



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

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Mr. Delbert Kirsch  
Batoche

Ms. Laura Ross  
Regina Rochdale

Ms. Nicole Sarauer  
Regina Douglas Park

[The committee met at 15:30.]

**The Chair:** — Welcome back, everybody. Good afternoon. This afternoon and evening, the committee will be considering the estimates for the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and Ministry of Corrections and Policing. The estimates under consideration today include vote 73, Corrections and Policing; vote 91, Integrated Justice Services; and vote 3, Justice and Attorney General. This afternoon for committee members we have Mr. Kirsch; Mr. D'Autremont; Ms. Ross; our member from Kindersley, Mr. Francis; and Ms. Sarauer.

**General Revenue Fund  
Corrections and Policing  
Vote 73**

**Subvote (CP01)**

**The Chair:** — Minister, do you have any opening remarks?

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — I do, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon. That's it; I'm done. I am pleased to be here today to provide highlights of the Ministry of Corrections and Policing's 2020-21 financial plan and to answer any questions. I am joined by a number of officials from the ministry today. With me at the table is Dale Larsen, my deputy minister of Corrections and Policing. There will be other ministry officials to introduce or that will be speaking today, and I ask that all of them introduce themselves as they approach the mike.

This budget aligns with our government's goals of keeping Saskatchewan strong and supporting the people of this province through the COVID-19 pandemic. This year the Ministry of Corrections and Policing budget has increased to \$419 million, an increase of \$14.6 million or approximately 3.5 per cent. Custody, supervision, rehabilitation services has increased by approximately \$5 million from last year to over 186 million this year. Policing and community safety services has increased by over \$9 million to nearly \$230 million this year.

I will now highlight some areas of importance in this year's budget. Our infrastructure investments will increase by nearly \$12 million this year, bringing us to a total of over \$20 million. This funding will be used to make improvements in our custody facilities. One of the most significant projects we will be undertaking this year is a 427-bed unit expansion at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre.

We will also be opening temporary 44-bed units in Regina and Saskatoon to create additional flexibility to manage the corrections population during the pandemic.

Saskatoon Correctional Centre will also see the replacement of urban camp as well as major renovations to the admitting area of the facility. We will also be repairing and upgrading our existing infrastructure to ensure it remains secure. This will include 6.85 million for the replacement of locks, fencing, and the installation of contraband reduction equipment.

To ensure we are providing offenders with the programming that they need, we will be expanding our cultural lodge program to four additional facilities throughout the province. This will allow

First Nations cultural programming at these facilities to take place year-round.

In partnership with our colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, we will continue to implement the gang violence reduction strategy. In 2020-21 a further 1.8 million in federal funding will be devoted to this work. This will include the opening of another dedicated substance abuse treatment unit in one of our adult secure custody facilities.

We will also continue to make significant investments in our police services. This year we will provide 8.8 million in additional funding to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. This money will support important initiatives such as the First Nations policing program. Through this funding, the First Nations policing program will add an additional six officers to First Nations communities across the province. This funding will also provide for contractual increases to the RCMP.

The Ministry of Corrections and Policing plays a vital role in our province. We have accomplished much in the last year and will continue to work with our partners in policing and the wider community to create positive outcomes for the people of Saskatchewan. Those are the highlights. Now I would be pleased to answer any questions about the 2020 plan and budget for the Ministry of Corrections and Policing. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — We will now begin our consideration of vote 73, Corrections and Policing, central management and services, subvote (CP01). And it is now time for questions. Ms. Sarauer.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. And thank you, Minister, for your opening remarks. I have a few questions about some of the increases that you had alluded to in your opening remarks. The first one, there is an increase of just over \$5 million in the custody service allocation. Can you explain where that money is going?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — Mindy Gudmundson. For the custody, supervision, and rehabilitation subvote increased by \$5.105 million, 2.424 million is for cost-of-living salary adjustments; 1.75 million is an increase for the staffing and operating of temporary structures at Regina Correctional Centre and Saskatoon Correctional Centre; 391,000 increase for the gang violence reduction strategy; \$288,000 increase to provide mental health training to correctional officers; \$222,000 increase was to transfer some policy positions from the integrated justice services vote; \$114,000 increase to correct a budget error from '19-20 related to electronic monitoring coverage; \$59,000 increase to transfer positions from the central management and services subvote; \$8,000 increase for cost-of-living salary adjustments for community-based organizations.

