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, and security staff — deal with every day at regional treatment centres across the country.

An Increasing Population

Their numbers are growing. Statistics show that over the past seven years there has been an 80% increase in the number of inmates

Greg Kane, Registered Nurse, Regional Treatment Centre

Greg Kane, a 31-year veteran of the Service, is a nurse on 1B — the acute care psychiatric unit — where inmates are first admitted to the RTC, many of them in psychotic states due to full-blown mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. They may be homicidal, suicidal or attempting to injure themselves and require round-the-clock monitoring for their own safety, the safety of staff and for treatment.

“We have some of the most dangerous offenders in the entire country here,” Kane comments. “Staff must use extreme caution in their day-to-day interactions with them. People work in this stressful environment because that’s where they choose to be. They want to be here. And there are benefits: everyone on the team is part of the decision-making process; we take pride in doing our jobs well, knowing that we are effective. We can see the positive results in the inmates.”

By the time they reach the RTC, they are in serious need of further treatment.

The Acute Care Unit

On 1B, the RTC Acute Care Unit, stabilization is the first goal. “Men arrive here in crisis,” says Correctional Supervisor Les Jung “If we can stabilize them so that they can function within the normal correctional environment and participate in their correctional plan at their parent institution — that is one of our measures of success.”

From a therapeutic angle, the measures are different explains Occupational Therapist Crystal Grass. “Success here is measured not only from a correctional standpoint but by mental health measures from the time they arrive at the acute care ward to the time they are living in a more communal setting, getting up and showering in the morning, holding a job in the institution or going to school. These are the real measures of success from our point of view.”

The Cornerstone of Treatment

Psychiatrist Dr. James Hillen is one of the first of the interdisciplinary team to assess an inmate who presents with symptoms of mental illness. “When they come to me, it’s because they *want* help. I listen to what they say and, more importantly, how they express it. I’m judging their ability to process thoughts, first by asking them very open-ended questions that require thought organization. In someone with a mental illness, that thought-processing ability has broken down.”

Dr. Hillen says that medication is the “cornerstone” of treatment. The right combination of drugs helps to stabilize inmates so they can once again comprehend their surroundings. “We have no cures for mental illness but we can treat the symptoms very effectively. Medication affects neurochemistry and re-establishes equilibrium within the brain,” Hillen explains.

Not all the inmates are willing partners in their own treatment. Some are so disturbed when they first enter an RTC that a psychiatrist must certify them as a danger to themselves or others in order for them to be treated without their consent. It takes anywhere from 8 to 12 weeks for patients to stabilize.

Spotting Trouble Early

“Ideally, we try to spot early signs of illness in these men before there is a need to send them to the RTC,” says Dr. Hillen. “If the illness is identified in its first stages and treated, the prognosis is better. The cost of medication is small compared to that of treatment and care later on in the disease process.”

Once stabilized, a patient is moved from the acute care unit to another unit where he can interact with inmates and staff and deal with issues that are part of his correctional plan. He benefits from the expertise of psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, and others who have special experience dealing with inmates with mental disorders.

Cost-Effective Innovations

In the same vein, medical staff at the RTC, Pacific Institution launched a pilot project for identifying mental illness in its early stages. Psychiatric nurses carried out a comprehensive screening process of all new inmates. RTC interdisciplinary teams (and case management for follow-up) targeted those at greatest risk, and treating their mental health needs became the first priority in their correctional plans. Those requiring immediate psychiatric care were quickly moved from the general population to the RTC before they had a chance to deteriorate.

A secondary benefit of the project: psychiatric nurses were able to deal with their patient’s fears and anxieties, which many new inmates experience when first incarcerated. As a result, correctional officers reported the number of disturbances had dropped inside the reception centre.

Offenders Disorders

who on admission to CSC facilities are taking prescribed medication for a mental health problem. There has been an increase of 61% over the same time period in the number of inmates who, on admission, report having a psychiatric diagnosis.

Each region has a treatment centre to deal with the most seriously mentally disordered offenders. At the Ontario Regional Treatment Centre (RTC) inside the walls of Kingston Penitentiary, at the time of writing, 114 inmates were being treated. They have been admitted on a priority basis while others, back at their parent institutions, await their turns. Fifty-five are lifers and 99, in total, have little chance of ever being freed on statutory release. They come from institutions across the region where they could not fit or function in the mainstream population. Often preyed upon by more able prisoners, these mentally disabled prisoners get moved into segregation for their own protection, they have withdrawn into themselves or, conversely, acted out in an aggressive manner.



Margo Butler, Correctional Programs Officer, Regional Treatment Centre

“We focus on the positive and try to build [inmates] confidence. Many of them have had little positive reinforcement in their lives. Although the measures of success are different than those for the general population, the rewards from helping to alleviate the torment of their mental illness are great.”



Ambulatory psychiatric nurses Dave Kereliuk and Trevor Nicholl treat inmates at institutions across the Pacific Region.

Dr. Art Gordon, Executive Director, Pacific RTC comments, “We were able to reach out to more inmates who otherwise might not get the chance to see a mental health professional. It was an excellent project and we are hoping to get it funded and back in operation.”

A second project in Pacific Region involves two ambulatory psychiatric nurses, Dave Kereliuk and Trevor Nicholl, who last year made more than 1,400 contacts at institutions across the Pacific, following up with inmates who had

been treated previously at the RTC. The goal of the project is to assist staff at regional institutions to support and maintain gains that have been made at the treatment centre. The nurses will also accept referrals from any institution and pass them along to RTC psychiatrists concerning potential new cases.

