



STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

Ms. Laura Ross, Chair
Regina Rochdale

Mr. Doyle Vermette, Deputy Chair
Cumberland

Ms. Lori Carr
Estevan

Ms. Lisa Lambert
Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood

Mr. David Marit
Wood River

Mr. Warren Michelson
Moose Jaw North

Mr. Warren Steinley
Regina Walsh Acres

[The committee met at 18:58.]

The Chair: — The time is 6:58 p.m. This is the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice meeting June 13th, 2016.

Welcome everyone. I'd like to introduce the members. I'm Laura Ross; I'm Chair of the committee. Chitting in today, we have Nicole Sarauer who's chitting in for Doyle Vermette who is the Deputy Chair. Nicole represents the NDP [New Democratic Party]. We have also attending Lori Carr, Warren Steinley, David Buckingham, David Marit. So David Buckingham is substituting in for Warren Michelson. Thank you very much, David, for making time this evening.

Pursuant to rule no. 148(1), the following estimates and supplementary estimates were deemed referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice on June 9th, 2016 and June 1st, 2016 respectively: main estimates, vote 30, Government Relations; vote 3, Justice; vote 27, Parks, Culture and Sport; vote 88, Tourism Saskatchewan; supplementary estimates March 2016, vote 30, Government Relations.

**General Revenue Fund
Justice
Vote 3**

Subvote (JU01)

The Chair: — Tonight we will be considering the estimates for the Ministry of Justice. We will now begin our consideration of vote 3, Justice, central management and services, subvote (JU01). Minister Wyant and Minister Tell are here with their officials. Ministers, please introduce your officials and make your opening comments.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I'll begin, obviously, by introducing my officials. I have Dale McFee to my right, deputy minister; Dave Tulloch sitting at the back, assistant deputy minister, corporate services; Mindy Gudmundson, director, corporate services; Dennis Cooley behind me, associate deputy minister, custody supervision and rehabilitation services — these positions get longer names all the time; Drew Wilby, executive director, corporate affairs; Ron Anderson, assistant deputy minister, community safety outcomes and corporate supports; Dale Larsen, assistant deputy minister, policing and community services; Brian Rector, executive director, research and evidence-based excellence; Heather Scriver, executive director, custody services; and Carolyn Graves, executive director, community corrections.

To continue on with my opening remarks, our plan identifies how we will grow safe and secure communities for Saskatchewan citizens by providing effective crime prevention, intervention, and suppression in this initiative. By collaborating with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], funding will increase by \$1.4 million . . . No, sorry. . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, we're saving paper.

Community justice partners and other human service ministries, we will continue to develop strategies to prevent crime and

victimization through early intervention and prevention. With an innovative lens, we will work to reduce the demand on our justice system and make sure we incarcerate those we are scared of and not those we are simply mad at. In partnership with the Attorney General, we're committed to delivering responsive and responsible government by providing programs and services that will make a difference in the lives of Saskatchewan citizens. Working closely with community and government partners, we will achieve our objectives of justice, fairness, and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

Of the \$602 million in the ministry's '16-17 budget, \$425 million will support the programs of Corrections and Policing. RCMP funding will increase by \$1.4 million for '16-17 to honour the 20-year agreement with the federal government for provision of RCMP services for Saskatchewan. It will also support the work done by the RCMP to improve traffic safety in our province.

Federally supported funding of \$895,000 will be used in the second year of a five-year pilot called the northern integration initiative. This will address serious violent crime in northern Saskatchewan.

A new living unit at the Prince Albert Provincial Correctional Centre was completed last fall. The ministry received \$3.9 million to support the operation of this unit. We continue to make investments for all physical and IT [information technology] infrastructure. We received \$4.1 million in order to purchase new kitchen equipment through our custody facilities, and upgrade the kitchen at Prince Albert Correctional Centre. A further \$7.1 million will be allocated to continuing implementation of IT systems for the ministry and maintaining custody facilities. We are also taking steps to ensure that adequate funding is directed toward core programming to improve the effectiveness of the ministry in reducing reoffending behaviour.

This budget and ministry plan will enable us to continue to work collaboratively with other ministries, other levels of government, police and community-based organizations to achieve our shared objectives on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens. These are the highlights, and I would be pleased to answer questions, but first my colleague will be introducing his officials and his introductory remarks. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Minister Wyant.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well good evening everyone. I'm joined by a number of officials from the Ministry of Justice, and to my immediate left, Kevin Fenwick, deputy minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General.

I'm also pleased to have quite a number of people here from the ministry to help support me tonight. With us is Susan Amrud the associate deputy minister from the public law division; Jan Turner, assistant deputy minister of court services; Glen Gardner, assistant deputy minister of the innovation division; Dave Tulloch, assistant deputy minister of corporate services; Glennis Bihun, executive director of court services; Kylie Head, executive director of innovation; Linsay Rabyj — did I pronounce that right? Okay, sorry — executive director of

communications; Aaron Orban, executive director of access and privacy; Daryl Rayner, executive director of public prosecutions division; Pat Thiele, executive director of community justice division; Linda Zarzeczny, executive director of the civil law division; Dale Beck, director of the Office of Residential Tenancies; Craig Goebel, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Legal Aid of Saskatchewan; Lionel McNabb, director of family justice services branch; Roger Sobotkiewicz, the Chair of the Financial Consumer Affairs Authority; Mindy Gudmundson, director of corporate services; Michael Morris, Crown counsel from the civil law division; and Nadine Barnes, executive assistant to the deputy minister and Deputy Attorney General.

Our plan, Madam Chair, and budget continues to support the government's direction of keeping Saskatchewan strong. It also initiates a government exercise of transformational change to ensure high quality public services are delivered in the most effective and efficient way possible. We're meeting the challenges of growth and securing a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people through the delivery of a responsive and responsible justice system.

In partnership with Corrections and Policing, we will provide a better quality of life for citizens by enhancing public safety initiatives and improving access to justice services. As part of this, the ministry is focusing on finding innovative strategies to make access to justice understandable, timely, and affordable for Saskatchewan citizens.

Through our innovation agenda, improving access to justice services remains a high priority for the ministry. With funding provided from the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, the ministry recently expanded a program province wide to support families going through separation and divorce. Since the three-year pilot project launched in November of 2014, nearly 1,300 inquiries have been made through the Family Matters program.

We will continue to invest in meeting the needs of children, youth, and families through the Saskatchewan child and family agenda. We will also support the mental health and addictions action plan with improvements to mental health, addictions, and correctional services in the province. In addition, we are helping women and children through further funding of \$140,000 to support the continued operations of the Melfort transition house.

Of the \$602 million in the ministry's 2016-17 budget, \$178 million will support programs of the Attorney General's portfolio of Justice. This is a decrease of \$5 million and is 2.8 per cent lower than the previous appropriation devoted to the Attorney General.

The ministry also receives funding to support continued operations of the court system and core justice programs. We're also continuing to make investments in both physical and IT infrastructure. A further \$900,000 will be allocated to expand video court availability and maintain court circuit points.

This 2016-17 budget and ministry plan will enable us to continue to deliver, to work collaboratively with other ministries, other levels of government, policing services, the

judiciary, community-based organizations, and the people of Saskatchewan to achieve our shared objectives.

In closing, the Ministry of Justice plays a key role in our province. While we are proud of our accomplishments over the past year, we recognize that there is still work to be done. We will continue to collaborate with our government and community partners to achieve greater success in delivery of programs and services. The funding for the 2016-17 fiscal year will ensure the ministry continues to play this important role for our government.

So, Madam Chair, those are the highlights. I'm now pleased to answer any questions about our '16-17 plan and budget. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Minister Tell, Minister Wyant, for your opening remarks. I would now like to open the floor for questions on these estimates. I'd like to recognize Nicole Sarauer.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Before I get started, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the ministers for their time to be here tonight, and especially the officials — all of you officials — for being here this evening. I'm sure there's no place you'd rather be than inside on a beautiful, sunny evening in June, so thank you very much. Some of you I've met before; some of you I'm just meeting now. In any event, thank you kindly for being here. I really appreciate it.

I know in the past you're used to dealing with somebody much larger than me — with a beard perhaps — and a couple of decades of corporate memory. So I'm going to try my best to make this as painless as possible for you officials. And in saying that, I want to start by first apologizing to the ministers. I've tried to differentiate, tried to separate my Justice questions from my Corrections questions. Unfortunately, oftentimes I get a bit scattered and they bleed in together, so apologies to begin with.

But I'll get started now with some of the questions. I'd just like to get a bit of an overview of the budget, and then I have some more specific questions. First of all, I noticed that there was a change; thank you for pointing out the reduction in funding, for the Ministry of Justice in particular. But for both ministries there was an increase in full-time employees of 29, I believe, FTEs [full-time equivalent]. Could you tell me where those additional FTEs were added?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I'll answer the question based on the information that I have. There was an increase of FTEs to annualize the staffing requirements for the new living unit at the Prince Albert Correctional Centre, plus two and a half FTEs to address the fourth-quarter implementation of the final year of the three-year initiative to support the docket court prosecutorial responsibilities. There was also six FTEs that were required for the assumption of the responsibilities by the Highway Traffic Board from SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance].

Ms. Sarauer: — So just to make sure I'm clear, there's an addition of two prosecutors, some additional staff for the P.A. [Prince Albert] jail, and then some staff to accommodate the

Highway Traffic Board changes?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Two point five FTEs on the docket court, and three and a third FTEs in the office of the chief coroner.

Ms. Sarauer: — Sorry, the office of the . . .

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Chief coroner.

Ms. Sarauer: — Chief coroner. Okay, thank you. Are there any other FTEs that have been added?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Just to clarify, there was 49.7 for staffing at the new Prince Albert Correctional Centre. There was six and a half, the docket court responsibilities. There were six for the Highway Traffic Board, 3.3 for the chief coroner's office, and then there was a net reduction from the food services reduction. So that would represent the total number.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thanks. Just moving through the budget, I'm just trying to get a better picture of what the either reduction or increase in funding means for each line item. So I'm looking right now at the courts and civil justice budget section, and in particular I noticed that there was a slight reduction in funding for family justice services. Can you tell me what that means, if there is changes to staffing levels or programming?

[19:15]

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There was a \$200,000 reassignment for the delivery of IT services which is now being done by . . . is that . . .

A Member: — Within the ministry.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Within the ministry.

Ms. Sarauer: — So that line item includes IT services for the ministry, the family justice services line in courts and civil justice?

Mr. Fenwick: — The way we used to budget that particular line is the cost for the IT services that were coming through family justice services appeared in the budget for family justice services. What we've done instead is we've moved that into the larger IT budget. So it's still within the ministry, it's just moved from . . . The IT part of family justice is now in the IT budget.

And then there was a slight increase in funding for family justice services otherwise which is why the net figure is just under 200,000.

Ms. Sarauer: — So that slight increase, is that just a . . . I'm assuming that means no new programming, just a reflection of an increase in salary, in raises or something like that?

Mr. Fenwick: — Yes, that's correct.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So there's no programming changes that have occurred at all in family justice services? Great, thank you.

Also, similarly, the court services line item, it has an increase of about just under \$400,000. Are there new programs that are going to be run out of that, or can you explain?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — So in the courts and civil justice, we had an increased salary for judges. That was the contractual obligation. We had increased salary costs for the CBA [The Canadian Bar Association], increased salaries for justices of the peace which is contractual, and that makes up the majority of that.

Ms. Sarauer: — Sorry, I'm a little bit confused because I see court services as a line item and then salaries, provincial court judges and JPs [justice of the peace] as a separate line item. So I'm looking at the line item that's on the top; it just says court services. I thought that would include . . . I'm not sure, I thought that would include things like court-appointed counsel, but I'm not entirely sure. This is the one that it was estimated at 33.012 million and then this year, or for 2016 it's projected to be 33.400 million.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Are you referring to the COLA [cost of living adjustment] adjustment? Is that what you're asking about?

Ms. Sarauer: — Sorry?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's a \$414,000 adjustment to that line item.

Ms. Sarauer: — I wish I could walk over and show you the sheet that I'm looking at right now. But in the *Estimates* it has . . . under courts and civil justice there's the allocations and then there's court services, and then two line items for salaries, provincial court judges and salaries, justices of the peace.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — So the difference between those two numbers is the COLA adjustment.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can you explain the COLA adjustment?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The cost of living adjustment.

Ms. Sarauer: — Oh, cost of living adjustment. Okay. So there's a \$400,000 cost of living adjustment in court services? Okay, and that's to account for salaries? I'm guessing I might get a . . . Oh, was there anything more on that?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The actual number is 414.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Sorry, I was guesstimating. I'll move on, but I might get a similar answer, I'm guessing. I saw there was an increase in the public law line item of just under \$1 million. I'm wondering if those new, if any of those new FTEs that you were talking about earlier fall under that line item, or if there is any other explanation for the change.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's no new FTEs in public law, but we'll . . . So the adjustments, there was a \$71,000 adjustment for cost of living plus \$825,000 for the common business identifier program.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. I'm going to move on to the community safety outcomes budget. This might be a question

for Corrections and Policing, I'm not entirely sure. But I was interested in hearing if you could explain to me a little bit the transfers for public services and the transfers to individuals portion of the budget. Can you explain what that means?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The first one, it's a bit of a pronged approach here. It's alternative measures, was a transfer from us to Attorney General for alternative . . . What is it called?

A Member: — Youth alternative measures.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Youth alternatives, whatever. And 431 is a reduction of CBO [community-based organization] funding due to a lack of referrals and non-performance. It's just a general statement in relation to the ones that received a reduction in funding.

The other part is a transfer of communications. It's a budget line item from Attorney General to us. It's just been a back and forth, basically a paper shuffle. The bulk of it is the \$906,000 for alternative measures.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can you expand a bit on the . . . you mentioned, sorry, I couldn't quite hear, but there was some programs that had been reduced, had funding reduced because of a lack of referrals and non-performance. Can you expand on that?

The Chair: — Okay. I'm just going to remind the ministers to have their staff introduce themselves the first time that they speak.

