

LET'S TALK

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Focus
on Effective
Interventions for
First Nations,
Métis and Inuit
Offenders



Correctional Service
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Jean Oakes, a highly respected Elder from the Nekaneet Reserve near Maple Creek in south-west Saskatchewan, counsels women offenders at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge.

Inside this issue of **Let's Talk** you will read about the transformation in Aboriginal corrections that has occurred in recent years as the criminal justice system tries to narrow the gap between the rates of incarceration of Aboriginal people and mainstream offenders.

MISSION



The CSC Mission

A Renewed Emphasis on Public Safety

Photo: Bill Rankin

The Minister of Public Safety, Stockwell Day, and Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) Commissioner Keith Coulter recently signed a revised version of CSC's Mission that reflects the government's emphasis on and CSC's contribution to public safety.

"I was pleased to sign this revised Mission with the Minister," said Commissioner Coulter, "just before the Executive Development Symposium, and I assure you that the fundamental elements of our Mission remain unchanged and are fully supported by the new government."

The revised wording is as follows:

The Correctional Service of Canada, as part of the criminal justice system and respecting the rule of law, contributes to public safety by actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens, while exercising reasonable, safe, secure and humane control.

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COMMISSIONER'S EDITORIAL

Focus on Enhanced Capacities to Provide Effective Interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders



This edition of *Let's Talk* offers a window into the Service's work on providing enhanced capacities to provide effective interventions for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit offenders. As many readers know, this is one of CSC's five key priorities, and success in this area will also mean better results in our other four priority areas: safe transition of offenders into the community, safety and security for staff and offenders in our institutions, improved capacities to address mental health needs of offenders, and strengthened management practices.

In this issue of *Let's Talk*, you'll find an article on CSC's Aboriginal initiatives by Senior Deputy Commissioner Don Head, who I asked last fall to lead CSC's Aboriginal Initiatives in order for this important priority to benefit from his focus and strong leadership. You'll also find other feature articles that highlight some of our key Aboriginal initiatives, and the employees and CSC partners who work diligently to make a difference and achieve real results in this area.

I am pleased with the progress we are making to position the organization to achieve tangible results in all five priority

areas. We have a series of targeted strategies and plans to help meet our objectives; for instance, to help with safe transition to the community, a plan is being developed and piloted for an accelerated intake assessment of offenders with short-term sentences. Another example is the implementation of CSC's new community mental health strategy that addresses the mental health priority. To support our priority for safe and secure institutions, CSC is also implementing an enhanced drug interdiction plan to help reduce illicit drugs in institutions. There will be more information on plans in support of this priority in the next edition of *Let's Talk*.

All of these efforts are focused on achieving the best possible public safety results. I hope you enjoy learning more about our Aboriginal initiatives in this edition of *Let's Talk* and about the dedicated people who are behind these efforts. ♦

Keith Coulter
Commissioner
Correctional Service of Canada

Enhanced capacities to provide **effective interventions** for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders

CSC'S Aboriginal INITIATIVES

Photo: Bill Rankin

Senior Deputy Commissioner Don Head



Over the past five years, CSC has developed and implemented new approaches to Aboriginal corrections and made progress; however, it takes time and we have more to do. For that reason, one of CSC's five key priorities for 2006–07 is to provide enhanced capacities to provide effective interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit offenders. We are in the process of implementing specific, targeted plans to meet this goal, in line with our longer term strategic vision for a federal correctional system that is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal offenders and that contributes to safe and healthy communities.

To give you some context, offenders with First Nations, Métis and Inuit ancestry are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and in correctional systems across the country. While Aboriginal peoples comprise 2.7 percent of the adult Canadian population, approximately 16.7 percent of offenders serving federal sentences (in institutions and communities) are of Aboriginal ancestry. The proportion is even higher for the overall women offender population.

To understand the challenge that this presents for CSC, we must acknowledge the differences between the Aboriginal offenders and non-Aboriginal offenders in our custody. Research shows that Aboriginal people admitted to federal custody are increasingly younger and are more likely to be incarcerated for a violent offence, often have affiliations with gangs and have much higher needs (including needs related to substance abuse, health, employment and education). While non-Aboriginal

offenders may also face many of these issues, there are unique aspects to consider for Aboriginal offenders and different types of interventions may be required to effectively address their needs.

To meet these needs, CSC adopted an Aboriginal corrections continuum of care in 2003. It is consistent with the four key components of CSC's overall correctional strategy: baseline risk and needs assessment at intake, research-based interventions that respond to those risks and needs, reassessment for decision-making, and community reintegration.

We are now poised to take the next step. This fall, we will launch our five-year plan which articulates a vision for Aboriginal corrections that will take us beyond development and implementation of correctional interventions to enhancing capacities to provide interventions for Aboriginal offenders within a continuum of care model that respects the diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit

offenders and their communities. This new approach calls for greater integration of Aboriginal initiatives and considerations throughout our organization, with other levels of government and with Aboriginal peoples.

We will succeed with these plans only with the ongoing support and commitment of Elders, Aboriginal liaison officers, community representatives and Aboriginal organizations, and we look forward to continuing our work with these significant partners.

Ultimately, our results will be measured in terms of public safety, the contribution that Aboriginal-specific interventions make to reducing the rate of violent re-offending while individuals are under CSC jurisdiction and the contribution that those interventions make to helping offenders sustain progress beyond the end of their sentence.

I look forward to sharing with you our achievements and successes, as we work with dedicated partners and staff to provide enhanced capacities to provide effective interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit offenders. ♦

Don Head
Senior Deputy Commissioner
Correctional Service of Canada

Focus on Effective Interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders

In recent years, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has made it a priority to find alternatives to traditional incarceration for Aboriginal offenders. The impetus behind this effort comes from within the Service, from various judicial inquiries and from the 1991 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which concluded that “the justice system has failed Aboriginal people” — the key indicator of which was their steadily increasing disproportionate representation in Canadian institutions.

BY **G. Chartier and Bill Rankin**,
Communications Officers, Communications
and Citizen Engagement

Photo: Martin Bélanger

The current Canadian Aboriginal adult population is approximately 2.7 percent of the total Canadian population, yet 16.7 percent of current federal offenders are of First Nations, Métis or Inuit descent. And in the Prairie Region, where Aboriginal people comprise a larger proportion of the general population, they account for a staggering 60 percent of federal offenders.