“Their input is of great value to the case management team,” says Dr. Gordon. “They make a huge number of contacts; it’s an extremely valuable service that we hope can expand into the community so we can ensure continuity of care. Again, we hope to get funding for this extremely effective and relatively low-cost service to continue.”

The Intensive Healing Program

Moving eastward across the country from Pacific Region to Saskatoon, it is worth noting the work done in the Intensive Healing Program at the Churchill Women’s Unit of the CSC Regional Psychiatric Centre. Its goal is to improve the mental health of women offenders, often through the use of short-term behavioural agreements and monitored behavioural checklists. When treatment goals have been reached, patients are discharged to their home institutions, much as they would be discharged to their homes if they were hospitalized in the outside community. The Churchill Unit is the only CSC-based option for the intensive care of women offenders experiencing episodes of acute mental illness. The Unit has admitted women from each of the five CSC regions, as well as Saskatchewan women on remand, and on provincial sentences.

Audrey Hobman, a program officer in the Intensive Healing Program comments, “Components of the program have a special Aboriginal perspective due to the large numbers of Aboriginal women participating. We



Audrey Hobman, Intensive Healing Program, Prairie Regional Psychiatric Centre



add Native teachings, a touch of humour, and we depend on the counsel of Elders who are an integral part of the program.” Audrey, a Nakotan woman from the Carry the Kettle, First Nation, has shared some of the hardships that many of her patients have been through. She, too, was a part of what Native people call the “1960s scoop” during which Aboriginal children were taken from their families and placed in non-Aboriginal foster or adoptive homes.

“Not only did they lose their families but their language, their culture and their community connections as well. This loss of identity,” says Audrey, “has contributed to their illnesses and to getting into trouble with the law. We help them understand what their family roles can be outside of the institutions and help them prepare to be those things — mothers, daughters, aunties — once they are released. We try to make them see that they are something besides ‘offenders’ and that they can fit in somewhere else.”

Into the Community

Over the years, regional treatment centres across the country have expanded their roles, arranging interdisciplinary community supports for those about to be released. This is not an easy task; both provincial and municipal resources have shrunk in recent years and psychiatric beds are in high demand. “And there is still the stigma connected with mental illness,” says Ontario RTC Psychologist Dr. Dorothy

Cotton. “Ordinary people react with fear to the mentally ill. They often equate their odd appearance or behaviour with danger. And not all halfway houses are equipped to handle these people, nor are they obligated to accept them.”

New Demands on the System

In a presentation to the Kirby Senate Committee on mental health in February 2005, spokespersons for CSC pointed to four areas where new funding is needed: thorough mental health assessments for all offenders at reception; maintaining consistent standards in all five RTCs across the country; establishing intermediate care units in some regular institutions; and creating a community mental health strategy that will ensure continuity of care for inmates once they are released.

Recently, Minister Anne McLellan announced that almost \$30 million in new funds will be available over the next five years for the community mental health strategy.

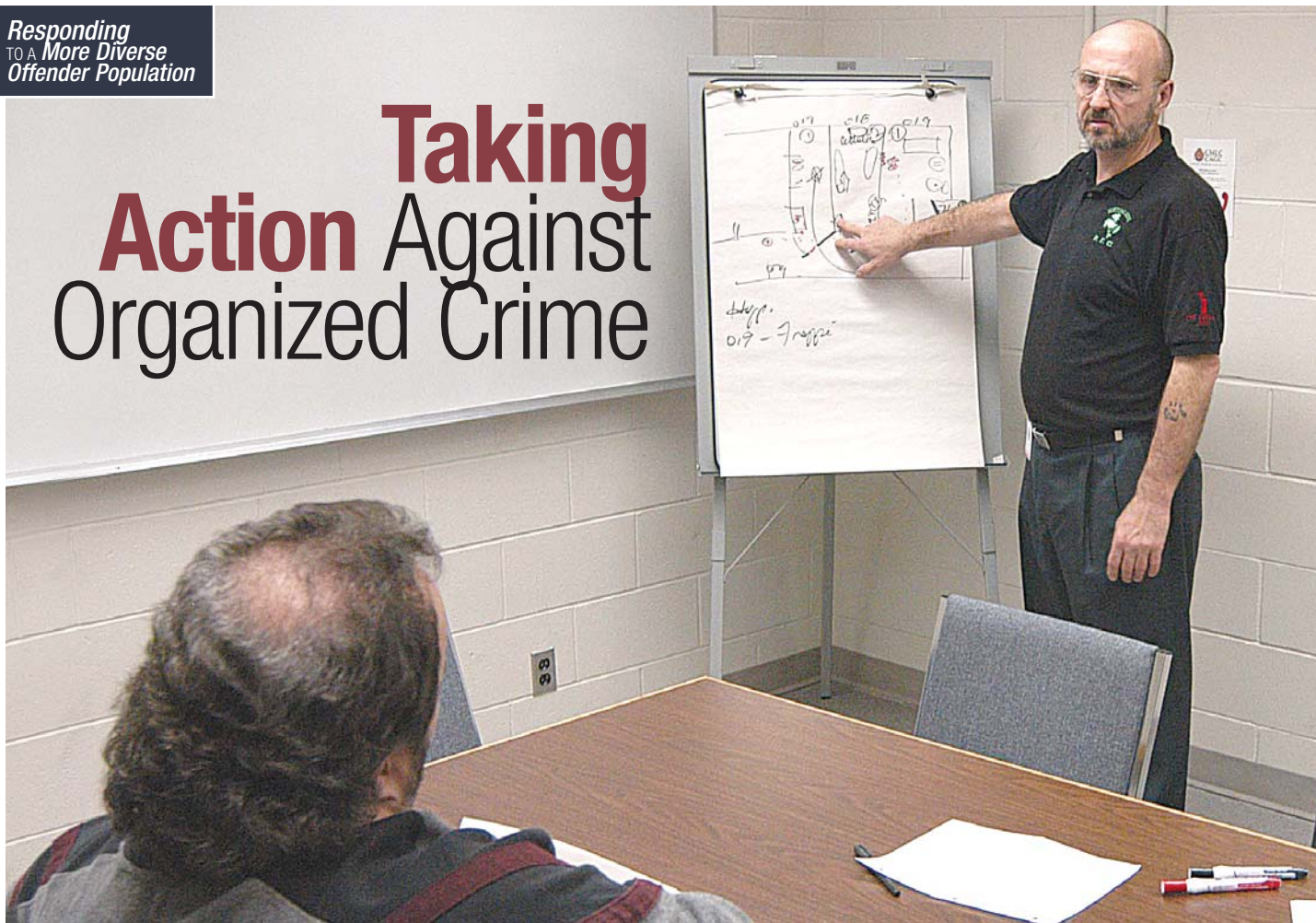
The psychiatric problems of federal offenders are numerous, complex and longstanding and the quality of treatment provided by CSC has a direct effect on the success of releases into the community and, ultimately, on the safety of the Canadian public. Despite the many obstacles they must overcome, including increasingly tight budgets, staff at RTCs across the country are working hard to ensure that offenders with mental disorders receive the best care possible. ♦