Mr. Anderson: — Sure. Ron Anderson, assistant deputy minister, community safety outcomes and corporate supports. The area of the cuts was done in two ways. One, there's been a reduction in the number of alternative measures, referrals over the last five-year period. We did a review of the numbers that have been coming in over that period of time and, over that time, our contracted amounts for those referrals hadn't changed. So this year was part of the . . . part of a reduction was to get the contract levels for the youth alternative measures in Saskatoon and Regina down to the level where it should be, based on what the volume coming in. So that was one of the cuts.

The others were, with our contracts, there's service levels that we maintain on evaluations and outcomes. And if the service provider is not meeting those standards, then they're in non-performance, we work with them over a period of time. And if they continue to not reach the outcomes that we're looking for, then we will discontinue the contract. So there was some funding that was discontinued due to non-performance.

Ms. Sarauer: — So just to clarify . . . Because I thought alternative measures programming was in the community justice budget. Can you clarify?

Mr. Anderson: — So up until this year, we had the youth alternative measures program on the Corrections side of the house. The adult alternative measures was on the Attorney General. The 906,000 that you're referring to, we've managed to work out a transfer from the youth alternative measures into that one side to consolidate all alternative measures on the

Attorney General side.

So the 906,000 that was part of what the minister spoke to earlier is the process of us beginning to consolidate into one alternative measures branch, if you will.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So now it's all under community justice and no longer split between community safety outcomes and community justice, which probably makes logical sense.

Mr. Anderson: — Correct.

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes, okay. Okay. So that's the next one. That's one I was going to talk about anyway, so we might as well just move on to that unless . . . Just to clarify before we move on to some more questions about these alternative measures programs. So under community safety outcomes, there hasn't been any reductions in programming, not including the fact that that chunk of the programs have been moved to a different budget item.

Mr. Anderson: — No, the level of service available for the public or the youth will maintain the same. Because there's been a drop in the number of the referrals, we can reduce some of the contract dollars without affecting the level of service that we can have in the communities.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. But you're talking about the alternative measures programming that's now in the other budget item?

Mr. Anderson: — Correct. The reductions were on, came through our budget for this cycle, next year.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right. We're talking about the same thing.

Mr. Anderson: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm trying to keep my head wrapped around which budget item we're talking about but I understand the confusion. So well, let's just move on to alternative measures then.

I'm interested to know that . . . So what you're telling me is that the reduction that you've made in funding under community justice, with respect to community services, is it just alternative measures programming? Or is there other programming that have also seen a reduction in funding?

[19:30]

Mr. Anderson: — Sorry. To clarify, we did have some areas that were not . . . alternate measures be reduced. We had three areas that were young offender reintegration programs that did not meet their outcomes by the contract measurement, so those three were cut. We also had one bed space for emergency shelter be removed as well through the funding cuts. That however was not one that we had seen a lot of usage out of, and there were other . . . through our other contracted areas, there were bed space available in the same community. So we didn't see a cut to the available bed space as far as the needed space that we had.

We also had one unused portion of funding that had been . . .

we had been working with the organization to find purpose for it. We weren't able to come to an agreement on it, so we culled back those dollars as well.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is the cut to the Aboriginal court worker program, is that included in this as well?

Mr. Anderson: — That would be on the Attorney General side, which we'll pass to the side.

Ms. Sarauer: — But it's still in the same budget? It's still under community justice? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay. Maybe what I'll do is I'll ask the Attorney General if he can tell me if there's any . . . what the reductions are in the community justice budget from their perspective.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I'll walk through the whole budget with you if that's okay, because it's complicated. So the 2015-16 base budget was 16.543. I think you see that there. There was the transfer of the alternate measures that was referred to earlier, the 906. There was the annualized Melfort transition house funding of \$140,000. We talked about . . . Well we didn't talk about this, but there was the COLA adjustment of 20,000 which is referred to. There was the transfer of the northern transportation initiatives to the Victims' Fund which is a \$65,000 reduction from budget but not a reduction to the program. And again \$188,000 reduction of provincial coordination services, that's also being done by the Victims' Fund, now being paid for out of the Victims' Fund and not out of the base budget.

We reduced alternate measures programming by \$240,000, on-reserve community justice programming by \$360,000, and the Aboriginal court worker program by \$574,000. And we transferred the family violence outreach programming of 1.822 to the Victims' Fund. The Public Complaints Commission, you'll see that there's no change to the base budget at \$651,000. And office of the chief coroner, which is still under community justice, of 3.255 which was no reduction, but a COLA adjustment of \$27,000. There was a reduction for restructuring and reorganizing that office. There's \$100,000 in savings there. I think that's it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Before I move into the other more pressing ones, I did notice that Public Complaints Commission had been moved to boards and commissions which again makes logical sense. But it is a slight reduction. Is that slight reduction similar to the coroner's reduction?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There was no reduction to that budget. Within that budget was the allocation to the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] for the special investigations unit that was reduced by \$90,000.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, I'm just going back to the programs that had been mentioned. First of all, the Melfort transition house; is there any more funding . . . Is that project completed in terms of funding?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — It is and open today, so we're very pleased about that.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any . . . I don't think so, but is there

any funding in the budget for any new transition houses in 2016-2017?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There is nothing in this year's budget for any new transition houses so to speak. That was the first one they had built in the province for many, many years so it's . . . Yes, that 140 was this year's increase. The total funding's half a million dollars, I think, on an annualized basis.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay so this 140 will be the last instalment essentially. Okay, thanks. Now you mentioned one of the reductions is the Aboriginal court worker program reduction. Can you explain a little bit why the reduction?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Sure. Well historically that program's been a 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement with the federal government and, over the years, our funding commitment has increased. So this really represents a reduction of the provincial portion of that funding to re-establish the 50/50 funding arrangement with the federal government for that program.

As a bit of an editorial comment, we're certainly engaged with the federal government with respect to increasing funding for this program and for others, and we have a renewed confidence in the federal government that they're going to do that. We believe that we can continue to deliver the program with the funding that's still in place for that particular program, so we have some confidence we can continue to deliver it notwithstanding the reduction in the amounts in the budget.

Ms. Sarauer: — So it's your intention then with the discussion with the federal government that if they were to increase their funding that you would then match it to maintain that 50/50.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No, that would be . . . If the federal government decided that they were going to provide more funding for this that would be a discussion that we'd have to have with treasury board and my cabinet colleagues to see if there was any additional funding for that. But certainly we would look for any options that were available to match that funding whether within our budget or have further discussions with treasury board on whether or not there was any additional money, or look for, you know, as I mentioned, some new and kind of innovative ways of helping deliver that program more efficiently.

We do have some discussions going on with the Ministry of Finance. I think I mentioned in my comments that we've expanded video court in some significant way throughout the province and will continue to do that. If that medium can be used to help deliver this program, I think that that's a viable option, and we're going to continue to explore that.

Ms. Sarauer: — As a result of the reduction in funding for the Aboriginal court worker program, how many Aboriginal court worker positions have been eliminated so far?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — They're not government employees. They're CBO employees. So we're working with our, you know, our agencies, our community partners to see how this is going to be kind of rolled out. So at this present time, we can't answer the question in terms of how many fewer Aboriginal court worker programs or personnel there may be.

Ms. Sarauer: — You haven't heard from any of the other, any of the organizations what they intend to do as a result of the reduction in funding?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We're continuing to work, you know, with our community partners. It's quite possible that they'll be, there is a minimum of two people that will be, positions that'll be eliminated through those community organizations. But we continue that dialogue.

Ms. Sarauer: — Do you have any knowledge if that's going to be . . . Because I know there is two different types of sort of Aboriginal court workers that are working in the province. There's the family court, Aboriginal family court workers, and then there's the ones that are working in the criminal court. Do you know which ones are going to be affected?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There'll be some minimal impact to the family court worker program. The two people that I had, the two positions I'd mentioned earlier will be on the criminal side. But we expect a minimal impact on the family court worker program.

Ms. Sarauer: — What about the management level of that program? Have any of those positions been eliminated?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's a relatively small amount of administration from the ministry with respect to this program, but we have done some things within the ministry to reduce that further. But the amount of administration that was provided by the ministry was relatively small to begin with.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is the management of this program being rolled into the ministry now entirely?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Yes. It's funded by the ministry.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So the oversight and the management of the program will then be run exclusively by someone within the ministry?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — That's right.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there one person dedicated to overseeing this program now?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We have two people representing three FTEs who are responsible for administrating that program at that level. Oh, three people, two FTEs. I didn't get that, sorry.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, I'll move on. You mentioned a reduction in funding for on-reserve community justice programs. Could you expand?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I guess the short answer to that is that these are on-reserve programs. It's our belief, I guess is what . . . that the federal government should have responsibility for providing that funding on reserve. So that's another program, of course, that we're going to be continuing to have our dialogue with the federal government. We've heard some positive things about assisting with regard to the delivery of community justice programs on reserve, and so we have some expectation that there will be some further support. We haven't had any firm

confirmation from the federal government, but that tends to be our . . . that that responsibility really lies with the federal government.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, so your hope is that the federal government will pick up the funding that was reduced by the provincial government?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Yes. We're going to continue to have a dialogue with the federal government on this particular part of the file including the other items that we've mentioned, we had mentioned before. I think I said before, you know, we've got a bit of a renewed faith in the federal government on this file. The Minister of Justice has been very — at least in the media — quite supportive of it. We still provide services on reserve to 66 of the 72 First Nations though, so there still is a community justice component on reserve that's being provided by our ministry. I think we'll continue to underscore the point that in terms of providing those services on reserve, that continues to be a federal government responsibility. But we do have, we still provide services in a number of First Nations.

Ms. Sarauer: — Could you expand a little bit on which, on what either programs or positions were eliminated as a result?

[19:45]

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We eliminated funding for five programs. I'm not sure if this answers your question, but if it doesn't answer it, you can ask it again. There was an elimination of the programming on five First Nations where the level of referrals was quite low. And then there will be some slight reductions in programming across some other First Nations, but no elimination of those. So it was on five First Nations where the program was eliminated. I hope that answers your question.

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes, somewhat.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I think I might have forgot what your question was.

Ms. Sarauer: — Could you provide me with a list of either the programs or the First Nations that had been reduced? And if you don't have it available, could you table it?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The reduction, I'll give you the name of the five First Nations where it was eliminated: Mistawasis First Nation, Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre, The Regina Alternate Measures Program there was a reduction, Saskatoon Community Mediation Services, and Thunderchild First Nation. So those are the five that were eliminated.

With RAMP [Regina Alternative Measures Program], just to clarify, it was the elimination of one program within RAMP, not the elimination of the entire program. The majority of that funding remains. And that was the same with the Saskatoon Community Mediation.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can you tell me which specific programs in RAMP and Saskatoon Mediation were eliminated?

Mr. Thiele: — It's Pat Thiele from Community Justice Division. So the program on Mistawasis First Nation was one of

the community justice programs that was eliminated. However, we understand our federal partners . . . These are all cost-shared programs on reserves. Our federal partners will be offering an increase in funding to the Saskatoon Tribal Council in order for them to take over services on Mistawasis, so those services will continue. That's already a cost-shared agreement for Mistawasis, so that will continue.

Regina Alternative Measures Program, we've eliminated the serious offence program called VOiCe [victims, offenders, and community], the VOiCe program within Regina Alternative Measures, and a similar program within the Saskatoon Community Mediation Services that's, again, a serious offence program that we funded in those areas. We've focused our funding on the basic services in order to find these savings. And these are two programs that had been in place for some time, and again, lower number of referrals and we were hoping to see some different outcomes from those over the last few years.

The other program eliminated is our funding to the Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre for adult alternative measures. And that funding is being transferred to the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, which we already fund, in order for them to continue that funding. So we're aligning those programs within that community.

The fifth program is actually one that was . . . We eliminated that program agreement last year in '15-16 mid-year, because we were having some issues with, again, member referrals and lack of ability for them to have staff in the position for an extended period of time. So we actually eliminated that last year. We're offering those services through a fee-for-service arrangement, so it's just simply a reduction in our budget dollar this year, not a change for the community this year.

Ms. Sarauer: — With respect to the last program, can you explain what that program is?

Mr. Thiele: — Sorry, Thunderchild First Nation was a community justice program which delivers alternative measures programming, some crime prevention activities, community awareness and so on.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can you expand on how that works as a fee-for-service program?

Mr. Thiele: — So what we've been able to continue for that region is a fee-for-service for the alternative measures activities. So we already have fee-for-service agents around the province and to provide the alternative measures activities where the referral numbers are lower. So that was a community where referral numbers were lower, and we've been able to meet that need with our local fee-for-service agent in the region.

Ms. Sarauer: — I guess I'm a bit surprised that one of the reasons why the alternative measures programming is being reduced is because there's been low referrals. So my question would be is there any . . . Because ultimately one would think diversion from the court system would save money in the long run. So is there any policy work being done within the ministry to address that issue? Is there an intention to hope that one day there are more alternative measures referrals being made?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I'll answer that question kind of generally and then I'll ask Deputy Minister Fenwick to jump in on this. But we certainly are aware that, you know, mediation, diversion are good ways of keeping people out of the system. We believe that, you know, reducing the funnel, so to speak, of people entering into the system is the most . . . Well it's not only cost effective, but it's also good for community. And so we're working with . . . Our innovation division has some discussions going on, you know, ongoing discussions with respect to innovation with respect to community justice and how those program are delivered and looking at new and innovative ways of delivering some of that programming to try to reduce that funnel of people coming into the system. But we agree that, you know, diversion is the most responsible way of dealing with people coming into the system if that's at all possible, whether that's through pre—charge diversion and those kinds of things like that. Kevin, did you want to just kind of add anything to that?

Mr. Fenwick: — I think the answer would be an emphatic yes, that we do want to increase the numbers in alternative measures. In fact even the use of that word, alternative measures, we'd like to get away from and talk about appropriate measures so that the programs that we have right now that we call alternative measures are not an alternative to the court system but are decided upfront what's most appropriate. So that's certainly our goal and that's our hope. And I'm going to say when, not if. When we get those numbers up, then we'll have to reassess the funding for those programs. So you know, we certainly hope that down the road we're in a position of explaining why we've had to increase dollars for those programs because of demand.