As alternatives to traditional incarceration evolve, CSC remains in a unique position as the federal agency responsible for the day-to-day lives of a significant segment of the Aboriginal population. This responsibility encompasses a wide range of services, including health, education, employment and those meeting diverse cultural needs. CSC is supported in its efforts by special provisions laid out in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA).

The Corrections and Conditional Release Act

“The CCRA fundamentally redefined the relationship between CSC and Aboriginal peoples when it came into effect in 1992,” explains Diane Zilkowsky, Aboriginal Initiatives Branch. Sections 80 and 81 of the CCRA require that CSC provides programs designed to address the needs of Aboriginal offenders and gives CSC the authority to enter into agreements with Aboriginal communities for the provision of correctional services.

“The challenge facing us,” says Zilkowsky, “is to bridge the gaps between traditional correctional approaches and Aboriginal methods of justice and reconciliation.”

Steady Progress

Just how is CSC accomplishing this? CSC’s Aboriginal Continuum of Care model embodies research findings that culture, teachings and ceremony — core aspects of Aboriginal identity — appear to be critical to

the healing process. Across the country, since the inception of the CCRA, there has been a steady development of directives, policies, programs and institutions specific to the Aboriginal offender population and many agreements signed between Aboriginal communities and the Service. Over time, these initiatives have been adjusted and assessed as their results and long-term effects on public safety become clearer.



Diane Zilkowsky, Manager Aboriginal Relations, Aboriginal Initiative Directorate

Equally important, sections 82 and 83 of the CCRA recognize Aboriginal spirituality as having the same status as other religions. As a result, Aboriginal spirituality has become an increasingly powerful factor in the day-to-day lives of both men and women offenders. Many have been introduced, often for the first time, to the beliefs of their ancestors, and through this way of life they have established a sense of self-worth and identity. Their new sense of self and community is based not on criminal pursuits but on the shared ceremonies of the sacred pipe and the sweat lodge and on the teachings of Elders who are accorded the same status as other faith leaders.

Healing Lodges

In no setting is this more apparent than in the eight healing lodges that CSC has established since the concept first emerged from the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women in 1990. A collaborative effort between the Service, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the Native Women's Association of Canada, these healing lodges integrate Aboriginal beliefs on justice and reconciliation into the federal correctional system. Recent research shows that healing lodges and other CSC initiatives for Aboriginal inmates, such as Pathways, have had a positive effect on public safety.

The following articles will give readers insights and understanding into how CSC works with Aboriginal communities to reach this goal, which ultimately leads to successful reintegration. ♦

Enhanced capacities to provide
effective interventions
for First Nations, Métis and
Inuit Offenders

Marc-Arthur Hyppolite,
Deputy Commissioner,
Prairie Region, and
recipient of the Public
Service Award of
Excellence for 2005



A Rendez-vous With Success

One of the largest geographical regions managed by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), the Prairies has the highest incarceration rate of First Nations, Métis and Inuit offenders — close to 60 percent. And it is in this region precisely where Regional Deputy Commissioner Marc-Arthur Hyppolite has put in place an effective action plan involving successful interventions that address the specific needs of offenders. With great modesty, Mr. Hyppolite explains why and how this approach to corrections — one that is practical, workable and highly successful — came into being.

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

Photo: Courtesy of Marc-Arthur Hyppolite

With 22 years of CSC experience under his belt, Mr. Hyppolite speaks with conviction about the work that he finds so exciting. He introduces us to an approach where wisdom and serenity join hands with ambition. “When in December 2003 I won the national competition that led to my appointment as Regional Deputy Commissioner for the Prairies, I was told that a formidable challenge lay before me. I don’t know why I was selected for this region in particular, because I didn’t know all that much about it. I found out it’s a highly diversified and very complex region, with a large Aboriginal offender population, which is why the challenge at stake was not to be underestimated due to the combination of Aboriginal and political issues. But because I’m open-minded and willing to serve, I knew I could adapt to the situation.”

Hyppolite isn’t one to give up easily, whatever the challenge may be. “I’ve worked in various regions in CSC, but my greatest challenge was in a previous position, going from Ontario to Quebec. The issues in Quebec can be unique, especially culturally. I generally have excellent memories of my time there, especially at Cowansville Institution. Looking back, it was a confidence-builder.”

A Strategy Based on Reality and Law

Having looked at the challenges, Hyppolite rolled up his sleeves and immediately began work on a strategy, knowing that a special action plan was needed. “The facts were there. The region has close to 3,700 inmates, 1,117 of whom are Aboriginal. Of these, 751 are First Nations, 353 are Métis and 13 are Inuit. It is a diverse population, and traditional teachings for these groups are not necessarily the same. The offenders are housed in 13 institutions, along with healing lodges and district offices, bringing the total to 18.”

Mr. Hyppolite took as his starting point the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA), sections 4h along with sections 80 to 84, which outline, among other things, programs suited to the needs of offenders, recognition of Aboriginal spirituality and the establishment of agreements with Aboriginal communities to provide services. “These sections were vital to our approach,” noted Mr. Hyppolite. “There was an obvious need for culturally competent human resources, for working with Elders and for placing offenders in their hands immediately after their admission. It was also essential to place them in a healing centre and to have the initial evaluators prepare a correctional and healing plan. Aboriginal programs must form the basis of that plan, and move toward appropriate, secure release that would be gauged by the offender’s progress.”

Special Recruitment, Special Programs

“The regional plan included hiring and training front-line and other staff, because we had to develop specific skills and abilities to meet the needs on site,” added Mr. Hyppolite. “These staff members had to be Aboriginal so they could help us understand a lot of things related to their culture and give us guidance. For example, the contribution made by Lawrence Burnouf, Regional Administrator, Aboriginal Issues, and his team, was invaluable. The work had to be done with people motivated to work with the type of offenders we have here, people with an understanding of their culture.”

“The programs absolutely must be tied in with Native realities. I found that CSC’s accredited programs were just not there yet. We had to tailor them to suit the Aboriginal way of life, or it just wouldn’t work.”

Healing Centres and Aboriginal Pathways

Healing centres were included in Mr. Hyppolite’s strategic plan. He re-established some that were no longer functioning and created new ones as well. This gave many more offenders

a chance to stay in and benefit from them.

“I reopened Ochichakkosipi, which is now operating with 15 or 16 offenders, and quite a few offenders have been released from there by the National Parole Board. Occupancy is high, and I consider it to be a real success. I’m very proud of it.”