CX II Larry Sharpe and inmate in 1B, the RTC acute care unit

Despite the daily difficulties in handling inmates with mental disorders on the acute care unit, Correctional Officer II Larry Sharpe balances security enforcement with compassion. He goes out of his way to bring the inmates small comforts and encouraging words.

Once stabilized, inmates move out of high-security acute care to a more open environment. Other correctional officers at the RTC, such as Kevin Sweeney, are qualified psychiatric nurses as well as possessing security training. “At the RTC, we have the opportunity to interact with inmates on a more personal level,” he says, “and work closely with medical staff, teachers and parole officers.”

Taking Action Against Organized Crime



CSC has long recognized that gangs and other criminal organizations pose a serious threat to the security as well as to the efficient management of our federal penitentiaries. In recent years, the number of gang members and their associates under CSC's jurisdiction, both in prisons and in the community, has risen. This increase is due to the government's introduction of anti-gang legislation coupled with integrated and aggressive police investigations and successful prosecutions.

Retired Montreal Police Homicide Detective Roger Agnessi instructs SIOs in the preservation of crime scene evidence in a penitentiary setting. Specialists from many law enforcement partners contribute to the training of CSC security intelligence officers.

BY **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photo: Bill Rankin

According to the most recent statistics, the number of members or affiliates of organized criminal groups reached almost 1,700, or 8% of the total federal prison population. Of these, Aboriginal gangs constitute 32%, outlaw motorcycle gangs 31%, street gangs 15%, Mafia-style 12%, Asian-based gangs 4%, and other gangs (including terrorist organizations) 6%. Whatever forms these organizations may take, power through control and influence is their goal.

A Serious Challenge

CSC Security Intelligence takes this threat seriously. Its challenge is to prevent them from

undermining correctional operations. Security intelligence officers (SIO) understand what can happen when gang activity is ignored: their influence, even over a short period, can spread like an infectious disease throughout a prison population, weakening security for both staff and other inmates.

CSC is dealing with the situation on numerous fronts, but collaboration between front-line staff and SIOs has proven to be CSC's best defence against this threat. Commissioner's Directive 568-3, Identification and Management of Criminal Organizations, provides a solid framework and a consistent approach for dealing with gang members and their associates. On a broader scale, the Service links with intelligence units across the country and internationally to analyze emerging trends.

Recruiting Expertise

In 2002, the Security Branch set up a national, centralized intelligence unit with a multidisciplinary approach to combating organized crime. It also developed, in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, standard training for SIOs across the country. This includes information sessions to be developed for delivery by local SIOs to all front-line staff including correctional and parole officers.

On the International Level

Most recently, Luciano Benteuto, National CSC Manager, Organized Crime/Criminal Gangs, represented CSC as a member of the Canadian delegation at an international meeting on gangs sponsored by the Organization of American States (OAS) in Chiapas —

ETHNICITY AND CULTURE

A Diversified Correctional Approach

Mexico's southernmost state. Law enforcement agencies from across the western hemisphere sat down to discuss strategies for dealing with gangs. CSC advocated a cooperative, multidisciplinary approach that was not only welcomed by the international delegates but actually adopted unanimously by all countries involved.

Involving Staff

At the local level, SIOs help provide a safe and secure environment for staff and inmates alike. SIOs such as Doug Dennison, Edmonton Institution, believe in the benefits of sharing information with employees as long as sensitive intelligence and ongoing investigations are not jeopardized.

In quarterly meetings, Dennison briefs employees on key events and trends within the institution and "hot spots" are pinpointed. It's a way of involving staff in the big picture and demonstrating how seemingly disconnected events are, in fact, related. Dennison underlines the importance of careful report writing by correctional officers and encourages them to record anything out of the ordinary they encounter while on duty. Through the quarterly meetings, front-line staff are exposed to the analytical component of the security intelligence process and become active participants in the fight against organized crime.

Technology Can Help

In recent years, CSC has put modern technology to work by using specialized software that processes vast amounts of seemingly unrelated data to produce concise, analytical reports that decision-makers can use to evaluate various risk factors associated with organized crime. In the hands of a trained SIO, the software program's cross-referencing ability can bring the real picture of illicit activities into sharp focus and ensure that decision-makers get the facts quickly. ♦

Luciano Benteuto, National Manager Organized Crime/Criminal Gang CSC at the international law enforcement conference in Chiapas, Mexico.



