

Justice and Solicitor General

BUSINESS PLAN 2014-17

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of February 12, 2014.

original signed by

Jonathan Denis, QC, Minister
February 19, 2014

THE MINISTRY

The ministry consists of the Department of Justice and Solicitor General, the Victims of Crime Fund, and the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund. Within the department's budget, funding is provided for the following agencies, boards and commissions which are accountable to the minister: Alberta Human Rights Commission, Alberta Review Board, Criminal Injuries Review Board, Fatality Review Board, Judicial Council, Law Enforcement Review Board, Notaries Public Review Committee, Provincial Court Nominating Committee, Rules of Court Committee and Victims of Crime Programs Committee.

The ministry plays a key role in the stewardship of the justice system in Alberta. Its programs and services uphold the rule of law and help ensure Albertans' safety and security. The ministry performs a range of functions in conjunction with other ministries, the judiciary, policing agencies and stakeholder organizations. It administers the courts in Alberta, prosecutes people accused of breaking the law and provides custody, supervision and rehabilitation for individuals under correctional authority. The ministry operates programs and services to prevent crime and support victims and to assist Albertans with their legal problems. These include: Maintenance Enforcement and Claims and Recoveries programs, Family Justice and Civil Mediation services and Law Information Centres and law libraries. Justice and Solicitor General has oversight of Legal Aid Alberta and the Property Rights Advocate Office and administers the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. The ministry provides oversight of Alberta's law enforcement organizations such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and municipal police agencies, in addition to overseeing the legal work of the ministry and providing legal advice and strategic services to government.

A more detailed description of Justice and Solicitor General and its programs and initiatives can be found at www.justicesolgen.alberta.ca.

RESULTS-BASED BUDGETING AND THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC PLAN

Programs and services delivered by the ministry are reviewed for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency in accordance with the Government of Alberta's *Results-based Budgeting Act*.

This business plan supports the "Investing in Families and Communities" theme outlined in the *Government of Alberta Strategic Plan*. Through the work of Justice and Solicitor General and ministry partners, the government will continue building safe communities, making streets even safer and empowering at-risk individuals to achieve a better quality of life.

The plan supports the achievement of Goal 1: Honour Alberta's Communities as set out in the government's strategic plan. The ministry will work to ensure communities are safe, prosperous, welcoming, culturally diverse and desirable places to live or destinations to visit. In collaboration with the judiciary, policing partners, communities, government agencies and non-governmental organizations, Justice and Solicitor General strives to work together so that Albertans have safe communities and an accessible, effective and innovative justice system.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Albertans have legitimately high expectations about how their government should perform and want greater involvement in making the justice system work for them. The need to work together so that Albertans have safe communities and a responsive justice system mean change must come.

Alberta has one of the highest rates of population and economic growth in the country. Many have come from other provinces and countries, drawn to Alberta's vibrant economy. This means the justice system and the ministry must serve a growing province that is increasingly diverse and bringing pressures across the system.

Accessing the justice system is an ongoing issue. It is taking longer for Albertans to resolve their cases, in part because cases become more complicated as the law and legal procedures grow over time. This complexity is creating costs and delays across the justice system.

It is also clear social problems continue to bring Albertans into the justice system. Aboriginal Albertans who continue to be over-represented in the justice system, as well as Albertans who have addictions and mental illnesses, need help that extends outside the justice system and reaches into their communities.

Through the goals and priority initiatives identified in this business plan, the ministry will continue to adapt Alberta's justice system so that it is responsive to the needs of Albertans, including victims, offenders and those involved in civil or family disputes. The ministry will work with its partners and stakeholders to continue to ensure that Alberta's communities are safe and secure; the justice system is fair, accessible and innovative; and effective custody and community supervision services are provided.

GOALS, PRIORITY INITIATIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As a result of the ministry's review of its goals, environment, opportunities and challenges, a number of priority initiatives have been identified.