Another initiative in Mr. Hyppolite’s action plan was creating Aboriginal Pathways in institutions with higher security levels. He notes that the Aboriginal Pathways Strategy is designed to provide healing; it also prepares offenders to go from a maximum-security institution to a medium-security one, and from there to minimum security. “I didn’t have enough funding, so I redirected money budgeted for traditional programs at institutions like Stony Mountain, Bowden and Saskatchewan Penitentiary. This worked very well, since it helped establish a good level of security for the inmates, a level that tends to appear higher than it really is. It also helps raise the motivation of difficult offenders and facilitate correctional interventions.”

Crossroads – A Special Unit

In addition to adhering to Section 4 h and Sections 81 and 84 of the CCRA, Mr. Hyppolite also drew on his solid multi-dimensional experience as warden at both the community and institutional levels, including the Special Handling Unit, to create a specialized unit in the Prairies Region. The Crossroads Unit, similar to the unit in use at Stony Mountain Institution, was designed for offenders who are the least cooperative and involved in intimidating activities. “I deny offenders the right to become predators. We put them in this unit that we have created where it’s more structured and where they’re closely supervised. The Crossroads Unit helps reduce the level of violence. Those assigned to it participate in Aboriginal programs, and when they’re ready, they go back into the regular population. We have some very encouraging results from this initiative.”

Partnership with Aboriginal Communities

Mr. Hyppolite also scores points by promoting partnerships with the Aboriginal communities, which in turn, lend him considerable support. “We have created some invaluable partnerships in the community, one of which is the Aboriginal Consultative Committee. We can consult about everything. Working with Lawrence Burnouf, who has at his disposal a whole sector dealing with Aboriginal issues, we try to understand why things happen and then what we can do about them.”

What Makes Him Tick

When asked where he gets the motivation to work so hard on the Aboriginal offenders file, Mr. Hyppolite says, “First, there’s the CSC Mission, an outstanding and, for me, inspirational document. Then there’s the exceptional results, the recognition from the region’s Aboriginal population for my contribution, even though I am not Aboriginal myself. Their appreciation for my approach and for the interest that I take — all this encourages me to do everything I can to help fulfill the hopes of these offenders. I have indeed devoted a good deal of time to this file, and it is still a passion with me.”

A Broad Vision

Being pragmatic and realistic, Mr. Hyppolite has certainly moved forward the CSC agenda for Aboriginal offenders in the Prairies Region. This has earned him the respect of the Aboriginal population in the region and that of CSC partners. “This is probably the best assignment I have ever had. It keeps me busy and motivates me even more. The Prairies Region makes up close to half of the country — the challenge is great. I’m happy to have done my best and to have achieved good results although there’s always room for improvement. I believe that my success is also CSC’s success. I did not have any rendez-vous with destiny; I am just a man who’s too stubborn to quit in the face of challenges.”

Looking to the future, the recipient of the Public Service Award of Excellence in June 2005 says, “I’m very proud to see that the Aboriginal issue counts among the five priorities of Commissioner Coulter and Senior Deputy Commissioner Head. As for my part in a worthy cause, I will continue to do my best, as long as I have the strength and the will to loyally serve CSC, the Public Service of Canada and, ultimately, my fellow Canadians.” ♦



An excellent example, the Pê Sâkâstêw Healing Lodge provides effective interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit offenders.

Enhanced capacities to provide **effective interventions** for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders



The Pathways Unit at La Macaza Institution The Path to Personal Growth and Healing

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

A Pathways Unit is a living environment that addresses the cultural and spiritual needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit offenders. A number of Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) institutions, including La Macaza Institution in the Quebec Region, have implemented this initiative. A *Let's Talk* team met with Pierre Gervais, the Pathways coordinator at La Macaza, and his staff. They talked about the benefits of this approach, which meets CSC's current priorities.

Photos: Bill Rankin

After two hours heading north on winding roads, the buildings of La Macaza Institution appear in the distance. The institution sprawls over a large area, which in the 1960s was the site of a U.S. army base, and later, an Aboriginal school. From there, you can see a longhouse and the tip of a great white tepee that pierces the blue sky. This medium-security institution houses about

257 offenders, of which nearly half are sex offenders undergoing intensive treatment.

According to Pierre Gervais, the coordinator for the Pathways initiative, the unit is the catalyst for progress made by offenders on their path to personal growth and eventual healing. "It is a way of life that First Nations, Inuit and Métis offenders can relate to in a more specific and personal way than they could to more mainstream programs," explains Gervais. "Pathways

creates the cultural ties that some inmates have lost for a variety of reasons, including their experiences with residential schools and assimilation into mainstream culture. Within Pathways, offenders interact with other participants who have similar dynamics, goals and beliefs."

The Core of the Initiative

Pathways units were created in 2000 as a pilot project. In light of the makeup of the inmate population in the institution, management took a marked interest and, as a result, it underwent significant changes in 2004.

According to the small team working on Pathways, the unit fosters a way of living that takes into account the actual experiences of Aboriginal, Métis and Inuit offenders — experiences marked by residential schools, life on reserves, forced assimilation, broken family ties and a pervading feeling of helplessness in the face of change.

The Pathways Unit team.
Seated: Elders Pierre Papatie
and Colette Sabourin
Standing: Elizabeth Alikashuak
and Pierre Gervais

Pierre Gervais explains: "Pathways is an initiative that tries to offer solutions to alleviate certain social problems by recreating a way of life that enables offenders to reconnect to Aboriginal culture and philosophy and take their needs — such as self-esteem — into account." Darryn Roy, Acting Manager, Aboriginal Initiatives Branch, National Headquarters, adds: "Pathways tries to create a special healing environment that encourages only positive behaviour. It is a considerable challenge, when considered in the context of a medium-security institution."

The Pathways team consists of three Elders, a liaison officer, two program officers and Coordinator Pierre Gervais. Together, they work with nearly 60 offenders, providing them with individual counselling, organizing sweat lodges and other ceremonies and crafts workshops, and preparing traditional meals. In addition, the team works with parole officers, building a relationship of increased trust that is essential to achieving positive outcomes.

Pathways: Recognizing Differences

According to Pierre Gervais, "Commissioner's Directive 702 does not refer to differences between Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis peoples;



but in our institution we do find real differences, which Pathways tries to take into account. In Quebec alone, there are about 12 Aboriginal nations, including the Montagnais, Naskapi, Mohawk, Micmac and Malecite. The Inuit do not consider themselves Indians, but rather as a distinct Aboriginal people. They have their own culture, language and spiritual traditions. For example, sweetgrass is very important in First Nations spiritual ceremonies, but the Inuit do not use it. Pathways accommodates these differences because it is important to the offenders."