The National Ethnocultural Advisory Committee (NEAC) came into being in 2001, and Dr. Emerson Douyon, an internationally renowned psychologist, was elected chairperson in fulfillment of Commissioner's Directive 767, Ethnocultural Offender Programs. The CD complements and enhances the existing programs of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and encourages the recognition of ethnicity and culture while managing inmates.

I recently met with Dr. Douyon — an authority in his field and an unassuming man. He spoke openly and candidly about the importance of the ethnocultural factor when dealing with offenders from ethnocultural minority groups.

BY Djamila Amellal, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

"The Correctional Service of Canada administers programs in prisons to promote a change in the criminal behaviour of offenders under its responsibility," Dr. Douyon said. "In order to ensure that this educational process operates effectively, CSC must take the ethnocultural parameter into account and consider the needs of offenders from ethnic groups. Offenders do not have the same history or the same path, and this heterogeneity requires a more diversified and more personalized approach, depending on the offender's home base, culture and ethnicity."



Chair of the NEAC, Dr. Emerson Douyon

So far, Dr. Douyon, who has conducted research in the area at the Université de Montréal and outside Canada, has visited 14 federal penitentiaries in various CSC regions. He has talked to offenders from many ethnic backgrounds and cultures, including Asians, Blacks, Arabs and Latinos. In his opinion, CSC should focus its efforts on three key elements in relation to ethnocultural offenders: programs, requirements and services, and staff awareness.

Adapting Programs to Cultural Realities

Correctional programs are very important since their objective is to help offenders evolve and prepare for parole in the community. However, according to Douyon, offenders belonging to ethnocultural groups agree that they do not see themselves reflected in these programs and that the content is not adapted to their reality: their ethnic identity, the traditions and values of their culture of origin which constitute a reference for them. "CSC programs are void of culture — a hidden aspect of the personality," says Dr. Douyon. "Behind the criminal acts, there are attitudes, beliefs and values that are shaped by culture. Individuals do not express distress, emotions and needs the same way in every culture. Each program should, therefore, have a specific cultural component, depending on the ethnic groups. This pluralist ethnocultural approach would help with the effective management of diversity in prisons."

Douyon raises another key issue regarding programs: dealing with non-Canadian offenders who are serving their sentence under the responsibility of CSC and who are threatened with deportation at the end of their incarceration. "How do we motivate these offenders in the programs? What living environment do we prepare them for, here or elsewhere?"

Requirements and Services Meet Expectations

One of the requirements that offenders consider important is *diet*. This is not a minor issue for those who want a diet that is consistent with their traditions and religious standards. "Behind these community culinary preferences," says Dr. Douyon, "are profound emotional and spiritual links between diet and culture."

Offenders also need to keep in direct contact with their families or members of

the NEAC through visits to the penitentiaries. According to Douyon, contact must be maintained at all times.

The offender intake assessment also could be more tailored to identify ethnicity and cultural factors. It would be useful for CSC to evaluate procedures and assessment tools with a view to allowing for ethnocultural variations. If CSC disregards cultural parameters, a distorted image of the offender's personality may result. "That is what offenders are talking about when they say that their criminal profile, compiled from psychological tests, dangerousness classifications and actuarial scales designed for North Americans, does not reflect their reality," Douyon pointed out. "Some offenders may be incorrectly classified as dangerous or high risk, which could have an undesirable effect on their incarceration."

Staff Training — An Effective Tool for Improved Communication

Dr. Douyon points out that program methods could be improved by educating correctional staff about offenders' cultures of origin. In his opinion, this could easily be achieved by holding discussion workshops with staff members and ethnocultural offenders. It would be an opportunity to become familiar with one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect. "Knowledge makes it possible to correct certain stereotypes and prejudices, labelling practices, and some negative attitudes that are detrimental to intercultural harmony," Douyon commented.

He added, "Recruiting more diverse staff and making them more visible to staff and offenders will help CSC accomplish its mission. It would be ideal if diversity were visible in administrations and in the institutions. For example, Leclerc Institution has an intercultural relations officer who conducts outreach work from the institution. That's fantastic. It would also be good to have parole officers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds to supervise in the community and make connections with offenders' families."

Building Bridges with the Ethnocultural Community

According to Dr. Douyon, awareness is not just limited to CSC staff. A great deal of education needs to happen with the families of offenders belonging to minority ethnic groups and with community organizations that do not always have a positive perception

of CSC. "In a number of ethnocultural communities, there is an anti police and anti prison tradition and culture," says Dr. Douyon. "Because of their past experience in socio-political systems where arbitrariness and non-entitlement are too often the rule, many offenders and their families are prejudiced against CSC. So CSC needs the support of the families and ethnic communities in order to facilitate offenders' gradual reintegration into the community. To build real bridges with the ethnocultural community, we must better understand it."

To dispel these prejudices, Dr. Douyon strongly recommends that CSC holds forums, recruits volunteers from ethnic groups, educates people about the role of the NEAC, develops research projects on ethnic groups and conducts special surveys concerning the perceptions, attitudes and expectations of ethnocultural communities. "I address the Haitian community on the radio to explain and educate," he says. "People were very happy to find out that there is an ethnocultural committee. They didn't know. We need to clarify the image of CSC and foster reconciliation."