Ms. Sarauer: — Great. I sure hope so as well. And I do agree of the importance of diversion in pre—charge matters. But post—charge, which is what we're talking about for these specific programs, are important as well and I just want to make sure. Is there sufficient funding now within these programs to match what you hope will be the increase in alternative measures diversions for . . .

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Again perhaps I'll just make a general comment and I'll ask Kevin to fill in the details.

We have, you know, we're having an ongoing dialogue with our federal counterparts on this and I think it's fair to say that as far as innovation is concerned, we're kind of leading the charge in Canada when it comes to developing programming. And I think the federal government has some interest in what we're doing. And so I have some expectations that there will be some additional funding coming from the federal government to help with, help fund the innovation that we want to bring to the ministry. Certainly there's been some great work done and Kevin and his team have been recognized in terms of that work.

Mr. Fenwick: — It's probably logical to say that we couldn't, for example, double the number of referrals and deliver the service in exactly the same way we're delivering the service now, without an increase in funding. But there's two things to take into account. One of them is we are being creative and innovative about how we deliver those services and we may be able to deliver those services in combination with other programs, for example, that allow us to deliver it more

efficiently and effectively and better, quite frankly. And when I say efficiently and effectively, I don't mean with less money but in fact expand the service by combining with some other programs so we can deliver a seamless program and increase the, or sorry, decrease the cost per file as it were. So that's one point.

The other point is is that every file that we send to appropriate measures, that we pull out of the court system, is a savings to the court system. So the hope would be, is that we realize savings in the formal court system that we can then use to fund the appropriate measures programs.

Ms. Sarauer: — Absolutely. I agree. But just to clarify, when we're talking about referrals, we're talking about prosecutions referring a charge to alternative measures. So I get the independence level between prosecutions and the Attorney General. But in saying that, there is some ability to control the rate of referrals, I would assume, from the prosecution side. Do you have any comments?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Certainly. You're absolutely correct with that. The other thing that is encouraging for us right now is that some of the police agencies are indicating to us that they are much more interested than they have been in the past in referrals to appropriate measures and potentially even pre-charge referrals. The RCMP, for example, have expressed, you know, great interest in the last number of months about engaging with us on those initiatives. And so, that's very good news.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm very happy to hear about the pre-charge referral diversion. But focusing again, sorry, on post-charge, I just want to make sure that I have caught all of the organizations or all of the programs that have been affected by the reduction in funding. Are there any ones that haven't been listed yet and if so, can you please list them that have been affected.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I think we've gone through the majority of them but I think we have a few.

Ms. Sarauer: — I think you had mentioned the base level, a base level reduction in all of the programs. Is that the 20 per cent reduction or is that something else?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's a number of organizations that are getting some reductions in terms of their funding this year and I can go through that list if you'd like.

Ms. Sarauer: — Or if you were just willing to table it.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Sure, yes. We can give you the list.

Ms. Sarauer: — For ease of everybody, that would be fine. Would you be able to explain what the reduction has meant for the organizations in terms of employment loss or programming, if any programs have been cut completely, other than the ones that had already been mentioned when I asked specifically about on-reserve community justice programs, but now I'm talking about all of the alternative measures programs.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well my answer really won't be much

different than the last time I answered that, than the other programming. We're really just kind of working with these agencies to determine how best . . . It's not a blanket reduction across the board. We've looked at different agencies and different programming and made decisions in terms of how much of a reduction there might be in one particular First Nation as opposed to another who may be delivering different programming, may have more referrals for instance.

So we'll continue to work with those agencies to make sure that they can manage through these reductions. Certainly a number of them have found some efficiencies within their own operations, which is going to help of course with the reductions that are coming. But I think we're hopeful the community . . . that the programming will continue to be able to be delivered, you know, in a responsible way.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. And just to clarify — I think you've already answered this question, but I just want to make sure that I have it right here — with respect to Regina Alternative Measures or RAMP and Saskatoon mediation, there was only the one program that had been eliminated? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay. Was there a reduction in funding to either of those organizations as well in addition to that?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There was a reduction, a 20 per cent reduction to Saskatoon Community Mediation Services.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, in addition to that program being eliminated?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — In addition to that one specialized program, RAMP's funding remained the same except for the elimination. I mentioned that before.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. What about John Howard Society? Were there any programming reduction funding . . . Or, sorry, was there any reduction in funding to the John Howard Society as well?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We only fund one. We fund Moose Jaw on the AG [Attorney General] side, and that funding didn't change, but I should refer that over to . . .

Ms. Sarauer: — My apologies.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No, that's all right . . . [inaudible] . . . confusing, yes.

[20:00]

Ms. Sarauer: — Sorry, just to clarify. There was no reduction in funding to . . .

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Not in Moose Jaw.

Ms. Sarauer: — Moose Jaw? Okay, thanks.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The John Howard Society will receive a reduction of 513,480 in annualized funding. This is for alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions programs in Regina and Saskatoon. The program will be now delivered by

Regina alternative measures program and the Saskatoon Tribal Council, who already deliver alternative measures programming in each of the two cities. So really what that's saying is that there will be a reduction in funding but not a reduction in programming. The John Howard Society will be left with 508,340 in annual funding for alternative measures program, as the minister said, in Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon; anger management programs in Saskatoon; and a reintegration program in Regina. John Howard will continue to receive fee for service for fine options program. That is still in place.

Ms. Sarauer: — So just to clarify based on what you said, there are no reductions in programming though? The programs have simply been moved to other organizations?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Correct.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can I ask what was the reasoning behind moving that?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. It has to do with demand. They were both delivering the same service, so we were paying for administration twice. So this way, for alternative measures that they . . . Administration fees will be paid to the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

In adult and youth, they traditionally have been separated, but because of changes within our ministry, the adult and youth will be those services for . . . Alternative measures will be delivered by STC, Saskatoon Tribal Council — it's only one hour into this; this will be fun — Saskatoon Tribal Council for both adult and youth. And the AG will be administering it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, just to make sure I understand, so was there a reason why RAMP and Saskatoon Tribal Council were chosen to run these programs as opposed to John Howard Society?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — These organizations were already familiar to the government. They were already delivering the service, so they're just assuming now the alternative measures from John Howard Society. Obviously the First Nations component is quite large, so we wanted the Saskatoon Tribal Council to deliver those particular programs.

Ms. Sarauer: — And then with respect to RAMP in particular, then I understand then why it was moved to Saskatoon Tribal Council, but can you explain why it was moved to RAMP?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It was just, they were already doing the program, so you know — successfully — and so there was no reason to make a change in relation to that.

Ms. Sarauer: — So what particular programs were moved from John Howard Society to . . .

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Were moved to?

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Youth alternate measures was moved from John Howard Society to those, to STC. Okay.

Ms. Sarauer: — All youth alternative measures was moved?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — In Saskatoon and Regina.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Just because I'm worried about the overlap between the two ministries, and I'm worried that I'm going to miss something, again are there any other alternative measures programming, from your perspective, that has been reduced in funding?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No, there are not.

Ms. Sarauer: — So the only change is this movement from John Howard Society to RAMP and STC. Okay. So no reduction in programming, just a movement of dollars essentially?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Right, for these particular, the alternative measures, yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, are there any other programming under this community justice budget that's under Corrections and Policing that has seen a reduction in funding?

Mr. McFee: — Dale McFee, deputy minister of the ministry. So the one that was mentioned earlier by ADM [assistant deputy minister] Anderson was the Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre, and that was an alternative measures program that was cut due to lack of referrals. So that one was mentioned earlier and, other than that, that covers all the alternative measures.

And those were absorbed by the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. So again it's capacity underutilized and picked up rather than have duplication of cost, so no change in service.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. In addition to alternative measures, I asked if there was any reduction in any programming under the community justice budget from the corrections side.

Mr. McFee: — The ones we mentioned earlier and what you've just heard from the group here, it's kind of all lumped in together. That should cover us all.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. I apologize. It gets a little bit confusing. Everything gets a little integrated here, so I'm trying to suss it out. So I apologize if I'm asking similar questions over and over again, but it's just so that I can try and figure out where is it, what's going where here.

Now you had mentioned, I think it was the Attorney General had mentioned — I can't quite remember anymore — the young offender reintegration programs as something that had been either reduced or eliminated. Can you expand on that?

Mr. Anderson: — Ron Anderson again. Those are the three that I referenced earlier that were cut for non-performance. Were you wanting the name of three? We had Meadow Lake Outreach Ministries, youth reintegration program. We had the

Northwest Professional Services which was part of the Battlefords Tribal Council. And we had Regina/Treaty Status Indian Services as well

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. Can you expand on what you mean by non-performance?

Mr. Anderson: — Yes, when we contract for service delivery, we put in a series of measures and outcomes that we expect to get out of those, as well as the quality of the work that is done with the individuals that go through the program. We have service integration managers that work with those communities to make sure they meet those standards. If they don't, then we work with that service provider to try and bring them up to the standard required over a period of time. If it continues to be non-performing, then we do have the option to terminate the contract, and that's the case for those ones.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So when you say non-performing, you mean it didn't meet the standards that the ministry was looking for?

Mr. Anderson: — Correct.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any . . . Are you looking to other organizations in those communities to try and fill that gap?

Mr. Anderson: — At this point we would be revisiting the demand side of that as well and then looking to see if there's a viable opportunity to look at another service provider. We would of course look for other providers that we have in the region that could absorb that within the existing work that we're doing like we have with the other initiatives. But we would be looking for other alternatives if the need is there and can't be met through existing contracts.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So what kind of programs are we talking about that these organizations were?

Mr. Anderson: — These would be the youth reintegration programs taking youth from the correctional system back into the community.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right. Sorry, can you expand a little bit on what youth reintegration means, like what the youth reintegration programs actually do?

Mr. Anderson: — Yes. Can I call on somebody else to assist me on that?

Ms. Sarauer: — Absolutely.

Mr. Anderson: — Thank you. Sorry. So the reintegration program is a little bit different for each client because each one has different needs. So the workers that we have in the communities that are contracted to do this work help connect them with a place to stay if it's not with family. They help to reconnect them with the education services they need or reintegrate them back into the education system where they can and connect them to the supports they need in the community. Each community is a little bit different, so the agencies work with the other agencies in the community and the school systems, etc., to get them back into a normal, functioning

manner if possible.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. That sounds like really important work. I'm curious to know what's happening right now in those communities then with young offenders that are leaving the correctional system.

Mr. Anderson: — We would still have services provided by other vendors or other service providers in those communities. When we review the contracts, we also look at, as I said, what we can take into other contracts as well at the same time.

Ms. Sarauer: — So to your knowledge, there are no youth that are not being provided with services by the ministry once they're leaving the corrections system.

Mr. Anderson: — No, to the best of my knowledge we haven't reduced any of the services in the communities.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. You had also mentioned — and I didn't catch the whole thing — but something about one emergency shelter bed space. Can you expand on that one as well?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — That was with the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] in Regina, and they had one residential bed retainer of \$20,000. It was under utilized, and Street Culture Kidz in Regina has enough bed space to absorb that.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay so it was just one emergency shelter bed. Street Culture Kidz, I know, I believe they deal with youth, but the YMCA I think has a broader mandate for dealing with housing adults as well as youth. So are you properly addressing . . . I'm just making sure that you're properly addressing that difference.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — This was a youth bed.

Ms. Sarauer: — So instead of providing one emergency shelter bed at the YMCA, you're providing one emergency shelter bed. Did the funding get moved, or is it just that you feel that Street Culture Kidz is providing that service?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Right. The \$20,000 was for a retainer. If the service isn't being used and Street Culture Kidz can absorb that one extra space, then we reduce the funding to YMCA and the funding isn't going with them. They're absorbing it at Street Culture Kidz.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So you didn't increase the funding to Street Culture Kidz by \$20,000.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No.

[20:15]

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. I just want to clarify, and I know I'm sort of asking the same question over and over again, but you had mentioned that some of the programs have been cut because of non-performance or because essentially the ministry wasn't happy with the quality of service they were providing. So is your intention to therefore replace those programs with other organizations in those communities?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We operate these programs on outcomes-based. If the demand is there for any particular CBO or whatever the case may be, we will revisit it and make a determination as to who's going to provide the service, you know, what service is going to be provided. But right now the demand is not there to continue paying for the service. The words that were used by the associate deputy minister was, when a CBO or whatever the case may be is not living up to the performance standards set and agreed upon, then we have to find . . . I mean, we're all responsible for taxpayers' dollars. You know, if the demand is there, then we have to find someone who can deliver the service as required.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right, and I don't necessarily disagree with that. I'm just clarifying that . . . So I think what you're telling me is that in these communities, you're fine with the level or you don't . . . Because the demand isn't there, you're not looking for other CBOs that can provide a higher quality of service or a quality of service that the ministry is looking for. And the reason why you haven't been looking for that is because there has been a lack of demand for the service in those communities?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — As has been evidenced by some of these organizations taking over the duties and responsibilities that another CBO was doing, we have that ability within, you know, in every area. Right now we're completely satisfied with the level of service that is being provided in any particular community depending on the situation. We will constantly, you know, constantly monitor the level of demand. And if the demand increases to a level, we will then make a determination as to whether that service needs to be provided.

Obviously, that if someone is not living up to the outcomes that are required, that we will have to then, if the demand is there, we will then have to make a determination about who is going to provide that service only if and when the demand is there.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thanks for that, and I guess my thoughts go back to my earlier comments about alternative measures and some of the demand being dictated by the ministry. So hopefully the quality or the importance of these services will be recognized by both ministries.

But I can move on maybe for now and talk a little bit about the northern justice initiatives portion of the community justice budget. I think it was mentioned — I'm not sure if northern integration, if the northern integration initiative is in this line item or in this budget, or if it's somewhere else — but I did see that the community justice budget section mentions, "coordinates Aboriginal and northern justice initiatives." So I was wondering about the northern justice initiatives portion of this budget item or budget section, I suppose.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — So on the AG side, we have one FTE on the northern Aboriginal justice initiative that we have dedicated on our side. But I know that there's work that's being done on the CP [Corrections and Policing] side of the ministry as well and that funding for that position is stable on the AG side.