And this is offset by \$151,000 decrease transferred to accommodation services in the integrated justice services subvote to centralize payment of the new phone system.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Sorry, can you provide some more detail as to this new phone system?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — So the new phone system was installed through the Ministry of Central Services. Instead of each program area now was responsible for their SaskTel bill every

month, this is now going to be paid through the accommodation services allocation of integrated justice services. It's basically an addition to their rental charges to Central Services.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — This is for in the facilities, in the custody facilities?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — Throughout all offices, facilities, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — So you'll see this continuously throughout when we're talking about each one. There's going to be a decrease as we centralize all the payments from each allocation into one area.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. What about the mental health training for officers you had mentioned? Can you provide some more detail about that?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Heather Scriver, ADM [assistant deputy minister] for custody services. So we were allocated \$288,000 to provide mental health training for our front-line correctional officers. This is something that we have been putting forward as a need for our front-line staff. It's a two-year period that will give staff training to work in these critical situations that they're dealing with every day.

So the investment follows leadership by the government and other front-line areas to support the mental health of its workers. Last year's initiatives had began in the Advanced Education for post-secondary staff and through the Health Authority, and funds were committed to Saskatchewan paramedics and first responders. And we determined that there was a need for our staff as well in that. We recognize that working in correctional institutions is a high-stress environment, and through their work, corrections officers have a higher degree of probability to be exposed to situations that may cause post-traumatic stress disorder.

So this is a two-year initiative. The ministry intends to develop 12 internal trainers so that we can sustain the training year after year. So it's \$288,000 that's going to be spread across two years, and right now we are diligently working on putting a training package together that would train approximately 1,000 of our staff.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Will this training be mandatory for new hires, or ongoing continuous training? Could you provide some more detail as to when the training would be required, if it is required?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Absolutely, the training is required. It will be embedded within our induction training program for new recruits, and it will be facilitated through the internal trainers that we train up to facilitate to our existing staff. So the endgame here and the goal for all of Corrections and Policing is that our staff, front-line staff will have the training in mental health and how to deal with our complex-needs offenders.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Great. So is your plan, is this year the training the trainers, and then the next year is going to be the implementation system-wide?

**Ms. Scriver:** — So this year we want to do train the trainers and start implementing, and next year continue on with the implementation.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. I do have some questions about these temporary units in Regina and Saskatoon. I'm guessing, Ms. Scriver, you might be answering these as well, so I'll try and stick to yours. I'm not saying you have to answer them, but I'm just trying to limit movement for everyone as much as possible even though it's really difficult. But could you provide some more detail about these temporary 44 beds, these 44-bed units in Regina and Saskatoon?

**Ms. Scriver:** — They are temporary structures at this point. There are 44 beds. There is also a recreational dorm building attached to these areas. These dorms were constructed as a mitigation strategy for COVID and to ensure that we have the social distancing that's required within the correctional facilities. So this will also offer us flex space to manage the offender population.

They are to be up and running July now, and so this is going to help us go forward in dealing with the pandemic for waves two and waves three if that does come to fruition.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So they're not running right now? They're in the process of being constructed?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Absolutely, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What level of security are these units intended to house?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Well these will be . . . I don't want to say they're going to be fortified, but they will be modified to address the profile of the offenders that do come into our facilities. Because they are temporary trailers, they would be more of our low-risk offenders.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And are the units set up as single occupancy or dual occupancy?

**Ms. Scriver:** — They are single occupancy and they have washrooms, bathrooms within the rooms.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, you mentioned in your opening remarks that Saskatoon is replacing their urban camp. Can you provide some more information about that?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Hi. Jill Zimmer, acting executive director of infrastructure. The urban camp replacement is part of the Building a Strong Saskatchewan stimulus package, and that will be 6.145 million over the next two fiscal years. So we'll be receiving an allocation this year for the planning, and then next year will be the actual construction of the replacement facility.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How much money is in this budget for the planning?