He also points out that raising awareness among offenders' families will help offenders feel less cut off from their communities. "There is a tendency in ethnic communities to abandon, too quickly, those members who commit a crime. They become the shame of the family. Family members and communities who abandon the offender only fuel the offender's anger and discontent. Some of these individuals do not even speak the local languages and become very isolated. Raising awareness brings us closer to a solution."

In conclusion, Dr. Douyon says, "Ethnicity and culture are the frameworks within which we can examine offenders' problems. In other words, ethnicity and culture are categories or interpretation methods that can assist us with assessment, orientation, treatment and offender reintegration. Any initiative to restructure programs, services and research in an increasingly diverse prison setting should consider these new parameters." ♦

ETHNICITY AND CULTURE



Left to right: Jocelyne Simon, members of Montreal's Haitian community, and Daniel Amini

MEETING THE Challenges

Within its ethnocultural offender programs, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has created positions for intercultural relations officers and ethnocultural community engagement officers. We met with Daniel Amini of Leclerc Institution and Jocelyne Simon of the Montreal Metropolitan District. They talked to us about their work in the institutions and in the community.

BY **Djamila Amellal**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photo: Bill Rankin

"As a regional intercultural relations officer," says Daniel Amini in a quiet tone of voice, "I help implement CD 767, *Ethnocultural Offender Programs*, which enables inmates of foreign origin to assert their own culture, and spells out the obligation of operational units and district offices to respond, as far as possible, to their needs."

Inside and Outside the Walls

In the field, Amini's job is, among other things, to promote closer relations between offenders and their source communities so that offenders will have support when paroled. Amini makes a constant effort to inform community

agencies about offenders in CSC institutions, in order to organize meetings within the walls.

"Such agencies must have a clear mandate that is recognized by the government. I work to build bridges with, for example, the Italian, Arab, Asian and Black communities," says Amini, his voice full of optimism and determination. "To make this possible, I organize regular workshops, conferences and discussions to which I invite offenders and community partners. You have to help the offender develop trust in the community he is going to return to when he gets out."

Responding to Basic Cultural Needs

Amini also works to satisfy the basic cultural needs of offenders. In his view, this is a vital part of the CSC mission. "There are dietary requirements. The chaplains, imams and rabbis

in the institutions work closely on this with the heads of food services. Language needs must also be met, if offenders are to be able to understand their psychological assessments or their correctional plans, and to maintain contact with the outside world. I provide offenders with free copies of community newspapers in a variety of languages. There are also cultural needs, to the extent that culture and behaviour are inseparable. These needs can vary greatly from culture to culture."

Building Awareness at all Levels

According to Amini, fulfilling the CSC mission depends on sensitivity at three levels: the staff's sensitivity to the offenders' cultures, the offenders' sensitivity to other offenders' culture, and the community's sensitivity to CSC's mandate. To that end, he has developed an entire course on identity and diversity, which he is ready to give to CSC staff.

"Our job as CSC employees is to make law-abiding citizens out of offenders," comments Amini. "In practical terms, this means concentrating first on security, then on reintegration. It is essential, therefore, to listen with empathy,

to better understand and help offenders. We have to make CSC staff sensitive to the culture

of these offenders by, for example, providing thorough training for new recruits.”

Raising awareness among offenders, he says, is a matter of improving their knowledge about each other. “They have to get to know each other. I’m talking here about intercultural knowledge. For that, I organize gatherings and activities during which people talk about their homeland, its culture, its cuisine, and things like that.”

Guy Petit-Clair, Director of the Ville-Marie Area Parole Office, adds: “We know that CSC has commitments and goals in this area, and it is our duty to help achieve them. We have known for years that the ethnic and cultural dimension is going to be an increasingly significant one. We know, too, that the best way of reintegrating these offenders is into their own communities. The Quebec Region has always made a contribution to the maintenance of good relations with community organizations. We have opened the doors even wider by taking part in setting up national and regional ethnocultural advisory committees, and playing a role in their activities. Our efforts in this area are continuing.”

Mr. Amini will have his work cut out for him in the months ahead. In cooperation with colleagues and partners, he is organizing three community forums, one in October with the Greek community, another in November with Latin-American folk, and the third in January with the Muslim population.

In the Heart of the Community

Jocelyne Simon, an ethnocultural community engagement officer, speaks with quiet assurance born of solid experience in her field. She is very familiar with the challenges facing CSC. “My job is to meet with community groups, and by that I mean police, city politicians and representatives of ethnic and cultural communities in order to increase awareness of CSC’s mission,” she says.

She continues: “Moreover, some ethnocultural communities do not like the criminal justice system because of their experiences elsewhere. In their view, it is CSC that has taken their child away. Nor are they familiar with the whole issue of reintegration. A simple term like ‘community assessment’ makes them fearful, and they may slam the door in our face. So it is essential that we project a clearer image of CSC and its mandate. Raising awareness is what I do, and it is needed at every level, because CSC needs these communities.”

Ms. Simon, who joined CSC in 1989, even took a year’s sabbatical to work as a volunteer with young people from ethnic minorities. Marie-Andrée Cyrenne, the Metropolitan Montreal District Director, talks about her colleague’s contribution: “Jocelyne has built bridges with many communities. We have to maintain these alliances and work to create more. During Black History Month, she organized an activity that provided a golden opportunity to raise awareness between CSC representatives and the Haitian community.”

The Community Network: A Tremendous Resource for CSC

Ms. Simon plays a crucial role in relations with community groups, encouraging them to help fulfill CSC’s mandate. As Ms. Cyrenne points out, this is the most productive approach because, in the supervision of offenders CSC is dealing with a whole network. “The network takes in the family, the community and the police. CSC needs their support.”