Ms. Sarauer: — Can you expand on what the role of that one FTE is?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We have one person who deals with policy initiatives with respect to northern Aboriginal justice issues and generally kind of does a lot of troubleshooting for the ministry when it comes to the issues that arise or relationships with New North, for instance. She's kind of the face of the ministry when it comes to those issues on the AG side in the North.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thanks. I'll maybe ask the same question for Corrections, if there's some Corrections dollars that flows through here as well. Thank you.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The northeast initiative is a five-year program delivering service to Pelican, Sandy Bay, Deschambault Lake. It's a partnering with First Nations and the RCMP. It's 100 per cent . . . Or it is funded by the federal government to the tune of \$895,000 per year for five years. The focus is ages 12 to 24. And for further details on this particular program, I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Rector.

Mr. Rector: — Thank you very much. That pretty well summarizes it, though. The collaboration with First Nations agencies from those communities also looks at very . . . You know, what's the potential for early years intervention as well? So there's a provincial steering committee involving a variety of ministries within the government to say what source of programs might be appropriate in the early sections, say just before grade school, to start to increase the number of children attending school and completing school.

It looks also at, whether it's the 12 to 24 that was referenced by Minister Tell, it's also, you know . . . It's examining things like capability of mental health treatment services, remote presence technology, developing a network of professionals from different locations in the province to use that technology to provide some of that service and supervision at that advanced level. But there's also staff being hired within that funding provided by the National Crime Prevention Centre so that, you know, there's folks right in the communities working with the agencies. And so there's coordination around these situations so the . . . You know there's many challenging cases. Those three communities have very high crime rates relative to other areas.

But crime isn't ever . . . and statistics are just averages. The question is how does criminal activity and needs get distributed, and at that point it's not equally distributed. And so the initiatives start focusing on, you know, who represents a disproportionate amount of involvement, a disproportionate amount of the violence. It's not all children don't go to school and certain portion in families and impacts. And you know, how do you sort of work with the communities and target so you have the greater outcomes and that?

So it's all of those elements together. It's really quite comprehensive from that perspective, and it's a process that all government agencies locally and with partners like the RCMP are very committed to working in a long-term basis. Both the University of Saskatchewan and — about to be signed off — the University of Regina also have funds for the long-term evaluation, year-by-year for these projects, so we get to see from a process development what's happening but as well as from an outcome measures as the program develops.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Could you explain what sort of projects have developed as a result of this program?

Mr. Rector: — At this point in time, we're into the first year, and so we have completed community consultations in all three communities. There's a process of what we call ages and stages, looking at what are the needs and demands, what are the services, and what are the gaps, all the way from ages zero to adults, looking at the . . . You know, there are a lot, many services there. What's missing and then how can that gap be addressed through realignment of existing, as well as additional, programs?

So that's the part that's happening right now. The coordinator for the funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre was just hired a few months ago, and staff that they will be facilitating with will be hired, I believe, with the First Nations agencies. So there's a health agency. There's a child and welfare agency will be involved with those programs.

But you know, there's also fundings for, say, programs for youth itself, but how they are going to be designed is yet to be determined. It'll be part of the consultation with communities and the nature of needs within the area. We may have youth, for example, that are involved with high levels of violence so, you know, how do you . . . This has to be more sort of detailed life skills training in that regard, in terms of how do you deal with issues besides responding in a violent way. And so there's, you know, what we call criminal thinking, about how do we problem solve, that type of thing. That's a type of program in addition to positive, pro-social ways of thinking, but pro-social skill areas and activities. And so evening programs would be one of them, but evening programs by itself is meant to complement these other areas as well. It's a combination of things. So that's sort of it.

It's more than just sort of like, well here's some money and here's some services. It's designed to be quite broader than that in the sense of, first of all, there are services occurring already, but that doesn't necessarily mean the needs are all being met. And so the process to date is very specific in engaging the communities and has been very fruitful in developing that whole . . . What we call ages and stages is in the process right now, and that will really guide the targeting of how do we fill the gaps, which could be realignment as well as adding new services. So it's all of that in combination.

Ms. Sarauer: — So how have you found that community engagement to be? How has the community reception been?

Mr. Rector: — Very positive. I co-chair the provincial steering committee with Superintendent Grant St. Germain, superintendent for the North for RCMP, and we visited the communities on a few occasions for the consultation alone to begin the process. About, I would say, about two weeks ago, there was a further gathering of all the communities and looking at . . . between probation, between RCMP, between community agencies, exactly around gathering further partnerships and collaboration, and very positive response there. There's also been at least one very detailed planning process with one of the communities on articulating that whole range of ages and services that are there and that are missing at this point that need to be addressed.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is there any intention to have a report at the end of the five years?

Mr. Rector: — The evaluation contract with the universities is there's one at the end of each year. It's part of the contract with the federal government.

[20:30]

Ms. Sarauer: — Are there any provincial dollars that are going into this, or is it purely the federal grant?

Mr. Rector: — Well there's a number of funding that's going on based on course programs that are currently happening in those communities. So you have probation staff that are based in Creighton that provide services to those areas. You have three detachments of RCMP.

One of the things that we're working very hard on is, it's a variation of an initiative between the Attorney General and ourselves, police, and RCMP around . . . It was referred to as a serious violent offender initiative that was implemented a few years ago in Saskatoon and North Battleford area. But it speaks to integration of, how do we work together in a certain targeted way as opposed to well, you do this and I do that sort of thing. You know, how do we work actually together knowing what the offence pattern is of a particular individual? When I visit, what do I see? When you visit, what do you see? If something's not right, how do we communicate with each other?

So there's a lot of resources coming in from . . . even though, you know, Sandy Bay is for the most part municipal and the other two are for the most part First Nations. It's not quite accurate to speak of resources that are just sort of federal versus provincial. From a provincial perspective, we do provide services in there on the Corrections and Policing side, but the reframe that's going on is, yes, there is accountability here around young offenders and sentences and the RCMP in terms of the administration of justice mechanisms.

But a significant part around this is also being proactive. And proactive takes on a number of dimensions, and one of the big ones is you may be an offender, but how do we engage that offender to say, but we don't want you to reoffend again? We don't want you to breach. We don't want you . . . So how do we work together on this? A lot of crime is not necessarily a heck of a lot of contemplative behaviour. And how do we work together, you know?

So it's in some ways reframing a little bit of that relationship from, you know, I'm here to observe and lay charges or respond to your negative behaviours. It's also meant to be a . . . If we know someone, if left alone, has a very strong likelihood to reoffend, what's our responsibility to engage with them differently based on evidence-based practices that we know does make a difference? And so it's that kind of targeting, that kind of inter-agency training and development and program development is what we're developing here.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I look forward to seeing the results of all your work.

Mr. Rector: — So do I.

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes, I bet. Thank you kindly, I appreciate that.

I want to move on to another item here under community justice, interpersonal violence and abuse. And we already talked about transition houses, but I'm assuming . . . Actually I shouldn't make any assumptions here. Can you tell me what falls under interpersonal violence and abuse funding and programming and whether or not there has been any changes to the funding?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Actually it's probably best if we go through the general parameters for you, if that's all right.

Mr. Thiele: — Hi, Pat Thiele again. The interpersonal violence and abuse program unit includes funding for the transition houses, includes funding for the sexual assault services funded across the province, and as well the management of the provincial outreach, sorry, provincial coordination services that I mentioned, and the family violence outreach services as well. So there's no change to any of that funding other than the increase to the Melfort transition house that was mentioned earlier.

Ms. Sarauer: — So all organizations have seen . . . and all funding has remained stable, no increases or decreases in the funding.

Mr. Thiele: — Other than the Melfort transition house, that is correct, yes. Right.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right. The sexual assault services funding, I thought that had been moved to victim services.

Mr. Thiele: — The budget lines have been moved to the Victims' Fund. It's being funded out of the Victims' Fund for sexual assault as well as family violence outreach and the provincial coordination services, but the management is still within the interpersonal violence and abuse program unit.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Would it be fair to say that all domestic violence-related funding is now being funded out of victim services?

Mr. Thiele: — No, because the transition houses are still funded out of the main budget through the interpersonal violence and abuse program.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, but everything other than transition houses that relate to domestic violence . . . Am I being too simplistic?

Mr. Thiele: — I think primarily other than . . . Well there would be domestic violence programming on the Corrections side as well within probations and so on.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay.

Mr. Thiele: — But in terms of services for victims and those dealing with violence and abuse, primarily through the Victims' Fund and the transition house funding as well.

There are other programs, and as I mentioned, where victims would benefit from the services provided, for example through

probation services. But the specific programs for victims are funded through victim services and the interpersonal violence and abuse program for transition houses.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Maybe I'll pass this question then on to Corrections because it sounds like there's a little bit of overlap here. I'm not sure if it falls under the community justice budget, but it might be. I'm guessing it might be under custody supervision and rehabilitation services, but I'm not sure. In any event, can you explain from the custody, from the Corrections and Policing side?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We offer domestic violence programming through our community corrections division to clients that obviously require it. We also participate with the Attorney General in the domestic violence court.

Ms. Sarauer: — Has there been any reduction in funding for any of those programs?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No.

Ms. Sarauer: — Has there been an increase in funding?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. I may be saying this panel's name wrong, but the domestic violence death review panel, is there any dedicated funding to that panel once it becomes operational, which I believe will be happening shortly?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's no dedicated funding for that. We'll absorb the costs of that work internally within the ministry. And as you know, their work will start relatively quickly with an interim report this fall, but no, that would be funded internally through the ministry.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is it fair to say that there's no dedicated funding allocated to any recommendations that may be made in that interim report?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No. There is no dedicated funding. Of course we don't know what the recommendations are. And once we have those interim recommendations or any recommendations that come through the final report, then we'll have to look to see what our programming options may be, whether any of those can be incorporated through existing programming that we have with the ministry, or whether we need new dedicated funding to support those programs. But we'll wait to see what their work is like in terms of determining what program options may be available or what will be required. But we're serious about dealing with the issue, and so we'll look very carefully at those recommendations and the funding implications.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm happy to hear that. Thank you. I'm going to move on to the next budget item, boards and commission. I notice that there was a slight reduction in funding for the Legal Aid Commission. Could you explain that for me please?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well as far as the budget is concerned, there was a \$350,000 reduction to Legal Aid, but that was a backfill with a \$200,000 increase in salary increments for Legal

Aid. So the net difference in the budget was \$150,000 in terms of the actual item. You will know that legal aid is kind of a cost-shared responsibility with the federal government. Certainly the province has been shouldering the lion's share of that funding over many years. It continues to be, I think it's fair to say, the number one item that we talk to the federal government about when it comes to increasing their contribution to legal aid. We haven't had much success over the last number of years, but — I think I said this before — we have a bit of a renewed confidence that perhaps the federal government is going to recognize its responsibility when it comes to legal aid, so we'll continue to push them for increases in funding.

And I'll ask Kevin to maybe make a comment on this, but I think this was a significant item that the deputy ministers have been talking about, and I think that there was a suggestion that there was going to be some increased funding. I'm not sure the timing of that, but I'll perhaps let Kevin answer that.

Mr. Fenwick: — The federal contribution to legal aid has been frozen for a number of years, eight I think if I recall correctly, so that has been problematic. But with the new government in Ottawa, they have indicated that in fact that the freeze has been lifted and they are going to be contributing more money.

We're working with the federal government and the other provinces on a new funding formula for legal aid because there is understandably some difference of opinion between the provinces, whether legal aid money should be on a per capita basis — and those provinces who have an increase in population think that it should be — and other provinces who think, as we do, that there should be a more complicated formula that takes into account need and the number of individuals interacting with the criminal justice system, et cetera. The increase in federal funding will allow us to move forward, we believe with . . . we hope a new formula, but at the same time ensuring that no province has to take a reduction in the funding that it had before, which would not have been possible with stable funding or stagnant funding if we moved to a new formula.

So we have essentially a short-term agreement to get us through '16-17, and we're using '16-17 to negotiate with Canada and the other provinces on a new funding formula which we are hoping will mean that we have an increase in funding for '17-18. But at least we know there'll be no decrease for '16-17. The existing formula is in place for '16-17, so that's good news for us.

And yes, the minister is absolutely correct there's probably not a topic that has been the subject of more discussion at the federal-provincial-territorial tables over certainly the last three-plus years, or three years or so that I've been involved, than legal aid. So we finally see some light on the horizon, and that's a very, very good thing.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thanks, I'm really happy to hear that. That's a long time coming.

I'm interested to know a little bit about the funding formula, how it's going to account for the fact that essentially every province's legal aid program is different. Could you elaborate

a bit?

[20:45]

Mr. Fenwick: — Well we're not sure yet exactly what will happen. I mean, a simple straightforward formula, I guess, the easiest although not the best, we would suggest, would be to simply fund based on population province by province.

You know that, quite frankly, reminds me of how we funded some of our health care institutions a couple of decades ago, where it was based on your average daily census in the institution, and that's all that mattered: how many patients you had in hospital and that's how you were funded. And thankfully we moved away from that, and we moved to a system in health care that took into account the population that a particular institution served and adjustments being made for age and sex, for example.

That's what we think needs to happen in legal aid as well, that we need to recognize for provinces like Saskatchewan and Manitoba where we have marginalized populations that are more likely to use legal aid, we think there should be some recognition for the demand rather than just population. And we're hopeful that that's where we'll get to. But that's going to be the subject of the intense discussions over the course of the next year.

Certainly it was encouraging. We had our western, or sorry, our deputy ministers' federal-provincial-territorial meeting just two weeks ago, and I sensed at that table that there would be a willingness on the part of those provinces who were the most strident about population only that they would at least be open to a further discussion provided that there was enough money injected into the system by Canada that they would not suffer a reduction over their status quo. And we think we have the opportunity now to move forward on that front. But you know, many a slip 'twixt cup and lip as the saying goes, and there are some significant negotiations ahead of us.