[15:45]

**Ms. Zimmer:** — For the urban camp it's 1.2 million. So there's a program building that's also included in that. So the design is

600,000 for the urban camp living facility, and the program building replacement is 600K for this year, and then next year it's 3.4 million.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I understand you're still in the planning phase of this, but is the goal to have the same types of programming that exist currently?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — The current infrastructure is at the end of its life, so we're replacing it to continue with the program that exists.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Will it house the same number of inmates?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Yes, that's the intention at this point.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. And what will be the plan, because there's obviously going to be . . . Unless you're building it right next to the current building, you'll have move those inmates at some point, I'm assuming. What would be the plan for the interim?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Yes, we're working on that. We've got a few options on how we can manage it, but like I said, we're just in the early stages of planning that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you know how many years you're projecting it will take for this construction?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — The intention is that it will be complete in the next fiscal year.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, you had mentioned a portion of money dedicated to installing some contraband detection in the facilities. Can you provide some more information about that?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Hi. Yes, the contraband reduction strategy, it's a multi-year strategy to bring technology into the facilities to reduce the amount of contraband that's coming in. And so there is necessary infrastructure changes that need to occur in order to bring this equipment in.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What equipment is bringing in, and what infrastructure changes are needed?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — There's body scanners. Because of the radiation and stuff with those, there needs to be like a 3-metre perimeter around those machines. The current admitting areas in several facilities don't have sufficient space to allow for that, so there needs to be some changes to allow those to be installed.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Will this money allow for body scanners to be installed in every custody facility?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — For the current fiscal year, I don't believe . . . The contraband reduction for the current fiscal year is for the Pine Grove Correctional Centre. So the intention, again it's a multi-year type project, so the Saskatoon admitting project is also to allow for that to occur, and then Pine Grove this year as well.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Will there be any other ones completed this budget year?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Pine Grove is the main one, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Minister, you also mentioned in your opening remarks that there will be an expansion to the cultural lodge program. Could you provide some more detail?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Yes. There are existing cultural lodges in a couple of the facilities, currently at the Paul Dojack and Pine Grove Correctional Centres. So we're expanding that program to Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Regina, and Kilburn Hall.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So can you provide some more detail as to what that's going to look like?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — They're not sort of fancy buildings, but they're just basically to allow elders to come in. I actually don't want to speak to the programming aspect. The structures themselves, the infrastructure is like a one-storey building to allow for sweats to occur and items of that nature. As to the programming, I can't speak to that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I've seen some of them. In some places they are . . . well the elders' lodges are as simple as a mobile home really. Can you provide some information as to what the infrastructure is going to physically look like, and will it be all-seasons? That's another complaint I've heard before.

**Ms. Zimmer:** — It will be all-season. Yes. So I guess a little more robust than a trailer, but not too much more than that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Will this be a place where people can go for sweats as well?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Yes, that's the intention.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. And which ones will be completed this budget?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Again, it's the intention that all four will be completed this budget year.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. In your opening remarks as well, Minister, you mentioned an additional substance abuse treatment unit. Is that another new one? Because last budget you had also announced a new substance abuse unit but weren't sure where it was going yet. So I'd like some information as to where last year's unit was created. And then if this is a new one, what this new one is, or if this is an announcement of the one that happened last year.

**Mr. Larsen:** — Ms. Sarauer, do you mean in relation to the GVRS, the gang-violence reduction strategy?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Well I don't know. Maybe I heard the opening remarks wrong, which I probably did, because I have to frantically write down as much as I can while I'm hearing them. So if I'm wrong about that, is there . . . I thought there was an announcement for . . . Or I thought the minister had mentioned an additional substance abuse treatment unit. Am I wrong on that?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Yes. Yes we are expanding the DSATU [dedicated substance abuse treatment unit] unit to Pine Grove

Correctional Centre.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Ms. Scriver:** — The money that we're getting to expand the program comes through the GVRS money, and Drew Wilby could speak to the expansion of DSATU through that area.