An Alternative That Promotes Change

"Pathways is a healing tool," says one offender, "a way to reconnect with my cultural heritage and with who I am. I used to be in a maximum-security institution in Kingston. I am here now, and I hope that the progress I've made will help me get into a minimum-security institution. I would rather talk to the Elders than to correctional officers. Their teachings are fantastic: respecting the land and the people. I prefer that to meetings with psychologists. Now, I make objects that are part of my culture and that I'm really proud of"

Gervais explains that offenders wishing to participate in Pathways must show genuine motivation and commit to making positive emotional, mental, physical and spiritual changes. They must also demonstrate responsibility and show respect for others and themselves. "An inmate interested in Pathways has to fill out the participation request form, explaining why he is interested in joining Pathways," he says. "After consultations with the Elders, the coordinator, the liaison officer, the correctional officer and the parole officer, the case is discussed by the Pavilion Board, and if the decision is favourable, we hold a welcome ceremony for the new member."

Participants are housed in C Block living unit. They must follow traditional protocols, keep to their correctional plans and obey the institution's regulations.

The Elders' Central Role

Elders Pierre Papatie, Colette Sabourin and Elizabeth Alikashuak work side by side with Pierre Gervais. When asked how they fit into Pathways, Elder Papatie says: "I think God chose me to play a role here. Pathways harmonizes body and soul through various activities. We must listen to them because their past is holding them back."

Métis Colette Sabourin, another Elder and former midwife, says that being there for offenders in their troubled times is crucial to

An offender (left) with Pierre Gervais in the longhouse, where inmates meet for social activities or for a sweat lodge organized by the Pathways team.



In the activities room, an inmate burns sweetgrass and immerses himself in its scent. In front of him, on an Aboriginal mat, are works of art, a fox fur and a drum.

the healing process. "I have been here with the team for two years. I was sent by the Creator. I have lived the cultural duality and today I'm proud of it, but it hasn't always been easy. Self-acceptance is important. In Pathways, we focus on the offenders' best inner qualities rather than on their negative side."

Elizabeth Alikashuak has been in the institution for 13 years and works closely with Inuit offenders: "I try to work within a spiritual base. I talk to them about the old ways of life; I used to live in a tent in the middle of nowhere and I'm proud of who I am. I also encourage them to speak their mother tongue."

Offenders find that the arrival of Elders at the institution in 1997 changed their life for the better.

Common Goal Aims High

The Pathways initiative has been established in all CSC regions. The particular approach used may vary among the institutions, based on the guidance of the Elders on site, but the ultimate goal is the same: to help offenders heal so that they can become positive role models for other offenders, their families and their community. ♦

Enhanced capacities to provide **effective interventions** for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders



Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge No Walls, No Wire, But I Will Never Run Away

The Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge (OOHL) was built specifically to meet the diverse and unique needs of federally sentenced women. It follows the requirements for Aboriginal correctional initiatives noted in *Creating Choices*, the 1990 report of the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women: the participation of Aboriginal women and Elders, the connection of the lodge to the Aboriginal community and an approach that is meaningful to Aboriginal women.

The lodge, located on the Nekaneet Reserve near Maple Creek in southwest Saskatchewan, recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The philosophy of Aboriginal life enriches and guides the day-to-day work carried out by lodge staff, and sets this lodge apart from traditional Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) institutions. Staff members all say that after 10 years there is cause for celebration.

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

Photos: Bill Rankin

The Lodge

Built in 1995, Okimaw Ohci — the Cree term for Thunder Hills — is located on 160 acres of land on the Nekaneet Reserve. This minimum- and medium-security institution currently houses 28 residents, the majority of which are Aboriginal; a number of non-Aboriginal residents have also opted for its holistic lifestyle.

The circular administration building is the main entrance to the lodge. Further down, and closer to the forest, are the 14 living units:

eight contain three bedrooms and six contain two bedrooms. One secure living unit equipped with video cameras, another unit used for private family visits, plus two units housing Elders who stay at the lodge complete the OOHL. These units flank the spiritual lodge, where residents take part in traditional spiritual practices guided by Elders. A sweat lodge sits in the middle of the forest nearby; the yellows, reds and greens that colour the wings of the structure blend in well with the natural setting.

“The vision for this healing lodge has become a reality,” explains Dorene Sayer, Acting Kikawinaw. (Kikawinaw means “mother” in Cree, which translates to “executive director” in this setting.)

“Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge is guided by the CSC Mission as well as the Vision Document. The Vision Document is, in part, the result of extensive consultations supported by CSC and held with various

Opposite page: Elder Jean Oakes with residents in the spiritual lodge.



Above: Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge, an excellent example of initiatives that provide effective interventions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit women offenders.

Left: Janice Manygreyhorses

Middle: Elaine Philpott

Right: Dorene Sayer



stakeholders — the federally sentenced women, communities, and Elders who contributed to the development of the healing lodge. The Vision Document also articulates the principles, philosophy and teachings of the Aboriginal way of life, reflecting our values, beliefs and interaction with ourselves, others and all Creation.”

In speaking about operations and the day-to-day functioning of the OOHL, Elaine Philpott, Acting Assistant Kikawinaw (Acting Assistant Director) explains, “This institution is different from the others because everything we do is derived from the Aboriginal culture. This is reflected in our organizational structure. The Kikawisinaw (“aunts”) are the team leaders, and the Kimisinaw (older sisters) are the primary workers. Here, we focus on the family concept. The doors are always open to the residents, who do not need an appointment to meet with their Kikawinaw.”

Dynamic Security as the Foundation

To successfully carry out its mission to ensure the safety of employees, residents and the public, the OOHL employs nearly 50 staff, including the Kikawinaw, the Assistant Kikawinaw, 4 Kikawisinaw, 21 Kimisinaw, 1 parole officer, 3 program officers, 5 Elders who work on a rotating basis, and a number of support and essential service staff such as clerical, administrative, food services, and maintenance.

“From the beginning,” explains Ms. Sayer, “this lodge was designed to adhere to the holistic approaches utilized by traditional peoples, unique and different from the mainstream CSC institutions. Security requirements at the healing lodge afford residents and staff a high level of safety, and comfort, accomplished by using dynamic security principles. We have no fences, no barbed wire and no walls around the lodge, and minimal static security so it does not hinder our lifestyle in any way. Our relationships with the residents, mutual respect and the choices we provide are the tools that help us.”

According to Elaine Philpott, security is enhanced by the fact that the OOHL staff selects the candidates who stay at the lodge. “Residents are not placed here; we approve cases from those who apply voluntarily. They must satisfy a set of criteria and meet our expectations.”