Ms. Sarauer: — As I said, I wish you all the best in those negotiations, and I hope the result is a more robust legal aid program for the province. That's for sure. I am wondering if an increased federal contribution to legal aid would mean a corresponding decreased contribution from the provincial level, or will provincial levels remain the same or at least at no lower than the levels they are today?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well one of the goals of course is to have a cost-sharing arrangement because we, you know, we very much view this as a joint responsibility of the federal and provincial government, so any increase in funding from the federal government would not result in a decrease in provincial funding. I guess that's the simple answer. I certainly, I wouldn't advocate for that. I mean the work that Legal Aid does, as you know because you have some background in this area, that they do very, very good work. So anything that we can do to, you know, to enhance the programming at Legal Aid, just from an access to justice perspective, is a good thing.

But that's not to say that we're going to back away from our innovation agenda either because, as we mentioned before, we've got our Family Matters program which tends to try to

divert people out of the system before they get into it. And so we'll continue with exploring innovative ways of ensuring that perhaps people don't need to access the systems we have. But the simple answer to your question is no; we would not expect to reduce provincial funding simply with an increase from the federal government.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. That kind of rolls into my next question. I'm wondering if legal aid is going to be a part of the transformational change discussion.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well maybe I'll just start by saying . . . And I know you've had the opportunity to review our innovation wall, and thanks very much for doing that. I think that gives you a pretty good picture of the kind of very good work that the ministry is doing on innovation. That was really kind of, you know, when you talk about transformational change, that really got a start in the Ministry of Justice three years ago in terms of trying to advance innovation, trying to find a better way of delivering the programs more efficiently and effectively.

And certainly legal aid is a key part of what we do in the Ministry of Justice through the Legal Aid Commission. So you know, what we would be looking for I think is new and innovative ways of delivering programming, not reductions in the programming across the ministry. And so I think there's some things that you would have seen on that innovation wall which has a direct impact on access to justice and those kinds of things.

And so while we're not looking to substantially transform the way legal aid is delivered, certainly as far as innovation is concerned, it's always part of the discussion. So I'm not sure that quite answers your question, but finding new and innovative ways and more effective ways of delivering service is always a goal for the Ministry of Justice, as it is for all executive government.

And so I think that . . . And as I said, legal aid is a big part of that. But we know and you know how important it is for those services to be provided by the Legal Aid Commission and the good lawyers that are over there.

And so to the extent that that service could be delivered more efficiently, we'd certainly look at that but not at the cost of reduction of service typically, you know, over the course of that dialogue.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm happy to hear that, and I hope any discussion would consider the importance of legal aid and the importance of full-service representation services, especially for low-income individuals. So I am happy to hear that.

I want to talk a little bit again about — and I'm just trying to wrap my head around — the reduction or the change in the makeup of the funding that occurred within Legal Aid. Is there any reduction in full-time employees at all to Legal Aid?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I think the simple answer to the question is that there will be a kind of a rationalization in the number of farm-outs that happen at Legal Aid to private bar lawyers. So I think that that's where we're going to find some, that efficiency

to make up the difference in terms of the amount that was reduced. So I think that's kind of the simple answer. I'm not sure, Craig, if you want to add to that. I think that's basically how it's going to be managed.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is the plan instead of . . . or, in the effort to reduce Legal Aid farm-outs, that those files will be done by in-house Legal Aid counsel?

Mr. Goebel: — Craig Goebel, CEO, Legal Aid. The potential for cost savings is imagined and then realized by being more vigilant on determining which offices among the offices that do conflict work are actually able with their capacity to take those kinds of files. And in the past, we have been audited in a manner that would say, on an individual basis, why haven't you taken that? And so we've given the responsibility to the legal directors, and head office is now doing an audit on a regular basis to determine why they're not taking if they're not taking.

So when you look at things, the processes change. So we're quite confident that we can easily absorb a \$150,000 reduction by making sure that the legal directors are taking on the work that they have the capacity to take on. It's really just that simple. And then we can monitor at head office.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So based on what you're telling me, there's no FTE changes for Legal Aid.

Mr. Goebel: — No.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Are there any retired positions that are going to be left unfilled?

Mr. Goebel: — We have a couple of those right now.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are they going to be filled?

Mr. Goebel: — When we build back up our capacities. Like, they're not filled not as a result of not having them, but there is capacity in the offices to take on the work that's available.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So you feel that the level of staffing that you have right now is adequate for the need?

Mr. Goebel: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay.

Mr. Goebel: — The intake around the system is not the same, and so capacity and intake fluctuates up and down. In a couple of the offices, the trend has been down over the last few years. So they're receiving fewer applications, and therefore fewer files are being taken on by the lawyers, whether it's private bar or in-house, so there is capacity to absorb any increases. So there has been some retirements where we've said, you can absorb the present volume.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So just to clarify, you're saying you've seen a decrease in the amount of files that Legal Aid has done over the past year.

Mr. Goebel: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Another question that I had about Legal Aid, I'm curious to know, generally speaking, what the waiting times are for first appointments with the lawyer. Because I've heard that in Regina, Regina city in particular there, upwards of four months before the appointment, the first appointment with the lawyer. Do you know those numbers, and if not, could you get them and table them for us?

Mr. Goebel: — The numbers are anecdotal. It's never been measured in any consistent, rational way. We have adopted a new process within the last few months as a result of those kinds of concerns, that instead of asking each office on a quarterly basis or a half-yearly basis how long it takes to meet with a lawyer, we're actually looking at the data between the time that someone applies and is determined to be eligible and the first meeting. So we can now, with a better reporting system, actually look at data.

So you could be right: four months is probably the worst case scenario over a longer period of time. But there are at least a couple of months in some offices, but it varies seasonally. It varies by the amount of work coming in. It varies by vacation. But we can narrow that down to a very precise number.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So what you're telling me is that you don't know the exact number right now or the average number, but that's something that with . . .

Mr. Goebel: — What we're reporting in the annual report is presently anecdotal.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there work being established to track that number into the future?

Mr. Goebel: — Oh yes, that's what I meant just a moment ago. With better data we can get a report that is much more precise.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. What about the average caseload per lawyer at Legal Aid? Do you have that number?

Mr. Goebel: — Average caseload is available as a number between the number of files taken in and opened and the number of files closed, and that is pretty variable. It's based on how many files actually people close. And that again has been something we've worked on for quite some time to get people to close their files. We don't have a carrot, and we don't have a stick. We just have a rational basis, that if you're finished with something, say so, and move on to the next thing.

We're now in a position again where the discussions that come from that lack of information is now with a better set of data because the data system has now been in place for four years. It's pretty robust. It collects and can report on a lot of good things. But we need to have people actually close their files.

[21:00]

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So based on that better data, what kind of data could you provide me with respect to caseloads or, you know, a capacity of Legal Aid?

Mr. Goebel: — We can provide the data of how many files are opened by staff lawyers and by the private bar compared to how

many files are closed in a time period, which gives you an actual number, but an average number on an office basis of how many files there is in an active caseload.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, I don't know the . . .

Mr. Goebel: — I can say that there's limited national or international data about what a good caseload is. We're doing some research on that right now.

Ms. Sarauer: — That's great to hear. Oh . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Sure can I just, before we go can I ask if it's possible, I don't know what the proper procedure is, but if I could get that information tabled at some point before the committee? I don't know what the proper wording is but . . . brought back before the committee . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thank you.

Is there a time frame I could get for that? How long would it take to be able to get that information?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We will let you know. I'm not quite sure what the timing might be on that. It depends on . . . So I won't commit to a timing, but we'll work on it for you.

Ms. Sarauer: — That's good. Thanks.

The Chair: — We will take a five-minute recess.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

The Chair: — Okay, if everyone could take your seats please. Thank you very much. The time is now 9:10, 9:11. We will commence.

Ms. Sarauer: — I think my next question is going to be about video court expansion. You had mentioned that in your initial comments, I believe, or in one of your comments. Could you expand on what the work has been in terms of working on expanding video court access?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — So you'll see in the budget that there's \$300,000 that's been allocated for video court conferencing installations, which is fairly consistent with the budgets over the last number of years. There's currently 70 video conferencing locations in the province. One of the . . . We've identified priorities for implementation, including the provincial court locations at Wollaston Lake and Black Lake.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Has there been an increase, or is there any work to increase the percentage utilization of video court conferencing? Because I think I saw somewhere that it was quite stable at about 9 per cent.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — So I can just go through . . . In '13-14 we had 9,500 appearances by video court; 10,230 in '14-15; and in '15-16 there was just a little shy of 13,000. So the utilization of video court's been going up over the years, and of course as we continually expand video court, we'll see those numbers increase. That's our expectation.

Ms. Sarauer: — Great, thanks. I'm happy to hear that. I'm going to move on to the custody, supervision and rehabilitation

services budget. I just want to . . . No, it doesn't look like there has been any sort of major changes to the funding; in fact I think there might be a slight increase. So could you expand if there's been any changes and explain to me also what this budget item contains?

Maybe start by explaining to me what this budget item contains. So I'm looking at the estimates budget, and it's titled custody, supervision and rehabilitation services.

[21:15]

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Okay. The custody, supervision and rehabilitation services: annualizing the Prince Albert Provincial Correctional Centre new living unit, 3,000,873. We have the cost of living adjustment, 1,000,847; employee and family assistance program reduction for Public Service Commission, 25,000 for reduction; transfer internal to custody, supervision and rehabilitation services, 320,000 transfer; remand reduction, 350,000; overtime reduction, 450,000. Operational efficiencies is 500,000. Closing Buffalo Narrows correctional centre is 661,000 reduction. Food services reduction is 2,300,000. Going under community corrections specifically, again the cost of living adjustment, 393,000, another transfer internal to community services and rehabilitation; community supervision rehabilitation services and electronic monitoring, 150,000.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. You mentioned a remand reduction of \$350,000. Can you expand on that?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I'm going to ask Deputy Minister McFee to answer that question.

Mr. McFee: — So we've got a thorough review of remand right now, and this is a bit of a long story. Obviously since 1998, sentenced offenders has grown by 2.1 per cent. Remand has grown by 89.1 per cent.

And so when we start to actually look at the numbers, you start to drill into that: 58 per cent of remand service, 1 to 14 days; 80 per cent of remand service, 30 days or less. And all but 13 per cent of them get out without serving further time in custody. So what we have is . . . And then we further dove into the analysis, and a remanded offender costs us \$80,000 a year, and of course, as you know, there's no programming for a remanded offender. In a sense, the offender costs \$43,000 a year.

So if we're going to actually balance this, we have to drill into those numbers and figure out the aspects of remand that we can actually look at doing things differently. And of course, some of that is the court process, some of that is there a third party that has ability to take on some of the responsibilities and can do it better. And the other part of that is, can we use some analytics and perhaps develop a tool for police that we can actually better assess who should be on remand and who shouldn't be.

So we've undertook a partnership with the province of Ontario, between us and the Attorney General and the province of Ontario, to make sure that we have a comparative benchmark. Looking at this in a fairly fulsome manner, that report should be coming to us here within the next couple of months. And then of course at which time we're going to look at which actions

that can be taken to slow down the taps or that feeder system into the correctional facility.

So in essence, what's going on is we don't have a correctional problem, we have a remand problem, and the remand problem has been growing since 1998. And as you know, just to reiterate, there's no programming for remand, so rather than keep putting facilities up and put a band-aid to something that isn't working, we need to actually look at the system and figure out what we can do and change both on an . . . [inaudible]. And you've mentioned a lot of things in relation to talking to the Attorney General today in relation to that, or can we actually ensure that our populations that are in our facilities are the right people that are in there.

So we further did work on that to do an analysis on the relationship between crime reduction and increased incarceration — if there is a relationship — using 20 years of data. And it appears that there is no relationship. And in matter of fact, if we get the right people out of jail and keep the right ones in, we could probably actually look at even potentially reducing crime.

So what you're hearing from me is a whole lot of statistical analysis that the ministry is undertaking under the leadership of both ministers, and to actually slow down the flow into the facilities instead of the traditional response of building new facilities. We actually need to deal with the issue upstream and look at better ways in which we can manage the client population and obviously give them better outcomes.

But at the same time, as you can imagine, this is a huge dollar number in relation to resources, time, and money that's going in for very little results. So a huge opportunity, and obviously we're fairly into this, has been going on for some time, and then hopefully get some results in this. And as you can see, we are already anticipating there should be some savings in the low-hanging fruit of this, and then hopefully it will lead to much bigger savings later on.

Ms. Sarauer: — And I'm really happy to hear that's the direction that the ministry is taking. What you're saying is that the \$350,000 remand reduction is anticipating that there will in fact be less offenders in remand for this year. Okay, great. Thank you.

Does this budget item also include in-custody and out-of-custody programs from the corrections side in terms of any type of programming? Let's start with in-custody programming first. How about . . . You're giving me a strange look. Any type of in-custody offender programming that occurs, is that in this area?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It's all included. There are no cuts to programming. Are you wanting to know the specific programming that occurs within our facilities?

Ms. Sarauer: — Well I first wanted to know if it's included in this budget item, if it's in this budget area because I just simply don't know where it falls.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Community in custody.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. And so then what you're saying is my follow-up question: there is no cuts to programming due to funding. Okay. Are there any cuts to programming, or are you aware of any programs in custody that have had to be terminated as a result of something other than funding in custody, for example population density or problems with safety or gangs in prisons?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Nothing has changed with respect to the programs over time.

Ms. Sarauer: — So there's no programs right now that are on hold in custody as a result of safety or anything in prisons.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Could you explain . . . and we've talked a little bit about this. I just want to make sure that I'm not missing anything. Is there any out-of-custody probation services, for example programming for offenders that fall under this budget item? Is this were that would be?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, it does fall in this particular area. There's no cuts.

Ms. Sarauer: — So there's no reduction in funding.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any increase in funding? Okay. Would it be possible to obtain a list of . . . Moving back again, sorry to confuse you, but moving back again to in-custody offender programming, you had mentioned that there is a list of programming. Would you be able to table that at some point to the committee?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The list of programs? For sure.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. Hopefully I said it right that time.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — In custody.