But as you're aware, we do have the DSATU at the Regina correctional centre. We have evaluated the program since its rollout at the Regina correctional centre, and it has demonstrated that participants had statistically significant lower rate of recontact with corrections at the 6th-, 12th-, and 24-month post-release. DSATU participants who come in contact with corrections post-release took longer to have recontact than the control group.

So we know that we're onto something that is going to benefit our clients. So we have expanded. We do have a plan to expand DSATU to all of our facilities through the funding of the GVRS. Pine Grove will be in early 2000. Planning with the stakeholders has begun and a contract with the Saskatchewan Health Authority is being drafted as we speak.

Because the program is going to be with female offenders, it takes on a different dimension than working with male clients. So we are having the program currently being reviewed by expert consultants for gender responsiveness and with a trauma-informed lens.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Can you remind me what the acronym DSATU means?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Dedicated substance abuse treatment unit.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now last year in 2019 estimates you announced an additional substance abuse treatment unit in one of the facilities, but at the time the ministry wasn't sure where that was going to be placed.

**Ms. Scriver:** — And that's Pine Grove. That is the Pine Grove.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So it's the same announcement.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Right. Right.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thank you. And just so I fully understand, this is money that's coming from the anti-gang strategy. So is this federal money then?

**Ms. Scriver:** — So to ensure that we keep the efficacy of the program, we needed additional funds to ensure that we are meeting the targets for the whole program to sustain it.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So yes?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thank you. You'll have to remind me about how that money is going to work. I just want to ensure there's sustainability moving forward with that program and that unit. As you know and as you've said, it's incredibly beneficial and important.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Drew Wilby, assistant deputy minister, community engagement. You know, absolutely the money that's coming in from the GVRS we're putting towards a suite of initiatives, including the dedicated substance abuse treatment unit, some other pieces in IJS [integrated justice services], and then of course the policing piece as well. And IJS, that would be the community intervention model.

In terms of sustainability we have a robust evaluation plan built around the GVRS to ensure that we're using the money effectively and efficiently in achieving those outcomes we're looking for. I think what you're potentially indicating is when the federal money comes to an end, what's the sustainment plan? We're looking at that right now, and of course if we're successful we would come back to treasury board and cabinet and of course to the Legislative Assembly to receive funding to continue on those initiatives if we felt they were achieving those sustainable outcomes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Good. I do hope that government will consider sustaining that indefinitely after that federal money is completed. Since I have you, Mr. Wilby, I may ask some more questions on the anti-gang strategy and what the status is on some of the projects that were announced last budget. Now could you provide some information and some updates on the intensive outreach program that was announced last budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Absolutely. I believe it was December of last year we formally announced the contracts that were awarded to the CBO [community-based organization] partners for that community intervention model. We're very excited to have them working with us.

So Str8 Up 10,000 Little Steps to Healing was awarded the contract for the Saskatoon northwest and north catchment areas. So they're currently active in Saskatoon itself. They've connected in with the correctional centre there as well as the community offices. Of course, as with everything, COVID has confused that somewhat, but kudos to our correctional staff as well as to Str8 Up for continuing that on. They're receiving referrals from Lloydminster, and recently there was a media article you may be aware of that announced their expansion into Prince Albert and partnering with the West Flat Citizens Group there.

In Regina, RT/SIS [Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services Inc.] has the contract. So, sorry, the acronym escapes me, but RT/SIS has the contract, and they're doing some great work as well connected into the facility. So at present, we have 21 active referrals into Str8 Up, so they're in phase one of that program. And in Regina, I believe we're at 19 active referrals in Regina as well. But if you give me half a second to check my notes, I'll grab that number for you to be sure. This standing and not having a desk is interesting, but it is what it is.

So yes, Str8 Up has 21 clients in the relentless outreach program in phase one. And so there's three phases to the program. There's the relentless outreach and stabilization period, which of course for someone coming out of a gang is crucial, connecting them to services and what's required there. There's a transformation phase, and then there's the support and sustainment phase that will hopefully pull them back out into society on that sustainment path, knowing that there's going to be failure along the way, and

we've got to be patient with that coming back.