She adds: “The presence of many ethnic groups on the Island of Montreal is very much today’s reality, and it is reality also in CSC institutions. When we talk about reintegration, we are talking about the guidance and supervision of offenders. This is where the challenge begins for our parole officers [Pos], who absolutely must learn to work with the ethnocultural communities in order to do their job. A PO has to seek the support of the spouse, the family and the community. A PO is an authority figure, however, and is negatively perceived by some ethnocultural communities.”

Recruitment – A Solution

It is here that the recruitment of volunteers and employees from such communities becomes important. Recruitment helps build bridges with communities and is the key to developing trust in CSC. “These communities show interest when we approach them and talk about our mandate. We have to cultivate that interest and foster closer relations.”

Along the same lines, Ms. Cyrenne adds: “The participation of members of these communities in the discharge of our mission is vital. Recruitment is one means. To recruit people, however, you have to attract them. How do we attract and keep them? There is work to be done, and we are making progress. Employees from these community groups would be a great asset for CSC. Such people become role models.” ♦



Left to right: Jocelyne Simon and Marie-Andrée Cyrenne

Different Populations

Different Needs



There are now an equal proportion of offenders in CSC institutions serving less than three years and those serving life or indeterminate sentences. In the last five to seven years, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of offenders entering the system with sentences of three years or less. Why? It's due to a combination of factors but mainly to the declining rate of serious violent crimes such as sex offences, armed robbery and homicide in Canada.

BY **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer, Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photo: **Bill Rankin**

On the other end of the continuum are the inmates who will be "inside" for a very long time. They tend to have lengthy criminal histories, including first- and second-degree murder; these are the most serious offenders, in need of careful strategies and interventions to control their behaviour. As they accumulate in the system (more coming in than going out), they take up increasing amounts of space in maximum-security prisons. What will they do with so much time on their hands? How will CSC adapt?

A youthful offender with a 2- to 3-year sentence

Dr. Michael Bettman,
Acting Director General,
Offender Programs and
Reintegration (OPR),

explains that CSC has developed a new generation of high-intensity programs over the last six years. “We are currently adapting to the changing profile by recognizing that CSC’s time to intervene with a certain group of offenders will become more limited in the next few years. We may no longer have the luxury of treating a lifelong pattern of criminal behaviour in a limited sentence.”

As a result, for those offenders who have multiple needs and short sentences, OPR is currently developing a more effective program-referral process that targets the most serious aspects of criminal behaviour *first*. Program resources are being reallocated so that the higher intensity interventions that focus on serious crime — violence prevention, sex offender programs, substance abuse, and family violence — are the priority.

“We have developed motivational strategies to target those offenders who refuse to participate or drop out of programs,” says Dr. Bettman. “We implemented the Community Maintenance Program to ensure that the progress offenders make is continuous and adaptive to their changing situation.”

In the future, CSC will adapt to the changing offender profile even further. Making the offender intake process shorter and more effective is a challenge that will allow increased time for interventions. Modularizing programs and offering those programs earlier in the sentence will also maximize rehabilitation in a shorter timeframe.

Sharing programs and information with provincial and territorial partners will forge another step towards a seamless correctional system. Working closely with non-governmental partners to deliver programs and provide structured supervision will also extend CSC’s ability to help offenders beyond the limits of their sentence.

Another aim of reconfiguring the programs is to bring them out of the classroom and into the hands of parole officers, social program officers, psychologists and correctional officers. There will be a renewed effort to assist clinical staff in assessing and changing offender behaviour.

“Most importantly as an organization, CSC will measure progress and offender competencies on a regular basis to distinguish those offenders who are capable of managing their risk from those who are not.” ♦



Responding to Substance Abuse Issues

Offenders will tell you that drugs and alcohol are often what got them into trouble in the first place. But substance abuse problems do not necessarily end once they are incarcerated. Despite their best efforts, correctional systems worldwide — including CSC — have slowed but not halted the flow of drugs into prisons.

BY **Bill Rankin**, Communications Officer,
Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photo: Bill Rankin

But this is changing. To combat the problem, which leads to criminal activity, violence and disease transmission, CSC has stepped up its efforts, bringing to bear policies and programs that reduce both the supply and the demand for illicit drugs. In practical terms, this means stopping the inward flow of drugs at the front gate, providing innovative substance abuse programs and specialized units for offenders dedicated to a drug-free lifestyle, and methadone maintenance programs for inmates addicted to heroin.

Currently, the Service is devising a drug interdiction strategy that aims to fill any gaps in policy and practices, including a review of the deployment of correctional staff, intelligence gathering and the use of promising new technologies. A drug interdiction audit is also planned for the fall of 2005.

At the institutional level, search teams with detector dogs recently launched a coordinated blitz, increasing surveillance and awareness inside institutions across the country. They are turning up the heat and sending out a strong message to offenders and visitors who might be

contemplating a smuggling attempt: “We can show up at any institution, any time, day or night,” says Kingston Penitentiary Search Co-ordinator Jim Robinson.

Substance Abuse Interventions

CSC has long been internationally renowned for its high-quality substance abuse programs that help offenders beat their addictions and, at the same time, reduce the demand for drugs both inside and in the community. Recently, these programs were revised — a timely move given the Service’s renewed commitment to drug-free institutions.

Improvements to the original model include the addition of a national high-intensity substance abuse program, continuous intake maintenance in the institution, and a pre-release booster program. A low-intensity intervention has also been created that will be maintained only for offenders with low needs in this area — a better fit for some who don’t need the high-level assistance.

Another goal is to deliver institutional substance abuse programs as early as possible during a sentence so that the inmate can practise newly learned skills while he/she is incarcerated. The aim is to eliminate the demand for drugs in the institutions, thereby increasing institutional security *and* offender health.