Ms. Sarauer: — In-custody programming. Yes.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, I'm going to move on to the . . . because I am cognizant of the time. I never thought I would have way more questions than I have time, but I definitely do. I have to move on to the policing budget item. So I'm not sure which ministry this takes. I'm guessing it's Corrections and Policing. There was a slight reduction, it looks like, to funding for policing programs and to program support. I was wondering if I could get an explanation.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Okay, for the policing side: transfer of salaries to operating, 125,000; cost-of-living adjustment, 54,000; reduce Aboriginal community consultative group funding, 580,000 reduction; RCMP contractual increase, 1.808 million. A reduction to RCMP funding — you know, steal with one hand and take with the other — \$400,000 reduction. Policing programs or . . . the RCMP cost-of-living increase and

adjustment, 22,000. And transfer of salaries to operating, reduction of 125,000, matches the other one, the transfer of salaries to operating.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. What is the budget for safer communities and neighbourhoods? I see that's under this budget item.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — SCAN [safer communities and neighbourhoods] isn't broken out specifically. It's embedded with the other programs. But we can get you that information specifically to SCAN.

Ms. Sarauer: — That would be great if I could get that. And then I want to know what the change is from last year to this year in terms of funding. That would be fantastic.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Sure.

[21:30]

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. You mentioned the Aboriginal consultative group funding reduction. Could you expand on that a little bit?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Dale Larsen will take that particular question.

Mr. Larsen: — Good evening. So the community consultative groups that were for 33 CTAs [community tripartite agreement] in the province or 33 First Nations under the CTA program, they received funding for honorariums and elder stipends. So that amounted to about \$21,000 per First Nation, and we rolled that back to bring them closer in line with the funding, the police board fundings under the New North program. They're around 4,500 each. So even though there's a decrease of funding of about, you know, 580 overall, there's still going to be money in that program to try to deliver that service which is all about building those relationships with policing and the First Nation.

As far as front-line policing service delivery, there won't be any impact to that at all.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So this budget item deals with elder consultants to the police force?

Mr. Larsen: — That's right. Before 2013 there was a 52/48 federal-provincial funding agreement to support that. The federal government pulled out in '13. We continued and this last year decided to roll that back.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is this resulting then in a decrease in the amount of elders that are used, or is it the same amount of elders, less amount of time?

Mr. Larsen: — There will, in all likelihood, be less amount of elders, but with the, you know, 175-odd-thousand left, there should be some service that we can reprofile that and still deliver that education process to bring those relationships up to par with some elder support as well. We've looked at whether we do, you know, more of a group type of training process for some of those First Nations or whether it's just support of their

justice initiatives, those types of things.

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes, I think that was part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendation, so you wouldn't want to see all of that go away just after those recommendations have been made. I'll move on. Thank you for your answers.

To capital improvements, court and custody — there's been a pretty significant reduction of funding in this area. And I'm not sure if it's because some programs or some buildings that were budgeted for last year had been completed, but I'm hoping you can explain. Actually court facility land buildings and improvements have been reduced. Custody facility land buildings, improvements have been reduced as well significantly. And even more significantly, office and information technology line item had been reduced. So I was hoping I could get an expansion on what happened there.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Perhaps I'll just go through the capital on the AG side. You'll note that there's \$874,000 in the budget, in the capital budget for Pelican Narrows for the provincial courthouse. There's \$600,000 for tenant improvements. That's also included in the budget, as well as the \$300,000 that we've already talked about for video court. The Saskatoon Court of Queen's Bench was completed last year; that's why you see nothing in the budget as compared to last year's budget.

And there's no additional funds in the budget for any work to be done on the Saskatoon Provincial Court. There was some renovations that were done there last year. I can tell you, though, that we are doing some work within the ministry with regard to the Saskatoon provincial court building in terms of working on a strategy or at least working on the initial plans for perhaps our plan . . . we'd like to see, you know, an integrated justice building built in Saskatoon.

And of course these plans are all quite in their infancy, but we are working with the judiciary and with the ministry and with some officials at SaskBuilds to see what could be possible, you know, perhaps not in the near term, but certainly that's a facility that needs some attention. We recognize that. So there's no money in the budget for any renovations to that courthouse this year. But certainly within the ministry, we are using our internal resources to kind of keep an eye on that . . . so just to bring you up to speed on that particular project.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Is there any money in the budget for improving any of the northern court points or . . . yes, the northern courthouses? But I use that term a little loosely.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Most of the northern points are rented facilities. The \$600,000 of tenant improvements in the budget, we work with a committee of the judiciary to determine where those monies are best spent, certainly on the facilities that the government has, but we rent most of the facilities in the northern court points. So that's where that money would go, based on consultation with the judiciary. We have a number of things that need to be done, but they are prioritized, and that's where that money's spent. So I can't provide you with a list, but that's generally how it works.

Ms. Sarauer: — And has there been a reduction in the amount

of essentially that pot that you consult with the judiciary on using? Sorry, I know you're talking at the same time.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No reduction.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any money in the budget set aside for improving safety in any of the courthouses in the province?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — That's part of the tenant improvements. If there are safety concerns, they get identified. Certainly you know when items are prioritized with the help of the judiciary on that committee, particular attention would be paid to those safety concerns that are expressed by the court or the courthouse staff.

Ms. Sarauer: — What about the line item, office and information technology? I noticed that it was, I think, it's an over \$7 million reduction.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — That's primarily because we're completing the CJIMS [criminal justice information management system] project. That's the integrated justice management system, so we're in the final stages of the formal completion of that project, and so that's why that reduction was there. There was a big expense last year.

Ms. Sarauer: — So the reduction doesn't mean a reduction in any type of services or anything. It was just a project that's been completed now.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — That project was done in three phases. The two first phases are complete, and the last phase will be rolled out this fall, so the system will be complete and operational. That's why that's there.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Thank you for that. I'm going to switch gears a little bit here and move on to sort of the final quick answer round of the evening and talk about some more specifics in different line items.

First I want to talk a little bit about the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre. Besnard Lake has been mentioned a few times as a facility that may be utilized in the transferring of inmates. So is Besnard Lake still considered a correctional training residence?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Besnard is known as a community correctional camp.

Ms. Sarauer: — And is it, forgive me, is it online now? Is it currently being operated? And how many inmates are in there right now? And what is its capacity?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Besnard camp has a capacity for 26 offenders.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. And how many are in there right now?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — There are 26 in there as of today, as of June 10th.

Ms. Sarauer: — So it's safe to say that there's no room for any of the Buffalo Narrows inmates to be moved to Besnard Lake

currently?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Not as of June 10th. The populations in our correctional facilities fluctuate, so who knows what it'll be tomorrow.

Ms. Sarauer: — I understand that the inmates are to be moved by the end of the month from Buffalo Narrows. Has the ministry determined where those inmates are going to be placed yet and if so, where?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Some of the offenders at Buffalo Narrows will be completed their sentences, so obviously they'll be back in the community. The other ones will be dispersed throughout our provincial facilities. There is enough capacity within our facilities throughout the province to house the remaining offenders.

Ms. Sarauer: — So just to clarify, so at this time has the ministry determined where those inmates are going to be placed within the correctional centres that exist?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — By the time Buffalo Narrows closes at the end of the month, there will be two offenders in that location. We have no difficulty at all in finding space for those last two remaining offenders.

Ms. Sarauer: — So as you said, corrections inmate levels fluctuate. And it sounds to me like, as you're saying as of right now, Besnard Lake is full. So I guess what I'm trying to figure out is, if right now we have full Besnard Lake, and we have 14 in Buffalo Narrows, 14ish . . .

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Currently two.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right, but as of right now what we would do in the future . . . Because it sounds like our northern community training centres or community correctional minimum security prisons are fairly utilized. I'm not sure what's the plan for any type of northern offenders for the future.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — In our reduced-custody facilities, we are operating at 77.4 per cent capacity. We have 195 reduced-custody beds. Right now on an average, we're operating at about 151. So the reality is that what we're dealing with at the end of the month with Buffalo Narrows is two remaining offenders, and we have capacity within our reduced-custody facilities to house those offenders.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. You said 77 per cent is the capacity right now . . . 74 per cent.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — For reduced-custody facilities.

[21:45]

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes, okay. So if you remove Buffalo Narrows from that equation, what capacity level are we talking about?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — With closing Buffalo Narrows, we'll be operating at 85 per cent capacity.

Ms. Sarauer: — I know there's been a request for moving on

to the employee side of the Buffalo Narrows closure for the workers to go through the Public Service Commission instead of Justice or Environment for their placement. Is that going to be happening?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We're currently working with the Public Service Commission. Obviously they have a collective bargaining agreement, and it comes down to decisions that are made, in a large part to the individual employees, what they want to do with respect to their collective bargaining agreement. This is a process that started immediately and it is continuing today.

Ms. Sarauer: — And probably understanding that not all of the employees have either, you know, been let go or have moved yet at this time, but do you have an update as of today what's happening with the employees?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It's purely speculation at this point. They have 60 days to make an ultimate decision as to what they want to do.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I'm going to move on. I'll move subjects here, being cognizant of the time. I'd like to ask a couple of questions about the Compass contract, the food services contract. My first question is how many corrections facilities have dealt with hunger strikes in the past year? Or — you know what? — a better question would be how many instances of hunger strikes have occurred in corrections facilities in the past year and in what corrections facilities?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We'll get the number specifically and provide it to you, dealing with the number of tray refusals that we had within our facilities. However I can confirm that in Regina, Saskatoon, and Pine Grove we had tray refusals.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I look forward to getting those numbers. What steps have been taken in those facilities to resolve the concerns that were made?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — In the first few months of the transition to Compass Foodservice, issues related to unqualified staff, food quality, and quantity of meals were evident in all eight facilities. Formal meal complaints by offenders to facility directors, the Ombudsman, and the Advocate for Children and Youth increased significantly during this period.

The ministry raised concerns during weekly conference calls with Compass's regional vice-president and district manager. The ministry provided a formal notice of concern regarding the food service provided by Compass. This was followed by a sit-down meeting with the president of Compass in early January of 2016. Since the meeting in early 2016 between senior executives from Compass and our ministry, several changes have been implemented to improve the food service program. These changes have been positive and a noticeable decline in the number of complaints.

The steps that were taken are as follows: Compass has responded to food service concerns within the provincial correctional facilities with a formal action plan. Quality assurance: Compass quality assurance managers have visited each facility. Compass managers reviewed the menu, recipe,

and portioning with staff daily, and a daily meal compliance checklist has been implemented across all facilities to verify meals are served per menu. A sample tray will be prepared for review prior to each meal service and food quality is monitored daily for consistency at each facility with follow-up as required by the regional vice-president of Compass.

Compass has dedicated a hiring manager to ensure knowledgeable and skilled candidates are identified, and temporary management support has been added, including experienced food service staff from Ontario and Alberta correctional facilities. Compass will provide this additional support until it's no longer required.

The ministry initiated a review of the first food service transition in December, and it was completed in April of this year. The review confirmed that the menu meets the requirements of the *Canada Food Guide*, but that better balance could be achieved across the meal days. A rebalancing of the menu with Compass is currently under development, and it's anticipated a revised menu will be rolled out in June.

The ministry reviewed performance standards and expectations as per the contract and security protocols related to food service. Recommendations are being put into practice and include procedural improvements and regular quality assurance reporting back to the ministry.

The ministry has also put several processes in place to monitor the compliance of the contract. A contract manager has been hired to establish a formal reporting structure. This includes a joint service-user committee that meets weekly to promote information sharing and problem solving, focusing on food service delivery, product quality, and cost. It tracks key performance standards and expectations related to quality, service, and client satisfaction. The user committee reports to the food services executive committee comprised of senior representatives from the ministry and Compass to provide the overall direction.

Local food services committees have also been established in each facility to provide an opportunity to address issues of local concern, as well as to provide clients with a process to directly bring forward their concerns.

So I can probably . . . The ministry has been engaged in a menu revision with Compass, supported by independent registered dietitians to improve the variety across all meal periods in the three-week menu cycle. That's it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. You mentioned there's a revised menu that's going to be rolled out in June? Has it been rolled out yet?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It's not the end of June yet. No. It'll be coming out shortly.

Ms. Sarauer: — Has there been any amendments made to the contract since it was approved by order of council, August 4th, 2015?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — An amendment that was made to the contract is that in every lunch menu soup will be added.

Ms. Sarauer: — Could we be provided with a copy of the amendment? Could it be tabled? I'm not sure if I've seen it. Or could it just be . . . I should be able to, I should see it. I just haven't.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. Unless there's a reason not to, we will provide it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Has the cost per meal changed?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Cost per meal went up five cents per meal.

Ms. Sarauer: — That's reflected in the amendment?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It should be, yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — I also see there's a provision here for charged staff meals, that Compass meals are available to staff in Corrections at a rate of \$4.75 per meal. I doubt that you . . . You may have the information in front of you, but I'd be curious to know how many charged staff meals have been served in the last year and . . . Well I'll just ask that question first.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We will have to get that information from Compass, as to the numbers. Employees that are on post receive a duty meal which is provided free of charge because they can't leave wherever they're stationed. Other staff have an opportunity to purchase their meal for the amount cited.

We will get you that information when we give you the other stuff, along with the Compass contract.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thanks, I'd be happy to see both of those numbers if possible. I would also be interested in knowing for the fiscal year prior to the Compass contract being in force what the staff meal numbers were at that time as well.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We didn't track staff meals. We do now because Compass bills us back, so that's why we keep track of it now.

Ms. Sarauer: — There's also a demand clause in this contract as well that, as I believe if I read it right, as prisoner numbers go down, plate prices go up to keep a minimum balance level of payment to Compass. Has this clause been effected by Compass yet?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No adjustments were made to the contract in relation to that.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Move on, my colleague, the human rights critic, asked that I ask a few questions, so I'll get to those now so I don't run out of time. So I guess the buck gets passed on to the Attorney General again.

My first question is what the specific budget is for the Human Rights Commission for this budget term.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The base budget is \$2.366 million, and that did not change from last year. There is a \$40,000 salary increment that was added to the budget this year. So the base budget didn't change, just the salary increment which was added.