In RT/SIS we have 11 clients in phase one, so in the Regina catchment area and then down into the South as well. So some exciting pieces there, and obviously looking to, you know, continue that on for the next few years with those CBO partners.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How much money has each CBO received?

**Mr. Wilby:** — I believe the total value of those contracts is 4.8 million. I will confirm that for you to be sure, and it's slightly erred higher on the side of Str8 Up, just because of the larger catchment area that they have.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thanks. If that confirmation can also be broken out by CBO, that would be appreciated.

**Mr. Wilby:** — No problem.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Also announced was an IT [information technology] system to identify and track gang members. Can you provide some more information as to what's going on with that?

[16:00]

**Mr. Wilby:** — We are working through that actively. We've gone through a negotiated request for proposal process where we worked with our partners in SaskBuilds to move that out into a competitive bid process to hopefully bring back some creative innovation. At this point we continue on through that. It's not complete. I believe we've limited it down to four and we've had those presentations from the partners, but we haven't awarded that contract at this point in time.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you have a deadline for when you're planning on awarding it?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Very, very soon.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. I suppose you can't provide any more information then at this time as to what that's going to look like?

**Mr. Wilby:** — I mean, in base detail we're looking for something that's easy; that's user-friendly, obviously, for individuals that are out on the road and they're making these decisions, you know, quite quickly and trying to get people into that system; that can share information between the CBO partner, between the government, and potentially between the policing authorities depending on how that looks. Obviously we'd have the appropriate privacy implications around that and do a formal privacy impact assessment on the process as well.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Last year there were 12 CBOs who each got \$20,000. Can you advise if that's being renewed again this year?

**Mr. Wilby:** — That money won't be renewed again this year. That was a one-time grant process to try to drive some innovation in the CBO community. We believe some of that helped us achieve some of the contracts that were awarded through the community intervention model itself. We're starting to receive some feedback on what those CBOs have achieved with the \$20,000 contracts that they were awarded. And of course, you know, we're looking for those outcomes that are there. We're

aware of a few, including the John Howard Society and others that have put together some good work, and we'll continue to accumulate that.

As you can imagine, and I hate to point to it again but with COVID, getting some of that information has been a challenge because the CBOs have really been trying to do their best on the ground and get that work done. So we still continue to receive those reports of what was achieved with that money.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you provide the names of the CBOs who did receive that money?

**Mr. Wilby:** — If you can give me two seconds I'll get that info for you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Sure.

**Mr. Wilby:** — So the recipients of those \$20,000 one-time community capacity-building grants were File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council; John Howard Society of Saskatchewan; Meadow Lake Tribal Council; North Saskatchewan Victim Services out of La Ronge; Onion Lake Native Justice Inc.; Regina Treaty Status Indian Services, the acronym I was looking for earlier; Street Culture Project Inc. in Regina; the Thunderchild First Nation; the West Flat Citizens Group out of Prince Albert — so again you can see our partner there with the community intervention model that is working closely with Str8 Up, so some of that investment has obviously paid off; the Yorkton Tribal Council with their tribal justice unit. And that would be the recipients of those grants.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you for that. The money that went to — this is going back a few questions ago — that's being used to fund the work of Str8 Up, for example and the organization in Regina . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . yes. That's part of that federal-dollar project. Again the same question I had for you about the substance unit applies for here as well. What is the work that the ministry is doing to ensure sustainability in those initiatives?

**Mr. Wilby:** — You know, I would suggest we're always happy to experiment with federal dollars. It's a very good way to experiment so it's not the Saskatchewan taxpayer that's necessarily paying for that. But obviously we're hoping for success. And I think if this project is successful, we'll see savings in the criminal justice system and in other places that we're able to reinvest into the sustainability of this project going forward.

But again we have a rigorous evaluation around it to determine if those outcomes are being met. And something that the Minister has been very clear is that we need to achieve those outcomes in order to continue those investments, because we do value those resources that we receive.