Diverse Programs for Diverse Needs

The programs of the lodge are focused on healing and presented in a manner that is culture and gender sensitive. Elders and the traditional teachings are the foundation on which all programs are based.

When residents — both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal — are asked why they chose the OOHL, they list the natural surroundings, clean air, pure water, the sacred land of Nekaneet, the sense of freedom, communication with Elders, and a sense of belonging to a large family as the aspects that attracted them. Above all, they are convinced that the programs will help set them on the right path, help them be good mothers to their children, and become respected members of their community.

According to Janice Manygreyhorses, Kikawisinaw of Programs, healing begins with self-understanding and the acknowledgement of life-altering events. There are three types of programs at the OOHL to meet the specific needs of its residents: CSC basic programs, such as Spirit of a Warrior, Circles of Change, Women Offender Substance Abuse Program, and Nekaneet Horse Teachings program; the Elders Program that is held in the spiritual lodge; and the Mother-Child Program. There is also a recreational program that includes sports, crafts and music.

All programs emphasize spirituality; accordingly, the day begins with a talking circle in the spiritual lodge, in the presence of Elders. This ritual starts with the burning of sweet grass and sage, and prayer; afterwards, the residents voice their fears, dreams and thoughts before making their way to their daily program activities. Given that the residents are members of diverse Aboriginal nations, the spiritual activities vary widely and

include fasting, sun dances, sweat lodges and other ceremonies. They are all ways of teaching respect for the residents' respective nations.

"At some point in their lives," explains Jean Oakes, an OOHL Elder who started working here when the lodge first opened, "these residents were led astray because of abuse. Emotionally, they are still there, and that is the starting point of the path to healing. The residents have a correctional plan and a healing plan that is tied in with the teaching of Aboriginal values, fundamental protocols, dances and Indian names."

Developed by the Native Counselling Services of Alberta, the Spirit of A Warrior program — one of the most popular holistic

Aboriginal programs — begins to heal the cycle of violence and teaches skills to deal more effectively with emotional issues that contribute to violent behaviour. The Circles of Change program, developed by Manitoba Justice, teaches a number of skills and defines the role of women in Aboriginal culture.

The OOHL is currently offering a new program, the Nekaneet Four Seasonal Horse Teachings Program, developed and owned by the Nekaneet First Nation. The program teaches residents traditional lessons about the horse from a Nekaneet perspective, and allows them to master the basics of equine care and horseback riding. Horses are often used for healing in Aboriginal culture.

A Successful, Innovative Model

According to the OOHL's staff, the residents usually arrive feeling a profound sense of emptiness. Through the programs they attend and the traditional teachings of the Elders, they learn to understand what has happened to them and why they travelled the road that led them to incarceration. They rediscover their spirit and develop pride in themselves.

"This lodge has a philosophy and a vision," says Elaine Philpott, "and we are committed to doing whatever it takes to be successful. When former residents call us, just to let us know they are doing well, that is proof of their accomplishments ... and ours." ♦

Enhanced capacities to provide **effective interventions** for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Offenders

Aboriginal Employment Training Initiatives

Due to the relatively high numbers of Aboriginal inmates within the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), programs are being developed with their needs specifically in mind. This year has been a strong year in the Prairie Region for employment and employability skills training for Aboriginal offenders. That's where CORCAN comes in. The aim of CORCAN is to aid in the safe reintegration of all offenders by providing training opportunities and employment. Several new and promising initiatives have yielded positive results.

BY **Travis Boone**, Manager, Employment and Employability, Prairie Regional Headquarters

Photo: Travis Boone

What's Old Is New Again

CORCAN has entered into an interdepartmental agreement with Industry Canada for the delivery of the Information and Communication Technology Program at Saskatchewan Penitentiary's maximum-security unit. This program teaches inmates skills in repair and refurbishing of computers that are then redistributed to schools and other service groups by Industry Canada. By the time they are finished the program, inmates can pass the A+ certification exams — a credential that is in demand in today's labour market. At the present time, 75 percent of the participants in the program are Aboriginal inmates.

Filling the Construction Gap

The construction field is facing a chronic shortage of skilled workers in the Prairies, but CSC and CORCAN have taken on new initiatives to fill this need. Twenty-eight inmates (11 percent Aboriginal) have completed the Construction Framing Skills program from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, then followed it up with a practical skills component in the community via various types of conditional release.

While on work release, many of the offenders resided at the Stan Daniels Healing Centre, operated by the Native Counselling Services of Alberta in Edmonton.

Prairie Region healing lodges have also provided training in various skills to inmates prior to their release into the community: food safety, workplace hazardous materials, construction safety, computer skills, first aid and chainsaw safety. These skills are delivered through courses that are third party-certified, meaning the course material and subsequent certification is issued by an agency other than CSC or CORCAN. Aboriginal inmates earned 1,315 vocational certificates — 33 percent of the total number of vocational certifications earned in the Prairie Region.

In the Community

Following offenders' release into the community, an employment coordinator interviews them and then assists them with job placement or job search services. Prairie Region employment coordinators have been trained in Guiding Circles, which is an Aboriginal-specific employment assessment technique developed by the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council. The technique is widely used in the Aboriginal community by schools, community employment counsellors and persons seeking employment. As well, two of the four community employment coordinators are members of Aboriginal employment committees in their parole districts. This provides access to a strong network of agencies where offenders can be streamed into programs to assist with their re-entry into the community. ♦



Aboriginal inmates learn new skills that increase their chances of securing a steady job.



Addressing

Infectious Disease Issues for Aboriginal Offenders

Gil Carriere, National Aboriginal Health Coordinator and Marlene Buller-Lesage, Manager, Aboriginal Relations, recognize the value of partnership and collaborative relationships in meeting the particular health needs of Aboriginal offenders. The Aboriginal Initiatives Directorate provides advice and support to Health Services in defining strategic directions.

Rates of blood-borne and sexually transmitted infections in prison populations the world over are much higher than in the outside population and, generally, are dependent on various factors including intravenous drug use, the rates of infection among intravenous drug users in the community, high risk sexual behaviour and sharing unsterilized tattoo equipment.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY Health Services, Correctional Operations and Programs, Correctional Service of Canada

In the Canadian federal correctional system, the number of reported cases of HIV/AIDS at year end 2004 was 188, an overall prevalence of 1.43 percent. In the same year, a total of 3,303 federal inmates were known to test positive for hepatitis C, or 25.2 percent (24.8 percent of men and 37.6 percent of women) of the offender population.