[22:00]

Ms. Sarauer: — And that's not for additional staffing. It's just for, like you said, cost of living or salary raises or something.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Just the increment, yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — So what you're saying is basically the budget for the Human Rights Commission hasn't changed, and as well the staffing complement hasn't changed.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — As far as we know, yes, the staffing complement hasn't changed.

Ms. Sarauer: — Now based on the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission annual report for 2014-2015, it looks like the files opened have increased progressively and now somewhat substantially. Are there any additional supports to address these caseloads?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well there is, as I've mentioned, there's no additional money in the budget.

But I would offer this comment, that while the number of files that have been opened by the Human Rights Commission may be increasing, certainly the vast majority of those cases are resolved quite early on before there's any formal intervention through that process. And almost all of them are resolved now before they reach the Court of Queen's Bench. I could be mistaken, but there would just have been a very small number, less than 10 — and I'd almost say less than five — that had made their way to the Court of Queen's Bench. So certainly while there's lots of resources, you know, used at the early stage, certainly there's been a tremendous amount of savings by having those files resolved at an early stage before any formal intervention.

I can just give you the statistics, if you like. In '14-15, which are the latest statistic numbers that I have, there was 141 cases that were mediated or negotiated, settled, or withdrawn with a favourable outcome. Three hundred and seventy-seven files were closed, and 419 new matters which were received. Only 12 matters were referred to the Court of Queen's Bench for hearing with directed mediation, and only one Queen's Bench hearing, with no backlog in the cases in mediation or investigation, which is a far cry from the case of the Human Rights Commission not a few years ago, before the legislation was changed and the processes were changed, where there was a considerable delay in getting cases resolved before the Human Rights Commission.

So it's been very, very effective in terms of early resolution of cases and certainly in terms of the systemic work that they're doing on conflict resolution. So we're very pleased with the work that they've been doing in terms of getting these issues resolved sooner than later, as was previously the case.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are you tracking, on those cases opened, how many individuals are represented by counsel and how many are unrepresented?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I don't have that information, but certainly the Human Rights Commission would have the

information. We don't track that. The commission obviously would track it, and they would have that information available. And I'm not sure — I don't have their annual report in front of me — whether or not that information is referenced in their annual report, but I would think that that information would be fairly easy to obtain directly from the commission.

Ms. Sarauer: — I note that the presence throughout the province of the Human Rights Commission somewhat varies, and the Regina office is a bit limited in the services that it can provide. Is there any plans in the future, maybe not funding right now it sounds like, but in the future to remedy that?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Do you mean in terms of the actual presence of the commission in Regina or . . .

Ms. Sarauer: — Correct. More alluding to the lack of a storefront essentially for an individual who has a complaint to walk in somewhere and make a complaint.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — They do share offices in Regina with the Office of Residential Tenancies, and they rely on that office to provide, you know, the front-end services. But I think it's fair to say that the majority of work is done in Saskatoon at the office of the Human Rights Commission. But they do have an office where people can present themselves here in Regina.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Are there any new initiatives that the Human Rights Commission has plans for in the future?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No, not that we're aware of. We maintain a close relationship and communication with the Human Rights Commission, and so we're not aware of anything now that they're giving any consideration to.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I wanted to ask about the COR [centre of responsibility] and the Hub programs. As I had mentioned, I think it was last week, that the auditor had really some concerns about the program and the supports that are being provided. I was wondering if there was any plans within the ministry to address the auditor's concerns.

Mr. McFee: — So in relation to the Hub and the COR, first of all the auditor's report . . . Matter of fact I was speaking to her last week; certainly we take . . . in agreement with her recommendations. Some of the things that she's recommended have already happened. Certainly we've done a program review of that particular item. We've actually had some internal procedures in place at the time that they were actually doing the review. We were just building our e-learning component of that to ensure that everybody's trained to a standard and they meet the requirements.

And you know, there's 77 of these right now in the country, so it's important that we continue to upgrade these and take these recommendations to heart, and obviously continue to improve them. So there wasn't anything in there that we weren't aware of. As a matter of fact, all of those things were currently being worked on as we speak, and certainly something that we want to ensure that . . . obviously takes to the ground.

As you're aware, although the Hub comes under us, it's a multi-agency perspective. And when you actually talk about the

responsibilities, the Hub is a connector to services. The responsibility is actually transferred to the ministries to ensure that they follow up and collect their data and make sure that the responses are given. So when you look at it from that perspective, the Hub is pretty effective in actually connecting the individuals in need due to the risks that they're exposed to, and it's important that we distinguish the difference. It's not an agency that goes out and works on case management.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Thanks for the clarification. I have a couple of questions on current inmates in custody. Do you have a number, a more recent or an updated number on what percentage of inmates have mental health issues?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I'll just take a one-day snapshot of the offender population. Males, generally 33 per cent have identified mental health issues. In the female population, that rises to 50 per cent. When you add in addictions — alcohol or drug — that number goes up exponentially on both sides. And in part the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford and the facility that is being built as we speak becomes much more important or it is much more important. We do realize that until these issues are managed or resolved within the offender population, that this population will continue to be involved in our justice system. It's also a reason why we have the Hub, why we started an initiative called the healthy families, which is to in part address some of these very issues that our current inmates are experiencing. And as I said today, that if we do not do things differently, our jails will be full of offenders suffering with mental health and addictions, and that number will increase as we go forward.

So we understand the issue. We understand the necessity to address the needs of people with mental health and addictions in a much different way. Ignoring it or pretending that it isn't there isn't going to happen, isn't going to work. And that's why we are actually quite excited about the new facility that is currently being built. It is definitely an innovative way of addressing the mental health and addictions issues within our offender population.

The focus there though, however, is that we're dealing with offenders. They're already in our system. They've already committed a crime. If we can get to people that are experiencing these issues a lot sooner, we want to. We don't want them within our facilities. That isn't the best place for them to be, ever. And so hopefully connecting them to the appropriate service, addressing them on an individual basis, that we can reduce the numbers of people that are actually coming in with those particular issues. It's estimated that Corrections and Policing spends \$4.6 million annually simply to supervise and escort offenders who are experiencing serious symptoms as a result of mental health. It's not only . . . I mean it's a societal problem and an individual problem and a financial problem that cannot be sustained. So that's it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Last year you provided \$248,000 for mental health assessment in custody facilities. Is that being provided again this year?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — How does that work? Is it contracted out or is

it in agreement with the health regions?

[22:15]

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The front-line service is provided through the Saskatchewan mental health or Canadian Mental Health Association, Saskatchewan branch. These services are provided to those with severe violent tendencies and/or actions, and obviously that have some substantial mental health issues.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are there any collaborative efforts between Corrections and the health regions for dealing with in custody and out of custody, and if so, could you explain how that works.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, we do partner with the health regions, but it's in a slightly different capacity in that they help train our psychologists, you know, provide that guidance and support that they require. It's a slightly different area of focus.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. I was looking more for the transition of inmates from in custody to out of custody, if there's any type of collaborative effort there in ensuring that, essentially that no one falls between the cracks.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — It will be under the serious violent offender response that we partner with the health region and Saskatchewan mental health association, but it's to deal with people who are transitioning or are transitioned back into the community and yet still pose a significant risk to their communities and to themselves. So this response is a team approach, collaborative approach that deals with the most severe of the severe. And it's an extremely intensive response to this particular offender and the population, and it's working, operative right now in Regina and Saskatoon — Saskatoon, North Battleford and it is coming to Regina eventually. Yes, fairly quickly.

We have the dedicated substance abuse training with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, so there's partnerships all over the place, you know, depending on what specific program you're looking at.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are you experiencing any issues in any of the custody facilities right now with the transmission of hepatitis or HIV [human immunodeficiency virus]?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The hepatitis and HIV issues, there's nothing out of the ordinary that's being experienced throughout our facilities. We do have health care staff that are mostly present and they are continually monitoring the situation, but there is nothing out of the ordinary.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm wondering if you can elaborate a little bit on what ordinary is for the corrections system in terms of HIV transmission numbers.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We don't see any fluctuation or trends to what the normal is. We can't say how many people may have HIV or hepatitis, but there's no fluctuation to the trend. I mean, absolutely, normal is probably different in this particular at-risk population, but we see nothing of concern and it's being monitored consistently. We have policies to deal with it. That's it.

Ms. Sarauer: — Do you know the number of inmates currently who, as far as you know, who have HIV?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We can't identify that information.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. So you're not able to provide us with the number.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — This information is provided when an offender is admitted into the facility so it's a self-declaration, and no, we can't provide the numbers.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are there any screening procedures right now for inmates in terms of detecting HIV?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We have public health that comes in and if the person, whoever that may be, wishes to discuss that with the public health, that's fine. We can't compel them to obtain a screening test. Any information provided to us is on a voluntary basis.

Ms. Sarauer: — What's the protocol right now for transporting high-risk offenders?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We're going to have Heather Scriver take that question.

Ms. Scriver: — Our escorts within the correctional facilities are all screened. There's a security assessment, a risk assessment that's done prior to them being escorted in the community. And so there's set criteria and there's set protocols that we have within our divisional policies and the local standing orders in the facilities.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any circumstances where that procedure changes, or it's pretty standard?

Ms. Scriver: — It's all based . . . It's on a case-by-case basis so if it's a high-profile offender, they'll look at it on the merits of, you know, community consultation, the charges that they're in on. With those types of things, yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. I appreciate that. Do you know how many people are currently in solitary confinement?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — As of June 8th, 2016, offenders in administrative segregation at the PACC, Prince Albert Correctional Centre, number of offenders, 18. That's a 4 per cent of the total count, and the total count in PACC is 440. Saskatoon Correctional Centre, number of offenders in admin segregation is 38. That's approximately 9 per cent of the total population. The total population is 417. Regina Correctional Centre, number of offenders in admin segregation, 23. It's 4 per cent of the total population. Total population is 626. Prince Albert Correctional Centre, number of offenders in admin segregation is four, 3 per cent of the total count. Total count is 151. Oh, sorry, that's not the . . . It's Pine Grove Centre, not the P.A. Correctional Centre — 3 per cent, 151.

Ms. Sarauer: — So when you say administrative segregation, are those numbers broken down by how many are in segregation for punitive reasons and how many are in segregation for safety reasons?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The general administrative segregation:

Administrative segregation means the separation of an inmate from the general inmate population of the correctional centre in which the inmate is being confined or detained, other than pursuant to a disciplinary action or temporary confinement to a cell, room, or unit pending a disciplinary hearing. Administrative segregation typically involves a 23-hour lock-up for the inmate.

So that's what we're referring to when I gave you those numbers:

It restricts the inmate's residual liberties that an inmate would normally enjoy in the general inmate population, such as taking meals, working, recreating, or participating in a program in normal association with other inmates.

Ms. Sarauer: — So just to clarify, disciplinary segregation numbers are different from the numbers that you had provided?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, they are. What I gave was administrative segregation.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. Do you have those numbers then?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We don't have them here tonight, but I'll certainly get them to you.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I would also be interested in knowing how those numbers, both administrative and disciplinary, have changed from this year to last year, what the trend is. What's the average length of segregation, first of all I guess, administrative segregation?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — All we can provide is a snapshot in time. Our information management systems don't allow us to parse out that specific type of information on administrative segregation. We can give you that snapshot, and that's all we can provide. That's all we have.

Ms. Sarauer: — Sure, if that's all you can provide, then I'd appreciate that. What about disciplinary segregation?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Same thing.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, I'd like to see that as well if possible.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We're trying to find ways to track this a little bit better than what we're doing, but as of today, no go.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm happy to hear that there's some work in trying to track that a little bit better, that's for sure.

Moving on to gangs in prison, I'm just wondering if the ministry has noticed any increase in gangs in any of the correctional centres.

[22:30]

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We are seeing gang activity or gang offenders more frequently within our correctional facilities. It's a subject that we take very, very seriously, and it really does

come down to how we manage the offenders. But as you can well imagine, it poses some serious, serious concerns within our facilities. And there's only so many places, you know. Affiliates and all those and people of gangs or opposing gangs — there's definitely challenges for sure.

Ms. Sarauer: — So is there work being done right now to look at that problem and address it, or is there anything currently happening within the correction system to address the increase in gang activity?

Mr. Cooley: — Dennis Cooley. So certainly that's something that's top of mind for the directors of our facilities is to identify and have the intelligence of gang affiliation. It affects all aspects of the correctional program, from where the offender is housed to the types of compatibles that can be housed in the same unit to the types of programming that the offender requires.

We have seen, you know, anecdotally there's a sense that the gang presence in our facilities has increased. And we're looking now to looking into our . . . We have an initiative under way to look at how information is collected and disseminated within the facility, also between our facilities in the province, and also how our corrections security intelligence units interact with RCMP and municipal police services. So we're looking at that, looking at our gang strategy, so to speak, to determine the best practices to house and manage inmates with known gang affiliations.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. So based on those concerns, have any programs in custody had to be put on hold as a result of the gang activity or the increase in gang activity?

Mr. Cooley: — To my knowledge, no programs have been put on hold. But some offenders may not be able to participate in those programs because of their gang associations . . . [inaudible].

Ms. Sarauer: — Right. Okay, thank you. Do you have an average daily count in correction facilities for the past month that you could provide us?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Okay, the adult corrections total: sentenced inmates, 1,010; remand, 799. This is total throughout the province. Total is 1,809. Percentage of the population within is, of remand, is 44.2 per cent as of June 10th, 2016.

Ms. Sarauer: — So that's a point in time number? Okay, thank you. Do you have a total for the '15-16 year?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Sentenced for 2015-'16, '15-16. Oh yes, we're going by fiscal years here okay, which won't make much sense. Sentenced inmates is 1,043; remand, 770. Total custody is 1,813. And that's an average daily count. That isn't a specific date.

Ms. Sarauer: — It sounded a lot like the point in time. You don't have a total, just an average?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — What are you specifically asking?