Goal One: Alberta's communities are safe and secure

Priority Initiatives:

- 1.1 Set strategic provincial policy direction for law enforcement consistent with the Law Enforcement Framework.
- 1.2 Continue to identify and implement efficiencies and standardization of ministry enforcement services to ensure effective specialized enforcement is provided throughout the province.
- 1.3 Provide oversight governance of Alberta's law enforcement organizations.
- 1.4 Support innovation to improve access to services and supports for victims of crime.
- 1.5 Work with communities to support crime prevention, crime reduction and restorative justice to realize police and justice system efficiencies.
- 1.6 Implement any approved recommendations under the Grow Op Free Alberta Initiative.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2012-13	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
1.a Percentage of Albertans who feel safe walking alone in their area after dark	83%	84%	85%	85%
1.b Percentage of Albertans satisfied with policing in Alberta over the past 12 months	81%	86%	87%	87%
1.c Percentage of victims satisfied with services provided by employees and volunteers within the criminal justice system	85%	85%	86%	86%

Goal Two: Alberta has a fair, accessible and innovative justice system

Priority Initiatives:

- 2.1 Work with stakeholders to increase the sustainability of the legal aid plan in Alberta by implementing new funding strategies to allow low-income Albertans access to legal services.
- 2.2 Collaborate with justice system stakeholders to simplify the process for Albertans to access resources and use the civil and family justice system.
- 2.3 Increase access to justice for Albertans by implementing simplified processes for resolving uncomplicated, low-monetary value civil claims and providing additional options for dispute resolution.
- 2.4 Work with stakeholders and partners to put into action extensive traffic court process and technology improvements for the payment of traffic fines and to explore alternatives for processing minor traffic offences.
- 2.5 Implement actions from the Injecting a Sense of Urgency report to improve the ability to address violent and serious offences in a timely manner.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
2.a Maintenance Enforcement Program's compliance rate on cases enrolled, by regular monthly payments	72% (2012-13)	73%	73%	74%
2.b Percentage of Albertans who agree that fair and impartial service is provided to prosecute people charged with a crime	81% (2012-13)	82%	83%	84%
2.c Median elapsed time from first to last appearance for a criminal case in Provincial Court and Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta	117 days (2011-12)	116 days	116 days	116 days

Goal Three: Alberta has effective custody and community supervision services

Priority Initiatives:

- 3.1 Create a quality assurance strategy to evaluate and support the use of best practices undertaken by probation officers and correctional service workers to improve service and program delivery.
- 3.2 Continue to add new technology to enhance management of offenders under correctional jurisdiction.
- 3.3 Collaborate with justice system partners to expand services to individuals in the justice system with addiction and mental health issues.
- 3.4 Work with other ministries and stakeholders to explore policy options to more effectively rehabilitate and support individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
3.a Percentage of offenders successfully completing conditional release from custody to community without incurring new criminal charges	100% (2011-12)	100%	100%	100%
3.b Number of escapes from secure custody or during transport	3 (2012-13)	0	0	0

OPERATIONAL PLAN

(thousands of dollars)	Comparable			2014-15 Estimate	2015-16 Target	2016-17 Target
	2012-13 Actual	2013-14 Budget	2013-14 Forecast			
OPERATIONAL EXPENSE						
Ministry Support Services	62,510	58,926	58,926	56,140	55,493	55,873
Court Services	212,522	199,199	202,199	205,925	198,530	201,359
Legal Services	51,743	53,975	53,975	56,207	54,907	55,442
Alberta Crown Prosecution Service	87,774	90,965	90,965	95,457	91,207	92,100
Support for Legal Aid	65,810	58,810	58,810	58,810	58,810	58,810
Justice Services	35,172	38,464	38,464	39,205	33,899	34,213
Public Security	465,033	475,693	475,693	500,910	525,437	534,021
Correctional Services	233,107	241,987	241,987	255,271	250,923	253,156
Alberta Human Rights	7,985	8,264	8,264	8,374	8,374	8,461
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	20,589	23,687	23,687	23,287	21,787	21,787
Victims of Crime Fund	33,820	29,842	33,242	33,331	34,831	36,231
Consolidation Adjustments	(221)	(525)	(525)	(525)	(525)	(525)
Total	1,275,844	1,279,287	1,285,687	1,332,392	1,333,673	1,350,928

CAPITAL PLAN SPENDING

Ministry Support Services	5,554	1,510	5,634	305	780	780
Court Services	1,646	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Legal Services	44	100	100	25	-	-
Alberta Crown Prosecution Service	18	20	20	-	-	-
Justice Services	962	750	750	1,070	620	620
Public Security	102,859	83,862	51,567	132,443	51,462	15,655
Correctional Services	1,209	150	150	150	150	150
Alberta Human Rights	-	20	20	-	-	-
Victims of Crime Fund	-	25	25	25	25	25
Total	112,292	87,437	59,266	135,018	54,037	18,230