Overall, the estimated rate of HIV infection among inmates is 7-10 times higher than the Canadian population while the prevalence of hepatitis C is estimated at 25-30 times higher.

Routine health data on Aboriginals in the Canadian population are not collected and neither is it available for Aboriginal offenders in CSC; therefore, it is impossible to determine the specific prevalence of infectious diseases among Aboriginal populations. However, of the 30 percent of case reports where ethnicity is available, Aboriginal people represented 18.8 percent in 1998 and 25.5 percent in 2003. This data is in the form of diagnosis reports and not incidence of HIV infection. The large proportion of missing data makes interpretation difficult; nonetheless, it does suggest a higher burden of HIV among Aboriginal peoples in Canada.



National HIV surveillance data capture only those who are tested, whose HIV infection is diagnosed and whose positive test results are reported to the Public Health Agency of Canada. Surveillance data, therefore, does not describe the full scope of the epidemic; however, calculations using these data and other sources of data are carried out to estimate the total number of people living with HIV (prevalence) and the number newly infected with HIV (incidence). In 2002, it was estimated that Aboriginal people accounted for 5 to 8 percent (or 3,000 to 4,000) of prevalent infections and 6 to 12 percent (or 250 to 450) of new infections. This is noteworthy because the proportion of the population in Canada represented by Aboriginal people is 3.3 percent, while the proportion in CSC is 17 percent; thus it is clear that Aboriginals are likely over-represented in the epidemic.

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A Long-Term Strategy

What has been adopted by CSC in recent years is a long-term strategic approach to the issue of infectious diseases among offenders that includes close collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada, and infectious disease and drug education programs for inmates and staff. Harm reduction measures within CSC include the provision of condoms, dental dams, and water-based lubricant, bleach for cleaning injecting, tattooing and piercing equipment and a methadone maintenance program.

Upon admission and throughout incarceration inmates are encouraged to undergo voluntary testing for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis A, B, and C, sexually transmitted infections, and tuberculosis. Those who test positive for any infectious disease have access to medical specialists and treatment.

Aboriginal Peer Education and Counselling Program

The A-PEC program – implemented in all five regions and in most institutions – is a new educational program that addresses the issues of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and other infectious diseases faced by Aboriginal offenders. Its primary goal is to train Aboriginal inmates to become peer helpers within their institutions.

A-PEC distinguishes itself from the regular Peer Education Counselling (PEC) program by including Aboriginal traditional healing practices: sweats, smudging and employing Elders as regular participants offering spiritual guidance. This approach emphasizes the mental, spiritual, physical and emotional balance that is necessary for complete wellness.

A-PEC training is presented by a nurse, a trained member of an Aboriginal Aids Service organization or by the regional health coordinator. Training provides participants with up-to-date medical information on infectious diseases, skills needed to lead information sessions with peers, education on use of harm reduction measures and also training in the principles of the PEC program, including confidentiality, a non-judgemental approach, and respect for lifestyles and views of others. Some graduating participants are chosen as volunteers and one is chosen as the peer leader whose paid position is known as the A-PEC coordinator.

Prairie Regional Aboriginal Health Coordinator Curtis Charney describes it as “new and exciting.” Gil L. Carriere, CSC National Aboriginal Health Coordinator firmly believes that “CSC is making inroads in the fight against infectious diseases through this educational program. The great success is the result of the hard work by CSC Aboriginal health coordinators, regional health staff, Aboriginal stakeholders and especially the Elders, peer coordinators and volunteers.”

Links to the Community

Developing and maintaining strong ties to the Aboriginal community is a vital component of this initiative, as it is part of CSC’s commitment to involve community partners throughout the offender’s sentence. This has been accomplished

by using Aboriginal organizations whenever possible and ensuring open communication with the community.

“Aboriginal community partners will continue to play a significant role in the successes that A-PEC will undoubtedly achieve in the future,” says Charney.

In the Pacific Region, Aboriginal Health Coordinator Jane Whiting says, “We have great goals for Aboriginal health for all eight institutions and our one healing lodge. The A-PEC program has been especially tailored to reach Aboriginal people from the West Coast culture.

“Not only will the Pacific Region be delivering A-PEC, but we are adding a component that will deal with diabetes, cancer, nutrition and basic health wellness. This ensures that Aboriginal offenders will be educated on many health issues that could affect them or their community.”

Charney, Whiting and others have their work cut out for them. Program training is a constant exercise in renewal as new inmates enter the institutions and others leave on various forms of release. The coordinators often spend a month at a time on the road, travelling from one institution to another, liaising with regional infectious disease coordinators, chiefs of Health Services, and Elders, and ensuring that all goes well with the new program. ♦



Curtis Charney, Regional Health Coordinator, Prairie Region

Left: This t-shirt was designed by an Aboriginal inmate at Westmorland Institution with funding he received under CSC’s Special Initiatives Program. The goal of the program is for inmates to engage in activities and projects that promote HIV (and other infectious disease) prevention for other inmates. In addition to English and French, the message on the t-shirt is written in Micmac and Maliseet.

2005 Taylor Award Ceremony



BY **Jodi McDonough**, Project Officer,
Community Initiatives, Communications and Citizen Engagement

Photo: Honora Johannesen

More than a hundred Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) employees, volunteers and ex-offenders gathered in the community of Victoria, British Columbia, on April 28 to honour and celebrate the contributions of Jackie Maxfield, recipient of the 2005 CSC Taylor Award.

Created by CSC in 2001, the Taylor Award is presented annually to a CSC volunteer who exemplifies the spirit of dedication and caring needed to help offenders rebuild their lives. Selected through a rigorous nomination and evaluation process, Taylor Award recipients are recognized as outstanding volunteers with CSC who have made a significant and long-lasting contribution to corrections in Canada.

Jackie, who was nominated by the Victoria Parole Office, has been volunteering with CSC in the Pacific Region for close to 30 years, both in institutions and in the community. For once, it was her turn to be recognized, but she was clearly not used to the attention. A humble and compassionate woman who asks little in return for her volunteer efforts, it is not surprising that Jackie was moved by the hugs, thanks and well wishes extended by guests throughout the evening. After accepting the Taylor Award from Commissioner Keith Coulter during the ceremony's formal dinner, Jackie described herself as "completely overwhelmed."