Especially relevant for offenders serving long sentences, any inmate who participates in an institutional substance abuse program must now complete a pre-release booster program prior to community release. This helps ensure that offenders are leaving the institution with realistic plans that will help them cope with transition into the community.

Search coordinator/drug dog handler James Robinson and his canine companion, CJ, search the interior perimeter of Kingston Penitentiary.



Substance abuse programs, like other correctional programs,

are now aligned with the community maintenance program (CMP), a new and radically different strategy for community after-care. The plan is to have CMP replace all the national substance abuse maintenance programs within two years.

Exploring New Territory

The Addictions Research Centre (ARC) has been exploring new territory lately. In May 2005, the newly developed Women Offender Substance Abuse Programming (WOSAP) — the first substance abuse treatment to be developed and demonstrated by the Centre — was turned over to the Women Offender Sector for Service-wide implementation. Preliminary findings from the demonstration project, which saw an unprecedented number of institutional and community sites participating (17 in total) are extremely favourable according to feedback received by David Varis, Project Manager at the Centre.

The Aboriginal Offender Substance Abuse Program (AOSAP), currently being demonstrated in each of CSC's five regions, is being evaluated and refined, and should be ready for hand-over to the Reintegration Programs Branch in 2006. Participant, facilitator and Elder feedback on this new program, which blends both traditional Aboriginal healing and contemporary approaches to substance abuse treatment, are "overwhelmingly positive" says Varis.

The ARC has recently completed its research on the Intensive Support Unit (ISU) demonstration initiative, which involved five sites. The findings are very positive in terms of overall effectiveness and outcomes for offenders residing in these units. The complete impact analysis will be available on the Service's InfoNet site.

While the Addictions Research Centre is considered "the new kid on the block" in terms of substance abuse assessment, research, program development and knowledge sharing in Canada, its work is quickly becoming known for responding to substance abuse issues on a national level and within the Canadian addictions field. "The next five years promise to be even busier as we unfold new research, assessment tools, and programs," comments ARC Director, Dr. Brian Grant. "Our map is out and we're ready to journey." ♦



The Westmorland Institution farm

WESTMORLAND INSTITUTION

To help protect the hydrosphere and thus minimize water pollution, target 2.1.2 of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2003 will ensure that releases of effluents containing bacteria, fertilizers and/or pesticides from farm operations are reduced by 10% compared to baseline 2000 by March 2007. Armed with this goal, in 2005, CORCAN personnel in charge of farm operations at New Brunswick's Westmorland Institution, working with regional and national headquarters, launched the development and gradual implementation of an environmental farm plan (EFP) to reduce the environmental effects of their farming activities.

BY Paul Provost, M.Sc., National Co-ordinator, Environmental Protection Programs

Agriculture, Stockbreeding and the Environment

Farming and stockbreeding are still among the world's noblest callings. Nowadays, more than ever, this nobility must join with wisdom to ensure sustainability in practices. Indeed, when improperly managed, farming and breeding activities can pose a major threat to environmental (air/water/soil) quality. The main negative environmental effects may be summed up as follows: pollution of surface and groundwater by contaminated runoff and leaching; gas emissions that generate odours

and sometimes include greenhouse gases; soil contamination caused by inappropriate fertilizer or pesticide use and inappropriate land management, including nutrients. In this setting, spreading manure, crop rotation, ploughing practices and soil compaction and erosion are some of the realities that farmers and breeders face on a seasonal basis. And it is precisely in a process attempting to reconcile cost effectiveness with social and ecological priorities that an EFP becomes most meaningful.

Sustainable Benefits

The purpose of an EFP is to help farm producers develop a practical plan for managing their farms in a socially acceptable,

economically viable and environmentally responsible way. Producers developing an EFP are taking a major step towards ensuring the sustainability of the land they are farming. The initial stage involves filling out an awareness document designed to help producers gauge the inherent risks of their farming or breeding practices. Through risk assessment questions that bring out the strengths as well as the weaknesses of their operations, producers can later set realistic goals to protect and enhance the environment on their farms.

Concerned about optimizing their operations and attracted by the many benefits associated with setting up their own EFP, CORCAN personnel working on the Westmorland Institution farm jumped at the chance to get involved in this pilot project. The main area of interest and activity entered into thus far is the development of a nutrient management plan (NMP) to optimize the process and percentage of fertilizer use in terms of crop and soil types. The NMP includes, for example, creation of a detailed map of the lands involved and a stringent analysis of the structure and physicochemical properties of plots affected by fertilizer use. The data collected on each plot are then entered into a graphics program (database) that confers precise control over materials and quantities placed on the soil while fostering improved management of plots under cultivation. Special considerations are also raised to mark off buffer zones that prevent nutrient runoff and leaching into drainage ditches and thus shield nearby streams from eutrophication (killing of animal life by oxygen deprivation caused by a dense plant population).

Lastly, the Westmorland Institution EFP also focusses on pesticide storage and farm waste management as well as other beneficial outcomes that will emerge as this project settles in.

Exportable Outcomes

The EFP proposes specific improvements for the Westmorland Institution farm in response to one of CSC's SDS 2003 objectives. The authorities running the EFP count on exporting their training soon to other CORCAN farms in Ontario and on the Prairies. Setting up an EFP makes a lot of sense, not simply because it demonstrates leadership and the advanced training of staff and offenders working on CSC farms, but also because it is synonymous with the responsible and sustainable management of the valuable natural resources that form the basis of our food chain. ♦

New System Ensures Improved Client Service



Jean-François Talbot

BY **Jean-François Talbot**,
Project Manager, CORCAN Migration,
Comptrollership Systems Directorate

CORCAN and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) marked the beginning of a new phase in their ongoing partnership, effective April 1, 2005. Corporate financial and material management systems are now aligned through the use of one system: the Integrated Financial and Material Management System (IFMMS).