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm asking for a total count of inmates who've

gone through the system in the '15-16 year. My apologies.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Are you asking for people that cycle through throughout a year? Like, we're just trying to determine here . . . It's possible, but it will not be tomorrow.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. Do you have a percentage of inmates, what percentage of inmates reoffend? Do you know that number?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Okay. The percentage of readmissions within two years of previous release, these are the numbers we have. This is readmissions: in 2014-15, 47 per cent. Percentage of readmissions within two years of previous release from probation, '14-15 is 29 per cent.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you. I'm going to switch gears here I think and likely go back to the Attorney General for a few last questions, just when he thought he was off the hook.

I know there's been some work done to reduce time to trial, or time to remedy. I think the wording has changed a bit. Can you provide an update on what's been going on with this initiative?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I could provide you with a report from the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court which outlines the time-to-trial challenges that he has at certain judicial centres, which accompanied that is his plan to reduce the time to trial, if that's what you're looking for. Certainly when there's a time-to-trial issue in any particular area, the Chief Judge, along with his Administrative Judge just kind of put a plan together to reduce that time to trial. So he identifies the most difficult areas with his plan to reduce, and I can certainly provide a copy of that to you if that would be helpful.

Ms. Sarauer: — Sure, that would be fantastic.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Okay.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are there any recommendations that he makes that involve some Justice involvement?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We work very closely with the courts on all initiatives. One of the initiatives, and we've talked about it already, is the application of video court and the extension of video court in a number of areas. And so those are kinds of things that can be used to reduce time to trial and reduce appearances and court resources, but we're certainly looking at how resources are allocated. That's something that the Chief Judge works very closely with the ministry on to help reduce those time to trial. But I'm happy to provide you with a copy of his last report. I think it would probably answer most of your questions, I think.

Kind of one of the next generation of video court is having video court right at the detachments. For instance in La Loche, the plan is to have video facilities there so that people don't have to come out of custody, you know, to attend court, or at least leave the detachment. So those are kinds of things it can be used to again reduce time to travel. So those are kind of some of the innovative things that we're working at at Justice with the court.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm going to switch gears completely and ask a question about the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority. I almost can't even say that now at 10:45 p.m. Could you tell me what the expenses and revenues of the FCAA [Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan] are this past year?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The revenue from the FCAA in the last fiscal year was \$24.222 million ... [inaudible] ... and the expenses was \$8.5 million, plus or take a couple of dollars. So that's the numbers.

Ms. Sarauer: — Are there any dividends that are flowing from it to the General Revenue Fund?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The dividend that came from the FCAA to the General Revenue Fund was the difference, which was 16.391 million.

Ms. Sarauer: — So none of that balance is retained within the FCAA? It all flows to the GRF [General Revenue Fund].

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Yes.

[22:45]

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. I'm curious to know ... I'm trying to think of a way to articulate it now at this late hour. Sorry. I'm curious to know how many legal FTE positions are in existence within government but aren't necessarily paid for out of the Justice. Are there any that are in existence, counsel positions for example in other ministries, that aren't paid for or that we don't see in the Justice budget?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well as an example, and I know Kevin's going to come up with some other ones, but lawyers at the FCAA are paid from the FCAA budget so they're not, they don't come out of the Justice budget per se.

Ms. Sarauer: — Do you know how many FTEs would be like that?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's eight at FCAA. There's 11, there's six for instance in the ministry who are in the Social Services budget. And the other ones are kind of spread around with other executive government ministries.

Ms. Sarauer: — I know that, of course, and you've spoken about it already, that Family Matters is funded through the Law Foundation, so through a third party. Are there any other programs that are funded through third party organizations that are within the ministry?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I'm advised we may have some small grants from the Law Foundation for some small projects. If you can give us a bit of time we'll put that together for you, but the Family Matters would be the most significant one certainly

Ms. Sarauer: — If I could see the program, and then how much and where the money is coming from, that would be great.

Moving back to Corrections, if that's all right, you had

mentioned the new living unit at the P.A. Correctional Centre, and that's completed. Is that online now? Okay. Do you know what capacity it's at, just that new living unit specifically?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The living unit at PACC is for 144 beds. It's pretty much full. It's because it's new.

Ms. Sarauer: — Also the Orcadia facility. Am I saying that right?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Whitespruce?

Ms. Sarauer: — Perhaps ... Yes, that's the one.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, it'll be Whitespruce.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is that ... Are the changes, have the changes already been implemented to that?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, and it's a reduced-custody facility and we have capacity for 39. We currently have 24 since probably just about a year ago, obviously focused on job skills training.

Ms. Sarauer: — Right. Could you elaborate a little bit on what job skills training are occurring in that facility?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — As it stands right now, for over the past year they were focusing on construction, cooking, and working in the community.

Now that we have one year under our belt, we're looking at, where do we go from here? It's important that the job skills are ones that are required and needed so that the offenders can, when they leave the facility, can have real jobs and get paid real money to support themselves and their families. So it, you know, it will start evolving now, transitioning into something more. It's really the first of this nature, the first in the province of Saskatchewan, and we needed to see what we were able to provide and work out the kinks and hopefully get better as we go forward and increase the numbers of the types of jobs that we're actually training offenders for.

Ms. Sarauer: — So has the program been far enough along yet that you've been able to track its success?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, we have graduates of the cooking program that have been released and they have been placed in particular jobs. What we really want to see is them maintaining employment. It isn't just about a one-day snapshot, finding a job for an offender to start at, and we really want them to be able to stay and sustain employment also. So it's a little bit early for us to be talking about what's been happening, but we will.

Ms. Sarauer: — So on that basis is there work within Corrections to essentially follow those I guess ex-inmates through that path, not just three months from now, six months from now, but two years from now to see how they're doing?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, it's important that we follow them and as best we can. There's always situations that present themselves, but that's what we want to do, and it will inform our future programming also, depending on the longevity or the

longer term result of what's been provided in custody.

Ms. Sarauer: — I noticed that last year there was some money provided to Saskatoon Women's Community-Training Residence building upgrades. Could you elaborate on what occurred there?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Those monies were just to purchase the actual building from Gabriel Dumont Institute. Minor renovations.

Ms. Sarauer: — I just have a question regarding the victim services — going back again, sorry, to the Attorney General — and victims of crime. I noticed a change to *The Victims of Crime Regulations* that occurred on February 4th, 2016 that added — sorry, I'm just taking a quick look at this — an inclusion of the money in the fund being used for . . . And I already talked about sexual assault services being one of them, but also police programs respecting crime prevention and reduction. Could you elaborate on why that change was made?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Yes, we changed the regulation. We provided one-time funding for the COR, for the centre of responsibility. And that's why that regulation was changed, so that we were able to fund that from that fund.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any intention of providing any more funding through that subsection?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We don't have any present plans. As I said, that was one-time funding. There is nothing presently being considered by the ministries. But it does give us some flexibility if something was to . . . We do have more money in that fund as a result of the traffic safety initiative, for instance, and so it does give us some flexibility. But there's certainly no plans. The change was made specifically at that time to deal with that one issue, but again it gives us some flexibility.

Ms. Sarauer: — Now I only have a couple minutes left, but I do want to ask a question about the Office of Residential Tenancies budget. Has that number changed this year?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's a slight change in that budget just to reflect the \$23,000 adjustment for COLA.

Ms. Sarauer: — So it's just a slight improvement?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — For cost of living, right.

Ms. Sarauer: — Yes. So it's just a slight increase. Sorry.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — That's right, yes.

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay. What about the caseload at the Residential Tenancies office? Has it increased year over year?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Perhaps I'll let Mr. Beck answer that. He has those numbers.

Mr. Beck: — Dale Beck, director. The caseload for the last four years: in '12-13 it was 6,388. In '13-14 it was 7,376; '14-15 it was 7,609. And last year, it was 8,475.

Ms. Sarauer: — That sounds like a pretty substantial increase year over year. What is the caseload right now for the hearing officers?

Mr. Beck: — In terms of their number of cases they might hear in a day, there's considerable variability depending on whether they're doing possession hearings or damage claims that may involve, you know, considerably greater evidence. The caseload hasn't changed in terms of what they're typically assigned, but they're greater cost simply because they are more time to hear the case volume. We're working at the front end to try and get people to resolve their own problems directly without having to go to a hearing. And we need to make more changes to be more efficient, and we're working on automation of the office.

[23:00]

Ms. Sarauer: — Okay, thank you. So is there a wait time? Has there been a delay increase in terms of time for application and time for hearing?

Mr. Beck: — At the present time, we're fairly efficient at getting the cases to hearings promptly. Automation would assist us in doing that, and that will come into effect sometime this year.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thanks. Yes, I know there's some good work done in that office, so I hope the budget numbers are able to accommodate the rising number of cases that are being filed. That was a comment, not a question. No, thank you for that information. I appreciate that.

I'm curious to know if there's any movement on any of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations that specifically relate to Justice. And then I ask the same question for Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well I think it's fair to say we have a fairly active working group, you know, working with First Nations and working with other partners in executive government to look at the recommendations. And that's an ongoing process. But we're certainly engaged with regard to a dialogue in respect of those recommendations.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there any timeline in place for when those recommendations are going to be implemented?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We have no timelines for that. There is another meeting of the working group coming up in the next little while, so what comes from that we'll have to see. But we've set no deadlines for this. Certainly the ongoing dialogue and the consultation with First Nations and other community partners is very, very important, and so we wouldn't want to rush that process to come to some conclusions, or in terms of programming, without going through that. So we'll continue to work through that with our partners, not only in executive government but of course First Nations who are the most important partners at the table.

Ms. Sarauer: — Who is a part of that working group?

Mr. Fenwick: — There are a number of cross-ministerial representatives. We have somebody from Canada, from the

federal government, that sits with committee. We are working with FSIN. We're working with SAWCC [Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation], Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Council. There's representation from the Women's Commission from FSIN. It wouldn't be fair to say that we're working solely on the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations because there's a lot of crossover on the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls file, so that's a working group that we've had for some time.

If I can use a quick example of why we're proud of the work that we do. When the first round table on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls took place, actually it was Chief Marie-Anne Day Walker who was present, and our minister gave up his spot at the table and his time in order that she could speak. And chatting with her about what she was going to say and what she ended up saying was . . . Her message to the group was that they should get on board and do what Saskatchewan has done because we have such a strong partnership. And that was essentially her message to the room . . . is the rest of you better look at what we're doing here. So I think, you know, a strong indication of how strong that partnership is.

It didn't come about just because of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Certainly we've had that working group in place for some time, so some of the recommendations would have already been implemented and are already, you know, in the works. I haven't got the checklist here that I could say to you, we've done this, we're doing this by such and such a date, because it's an ongoing process.

Ms. Sarauer: — Is there going to be a report or something from the working group that you'll be able to provide to the public in terms of identifying the work that you have done with respect to those recommendations?

Mr. Fenwick: — I don't think that's been discussed yet. Certainly a possibility, but it's not something that we've talked about at this point.

Ms. Sarauer: — How many members of the working group are from government, and how many of the members are from outside government?

Mr. Fenwick: — About half and half, total members, about 14 or 15 members of the group. And it's about half government officials and half from the First Nations and Métis organizations.

Ms. Sarauer: — I'll maybe take that same question over to Corrections and Policing.

Mr. McFee: — Well obviously this is something that we work on together. There's something, though, that we can add that hasn't been spoken to. Right now we currently have a lab set up in Saskatoon Police Service with the police information from across the province and certainly the University of Saskatchewan and the ministry. And right now, it's looking at missing kids and the risk factors to missing kids, and it basically tells a couple of things . . . is the longer the kid goes missing, obviously the more at risk they are. But further to that is potentially based on risk factors where likely you could find the kid to a reasonable degree of success. And then of course

from that is to look at, can we get this to a pattern where we add data from Social Services to actually identify the next people, so we can do an intervention for those kids?

Now the second part of this phase is a proposal that we currently have in front of DRDC [Defence Research and Development Canada] and the federal government to look at the same risk factors for missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls because it's the same stuff. There's a reasonable, high degree of success looking at risk factors, that a lot of this stuff is predictable and certainly, if it is predictable, to move upstream or ahead of the curve and actually start to do that intervention before it gets into the justice system. So we're fairly optimistic about that.

You know, being a former police chief, I can tell you that a large part of justice is predictable. And if it's predictable, then we should obviously be able to work together with the right information and hopefully prevent it from happening. So it's pretty encouraging early on.

Dr. Rector has the lead for this in relation to our ministry, and certainly that partnership is formed. The MOUs [memorandum of understanding] have been signed, and good work is being done as we speak. So hopefully that second phase of this will just be a natural . . . something to actually expand this, to get into that area as well.

Ms. Sarauer: — [Inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, thanks. Maybe instead of one last question, I'll just say some thank yous. I know that's quite standard. So I know it was a late night, and there were some officials that ended up having to sit here, but I didn't even get to ask them any questions. So I'd like to thank everyone for coming here this evening and making it all to the witching hour of 11 p.m. I really appreciate it. Thank you for all of your answers. And to the ministers, thank you for your time.

The Chair: — And to give the opportunity to both ministers to say their thank yous and make some closing remarks.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much on behalf of both Minister Tell and I. I wanted to take the opportunity just to thank all the officials that are here today, not just for their attendance tonight but for the very, very hard work that they do every day to support us. And I want to thank the committee members for their kind attention and to Ms. Sarauer for her respectful questions, and hopefully our answers were a little bit helpful.

And I did want to thank you very much for your attention that you paid to the innovation work that we're doing at the ministry. I think it's fair to say that we don't have a monopoly on good ideas, and so with your experience, certainly anything that you have to offer to us, we'd be happy to hear about. Thank you for the patience of the Chair, for sitting here for four hours, and finally to Hansard for all their work tonight. So thank you very much.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much for everyone coming out, and like I say, a very long evening. And I'd like to also thank each and every one of the committee members for being able to attend this evening. And Nicole, I know this is your first

committee, is it? And so congratulations. You've done a fine job of handling the questions for the opposition, so thank you very much for your participation.

And the time now being 11:10, seeing that the time has been allotted for four hours for this session, and that we will adjourn. And this committee will adjourn until Thursday, June 16th, at 2:30. So thank you very much, everyone.

[The committee adjourned at 23:10.]