Many people in Victoria had another description for Jackie: she's "the face of volunteering with CSC." And it is no exaggeration to say that the results of Jackie's work speak for themselves. When advised that Jackie

would be the recipient of the Taylor Award, ex-offenders from all parts of the country travelled to Victoria at their own expense to share in this special moment with her, and to relay in person the effect that she has had on their lives. After 30 years, Jackie still receives weekly visits and phone calls from parolees and ex-offenders living in all parts of Canada, and continues to support their efforts to successfully reintegrate into the community.

Among her many accomplishments, Jackie was William Head Institution's (WHI) first citizen escort, accompanying offenders to medical appointments, cultural events, speaking engagements, funerals and meetings. In 2001, Jackie began supporting offenders through the Community Adult Mentoring and Support (CAMS) Program, based out of the Victoria Parole Office.

Jackie has also been instrumental in inspiring others to become involved with CSC. Through her regular participation in community forums, volunteer fairs and public speaking engagements, Jackie works hard to raise awareness of the work of CSC and to encourage caring and understanding in the communities to which offenders return.

To all who attended the 2005 Taylor Award ceremony, one thing was clear: lucky are those who have had the opportunity to get to know Jackie and benefit from her generous spirit and kind heart.

Jackie Maxfield is truly an exceptional woman. On behalf of CSC, congratulations Jackie, and thank you. ♦

Recipient of the 2005 CSC Taylor Award Jackie Maxfield (right), with the Regional Deputy Commissioner Don Demers (left) and Commissioner Keith Coulter (centre)

Moving Towards Purging the Paper Trail

Imagine the situation: you are a parole officer in charge of 25 offender cases. The information that exists to help you in your role of overseeing these offenders in the community has been stored in several different areas. Half of the files are jammed into heavy filing cabinets and the other half are in applications and documents on your computer. As you are reviewing your cases, a nagging feeling hangs in the back of your mind: What if something is missing? What if something has been overlooked? What if I am not seeing everything there is?

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

What you really need is one easily accessible file, containing all pertinent information on any given offender.

It is with that idea in mind that the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is now developing a strategy to implement integrated electronic offender files that will provide CSC staff with the ability to store, access and

share all relevant offender information in an electronic format — from only one source. CSC, which currently uses both paper and electronic formats, must continue to move away from paper-based systems in order to align itself more closely with its partners and Government of Canada (GoC) policies.



The project team works toward electronic solutions. Left to right: Karen Kelly, Gerry MacDonald and Suzanne St. Georges-Trépanier
Absent: Heather Dagorne

"We won't be changing the information that is available," explains Information Management Services (IMS) Director General Richard Harvey. "Instead, we will simply be gathering all the pieces together to make the most effective and comprehensive system possible."

Aside from allowing CSC to comply with GoC policies, guidelines and directions when it

comes to information management practices, this will also put the organization in a better position to share vital information with its partners in the criminal justice system.

Though CSC currently holds records for all offenders in the electronic Offender Management System (OMS), not all information is integrated into those records, often making it necessary for front-line workers to consult multiple sources when searching for information. With the electronic offender file, CSC hopes to eradicate this practice. The new electronic files will be a virtual one-stop shop for all the information available to manage the case of any given offender.

"It is a matter of moving forward with the amazing technology now at our disposal," says Harvey. "Technology is designed to make our lives easier, and that is precisely what we hope to do for our front-line workers."

CSC will be spending the summer and fall wrapping up an analysis of the project. This process involves legal consultations, defining requirements and needs, analyzing current offender file banks against legal requirements, and comparing paper documents to what is already available in OMS. Information that is duplicated could then be phased out of the paper environment.

This initial analysis will also assess how best to meet CSC's needs for requirements such as file tracking, electronic signatures, information sharing, forms design and management, to name a few. Eventually, applications like the Police and Court Information Management Module (PCIMM) and document information management systems will be integrated into OMS to form a more comprehensive tool. IMS will be working closely with other CSC business areas on this initiative to ensure that all operational and legislative requirements are covered.

In the end, it all comes down to making the job safer, quicker and more efficient for staff members who have the arduous task of managing offenders and making decisions throughout the administration of their sentences. If CSC can provide staff with a single window through which they can view all the pertinent information, then we can be sure we are helping to make their jobs a bit easier and, consequently, the country a bit safer. ♦

Organizational Transition

Responding to a More Diverse Inmate Population

As part of an effort to change the organizational structure and correctional officer deployment standards in CSC institutions, senior management met with a group representing unit managers and team leaders from across the country on April 28, 2006. This initiative came about in response to the increasingly diverse inmate population, the aim being to improve clinical supervision and interactions with offenders.



Photo: Jean-François Racine

BY **Alessandria Page**, Unit Manager, Cowansville Institution, and **Trent Kane**, Unit Manager, Edmonton Institution

Fraser McVie leads the National Headquarters (NHQ) implementation team for both the institutional management structure reorganization and the correctional officer deployment study. It became clear, as the work of the reorganization team progressed, that the current role of the unit manager (UM) would not remain within the organization.

Unit managers from across the country had asked to be heard on the introduction and implementation of changes emerging from the reorganization. Following approval of the reorganization in principle by the Executive Committee in March, the Commissioner asked the Senior Deputy Commissioner to invite a group of unit managers to National Headquarters to discuss their roles and responsibilities.

This initiative was seen as recognizing the importance of the unit manager and team leader role within the organization.

Left to right: Mike Velichka; Sheila Liston; Lisa Waddell, Stony Mountain Institution; Michelle Bridgen, Collins Bay Institution; Val Whitton, Beaver Creek Institution; Dianne Livesey, Ferndale Institution; Judy Amos, Springhill Institution; Fraser McVie; Don Head; Simon Coakeley; Diane Lacelle; Daniel Cournoyer, Établissement Joliette; Brad Donovan, Atlantic Institution; Morgan Andreassen, Mission Institution; Alessandria Page, Établissement Cowansville; Josée Brunelle, Établissement Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines; Trent Kane, Edmonton Institution

In consultation with the regional deputy commissioners, eleven unit managers and one team leader were chosen to represent their peers at the first consultation meeting in Ottawa.

Unit managers were first to receive Fraser McVie's strategy for implementation. They provided valuable input. It was an important opportunity for unit managers to have a say in the future of CSC. The group also presented the strategy to senior managers based on their concerns, not only for the future of the unit managers and team leaders, but for the organization as a whole. A constructive discussion ensued.