Previously, CORCAN's accounting and manufacturing operations used another system called Syteline, which was established prior to CSC's Oracle implementation. Both organizations pursued a parallel development course, but over the years it became evident that an integrated approach would be beneficial to both.

When CORCAN signed the IFMMS agreement in November 2003, both organizations aimed to merge their work into one integrated system. The scope of the project initially comprised the migration of accounting modules only but soon incorporated manufacturing components as well.

In the spirit of true partnership, the project team included the Comptrollership Systems Directorate (CSD) as well as CORCAN resources. Numerous working group sessions were held; CORCAN resources across the country could be counted on to share their insights and expertise related to their business processes. CSD faced new and challenging issues and gained invaluable insight into the manufacturing world. Processes and procedures were streamlined for both organizations. In order to meet CORCAN's unique requirements, Oracle Discrete Manufacturing modules were adopted to supplement the current modules in use at CSC. CSC/CORCAN is the only federal government department to implement these modules.

In total, more than 100 CORCAN users from every region were trained on all the IFMMS modules during the busy year-end period. In addition to meeting end-of-year production and sales orders, staff were engaged in two training phases of two weeks each.

CORCAN will now have all its information — such as inventory items numbers and customer addresses — under one database. This will help the organization with their business decisions (for example, deciding which institution can manufacture a particular product at the best cost).

This new affiliation between CSC and CORCAN will streamline financial and material management activities. It's simply one more step taken by CSC and CORCAN to improve methods and processes and ensure improved client service. ♦



CSC Links Up with Passport Canada

BY **Jaimie Banks**, Communications Officer, Information Management Services

Photo: Bill Rankin

On March 31, 2005, CSC inked a deal with Passport Canada to allow electronic information sharing concerning offenders under CSC's jurisdiction.

The two departments had been sharing little information, and there was a recognized need on both sides to improve upon the method and the extent of information sharing. As stated in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations*, offenders on day parole, full parole, statutory release or unescorted temporary absences are to "remain at all times in Canada." To establish who these people were and to determine instances in which offenders' passports should be refused or revoked, Passport Canada needed more information from the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC).

"An electronic link between the two departments will make the exchange immediate," explains Dan Kingsbury, chief of communications for Passport Canada. "This memorandum of understanding [MOU] between the two parties really facilitates the flow of information between the two sides." The importance of such an agreement became apparent as public safety concerns became a bigger issue across the globe.

There are numerous benefits to this new agreement for both Passport Canada and CSC. As soon as the links are in place between the two departments, Passport Canada will be provided with access to information — names and known aliases, gender, date and place of birth, photograph and warrant expiry date — on all current offenders. With that, Passport Canada will be able to identify any offenders currently holding valid passports. This will allow officials to review the circumstances of the case, possibly resulting in the revocation of some passports. After that one-time information transfer, CSC will continue to provide Passport Canada with

Standing, left to right: Gérard Lauzon, Gino Lechasseur, Garry Mohr, Nathalie Gervais, Richard Harvey, Nancie Proulx, John Milchak, Mel Sater. Seated: Robert Riel, Doreen Steidle

daily updates concerning new offenders. Passport Canada will also be able to request electronic updates via the CSC database if there is any indication that a passport applicant may also be an offender.

However, CSC wanted to be certain that privacy issues were respected, and in that regard Passport Canada will also have access to offenders' warrant expiry dates, and will purge all records related to individuals who are no longer considered offenders. This is determined by a definition laid out in the MOU.

CSC also benefits from the exchange. After Passport Canada requests information from the CSC database, CSC will be provided with information pertaining to all passports that are revoked, refused, maintained or issued to offenders. As soon as Passport Canada takes a decision concerning a passport for an offender, that information will be electronically sent to CSC. This quick method of transmitting information ensures that both CSC and Passport Canada are doing their utmost to meet their respective mandates, and it allows Passport Canada to have the necessary information on hand when determining an applicant's eligibility.

This MOU represents a momentous step taken together by CSC and Passport Canada to better serve the public. Along with allowing CSC up-to-date information on offenders who put in requests for passports, sharing information electronically will save time and resources, making it quicker and easier to have essential information at the fingertips of those who need it.

Estimates are that the electronic links will be in place and functioning by this fall, allowing the two departments time to perfect the process and work out all the details, including specific instructions for operational units. ♦

LEADERSHIP RENEWAL

National Headquarters

Keith Coulter

Commissioner

Effective September 8, 2005

Richard Harvey

Director General, Information Management Services, Corporate Services Sector
Effective June 7, 2005

Jennifer Wheatley

Director General, Performance Management, Performance Assurance Sector
Effective May 10, 2005

Lisa Hardey

Assistant Commissioner, Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector
Effective September 6, 2005

Todd Sloan

Director, Access to Information and Privacy, Organizational Renewal Sector
Effective May 25, 2005

Lynn Garrow

Director General, Offender Programs and Reintegration, Correctional Programs and Operations Sector
Effective September 6, 2005

Regions

Lise Bouthillier

Acting District Director, East-West District, Quebec Region
Effective July 4, 2005

Jean-Luc Gougeon

Director, Federal Training Centre, Quebec Region
Effective July 4, 2005

Joyce Malone

Warden, Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines Institution, Quebec Region
Effective June 13, 2005

David Pisapio

District Director, Central Ontario, Ontario Region
Effective July 4, 2005