Fraser and his team are making good use of the invaluable front-line experience and knowledge of day-to-day operations. The professionalism of the group has impressed many, including Senior Deputy Commissioner Don Head who wishes to consult on a regular basis with the Unit Manager Consultative Committee. A second meeting is will take place soon. ♦

A Problem That Hasn't Gone Away Here Comes the Rain Again



BY **Paul Provost**, MSc, National Coordinator,
Environmental Protection Programs

As if we didn't have enough to worry about with the environmental effects of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄) emissions, which cause the greenhouse effect and climate change; chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which cause thinning of the stratospheric ozone layer; and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which contribute to urban smog. Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and sulphur oxides (SO_x) are still causing problems of acidification of soil and water bodies. To reduce its contribution to this still unresolved ecological problem, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) recently took further steps aimed at reducing the gases responsible for acid precipitation.

Acid Precipitation

Acid precipitation results primarily from the transformation of sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) into dry or moist secondary pollutants, such as sulphuric acid and nitric acid. The transformation of SO₂ (a by-product of industrial processes and the burning of fossil fuels) and NO_x (gases generated by fuels used for heating equipment, vehicles, engines and industrial/ institutional boilers) into acidic particles and vapours occurs as these pollutants are transported in the atmosphere over long distances.

According to Environment Canada (EC), the provinces most affected by acid precipitation are Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia because their aquatic and geological characteristics are unable to counter the adverse effects of acid precipitation. In the absence of additional control measures, an area of approximately 800,000 km² in southeastern Canada receives harmful quantities of acid precipitation.

Studies have shown that the most serious negative effects include acidified lakes that are no longer able to support the same diversity of life forms as healthy lakes, while prolonged exposure to acid precipitation robs the soil of vital nutrients. Consequently, trees grow more slowly and are less resistant to other sources of stress, such as drought, diseases, insect pests and cold.

Attacking the Problem at the Source

In keeping with target 1.1.2 of its Sustainable Development Strategy, in 2005–06, CSC commissioned Natural Resources Canada's Energy Technology Applications Group to analyze NO_x emissions, develop technical adjustments for the selected institutional boilers and propose corrective actions based on the data collected. In addition to previous projects with similar aims, the ultimate objective was to improve the efficiency of CSC's heating plants in the short and medium terms while reducing their NO_x emissions. Visits were made to boilers at the 11 institutions selected, all located in the Quebec City–Windsor corridor and the Fraser Valley in British Columbia, namely Kent, Mission and Matsqui institutions in the Pacific Region; Leclerc, Ste-Anne-des-Plaines, Drummond and Donnacona institutions in Quebec; and Kingston, Bath, Collins Bay and Joyceville institutions in Ontario.

Future Actions

Since the transportation sector is a major source of NO_x emissions, initiatives promoting energy-efficient vehicles will continue to be a

priority for the future, as will various energy efficiency measures in institutions. Studies conducted last year confirmed the positive benefits of regularly making the required adjustments to optimize the performance of institutional boilers. However, given the obsolete condition of some of these boilers, especially those located in the Quebec City–Windsor corridor, a number of heating plant renovation projects (including replacing old control systems with new ones and replacing inefficient burners with low-NO_x burners) will have to be carried out if we are to significantly reduce NO_x emissions from boiler rooms at certain CSC institutions.

What Goes Up Must Come Down

In the past, one way of minimizing the problem of air pollution was to build taller industrial stacks. But this "not in my backyard" approach, which is largely to blame for the emergence of acid rain, is no longer acceptable given the borderless and macro-level environmental effects of the transport and transformation of air pollutants generated by human activities. In fact, the events of the past few decades have demonstrated in many ways that the equilibrium of our thin and precious tropospheric layer is much more fragile than previously thought. It is therefore in everyone's interest to reduce our atmospheric emissions, since despite the invisible nature of this threat, the effects are, and will continue to be, very real.

For more details:

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/acidrain/acidfact.html> ♦



Acid precipitation stems from industrial activity and vehicle exhaust.



Left to right, front row:
 Denis Dugas and
 Delvin Allbright
 Back Row:
 Patsy Le Clair,
 Julia Hopps,
 Mike Lightstone,
 David Snowdon
 and Lisa Hardey

New CSC Internal Communications Advisory Committee

As Part of Strengthening Management Practices

Strengthening management practices

Strengthening management practices is one of the Service's five key priorities this fiscal year, and improving internal communications is identified as an essential component. That's why all direct reports to the Commissioner have now made formal commitments to demonstrate improved internal communications in their sectors or regions, and that's why our Commissioner continues to emphasize the important roles and responsibilities for himself, managers, employees, and communications specialists in building better internal communications capacity.

BY **Lisa Hardey**, Assistant Commissioner, Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector

The Communications and Citizen Engagement Sector is uniquely positioned to work in partnership with regions and sectors to offer advice, and to build and deliver services, tools, and products that will be useful and practical in meeting objectives.

To help ensure that our efforts net the right results, we first held focus groups with employees across CSC this past February, and then in April proposed to use the new CSC Internal Communications Advisory Committee that will offer creative ideas, advice, and will "test-drive"

initiatives before they are implemented. This proposal had solid support at both the Executive Committee and at the most recent Executive Development Symposium.

This CSC Internal Communications Advisory Committee is now fully operational. On May 31, at our inaugural meeting, Commissioner Coulter joined us and underscored the importance of the link between effective internal communications and a high-performing organization, and to thank committee members for agreeing to serve on the committee and for providing their time and advice.

The committee is comprised of a cross-section of CSC employees from across the country, including national headquarters and, it is important to note, that individual members do not represent their region, unit, area of expertise, function, level, etc. Criteria for membership involves only a dedication to and willingness to help build better internal communications by providing suggestions, new ideas, and advice on proposals and initiatives.

To keep a collaborative and inclusive approach to strengthening CSC internal communications, more focus groups are planned for this year, and membership on this advisory committee will be refreshed periodically through rotation. Toward the end of this fiscal year, more information will be provided for CSC employees who may be interested in becoming members. ♦

LEADERSHIP RENEWAL

National Headquarters

Stephen Wilson
 Director General, Values and Ethics Performance Assurance Sector
 Effective February 20, 2006

Judith Lockett

Director General, Organizational Design and Resourcing Human Resources Management Sector
 Effective April 6, 2006

Regions

Mike Hanly
 Warden, Drumheller Institution
 Prairie Region
 Effective February 28, 2006

Dave Niles
 Warden, Atlantic Institution
 Atlantic Region
 Effective February 28, 2006

Daniel Erickson

Warden, Stony Mountain Institution
 Prairie Region
 Effective February 28, 2006

Linda Boily

Warden, Drummond Institution
 Quebec Region
 Effective March 17, 2006