If you could allow me for one second. We do have a provincial investment as well that sort of plays in very nicely with this and it's a partnership with Education. We're quite proud of it so we like to talk about it. Basically it's a partnership with the Pathways program at Scott Collegiate where it's designed to get individuals that are high-needs, complex, likely gang-involved members out of that lifestyle and into a career path. So partnering with the Regina Public School Division who's been very happy to partner

with us. So that would be provincial dollars that's going towards that. We transferred \$87,000 last fiscal to the Regina Public School Division to put that program forward and we're quite hopeful that it will see some success going forward for some of those high-needs kids in the Regina area.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — That's great news to hear. I appreciate that, Mr. Wilby. And the work that these front-line services are doing in terms of anti-gang initiatives and pulling people out of gang situations are incredibly invaluable. And I understand your remarks, but I do think that this has had a history of success and is less of a . . . If it's an experiment as you've described, I think it's one that has a long history of being successful even in this province when it was more robustly funded. So I do hope that it does continue to be seen as a priority by this ministry moving forward.

I have some questions for integrated justice services. I know you're here so I'm wondering if I should ask them. I wasn't sure if that was with Justice or Corrections so I might just ask a couple questions about the numbers now.

**Mr. Wilby:** — I'm here all night, so you can ask them whenever you want. It doesn't matter . . .

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Lucky you.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Minister Morgan says, go for it.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Under integrated justice services there was an increase in funding for accommodation services by about \$1.5 million. Could you provide some detail as to what that money is?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — Okay so that is 908,000 increase in just general accommodations. So it's the leases that we pay to the Ministry of Central Services. So no real changes there, just more expensive year over year. The \$388,000 is an increase from all those other transfers from the centralization of the new phone system. So that's where all of this is going to be accumulated. There's also a \$230,000 increase for accommodation costs associated with the temporary structures that are being built at Regina and Saskatoon correctional centres.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Sorry can you repeat what you just said?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — \$230,000 for accommodation costs related to those temporary structures at the Regina and Saskatoon correctional centres.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now under capital improvements, I'm assuming that's where some of these major changes are occurring, that's why there's a large bump in the funding from 2019 to 2020. I just want to ensure that there isn't anything that I have missed. So for example, custody facility land, buildings and improvements, what is this increase?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — So Mindy Gudmundson again. For the custody facility land, buildings and improvements that's an increase of \$11.798 million. 7.25 million of that is to design and build the remand centre at the Saskatoon Correctional Centres. \$1.4 million is an increase to the project that's replacing the locking mechanisms in the custody facilities. That brings that

project to a total of \$5.2 million for '20-21. There's \$1.2 million increase to renovate the admitting unit at the Saskatoon Correctional Centres That's a new project. \$1.2 million increase to replace the urban camp at Saskatoon Correctional Centres. \$920,000 to install cultural lodges at the four facilities. 653,000 to install the temporary structures at the Saskatoon and Regina correctional centres. \$625,000 for various custody facility enhancements including fencing. \$400,000 for a study of some of the correctional facilities. \$150,000 increase to design and install the contraband reduction equipment in the custody facilities. That's an ongoing project, bringing the total for that project in '20-21 to \$1.3 million. No change but there is a \$1.6 million base budget for small capital improvements in Corrections and Policing. And a \$2 million increase . . . or sorry, decrease to cease the expansion of the Paul Dojack Youth Centre.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — \$1.2 million increase to cease the expansion in the Paul Dojack Youth Centre? Sorry.

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — It's a \$2 million project that was scheduled for '19-20 and it was decided to cease the expansion of it. So the \$2 million goes back to the GRF [General Revenue Fund].

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So the unit expansion that was, I think, announced last year has been cancelled. Why was that cancelled?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Hi. After the approval of that budget, we went out for tender on that. And the estimates we received back were approximately 4.3 million, so it was over double the cost that we anticipated. So we took that opportunity to go back, relook at the project and determined that the anticipated increased need was no longer there. There was sufficient capacity within the youth system that that project didn't have to proceed and it was decided that we wouldn't proceed.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How much money was expended by the ministry on the project prior to its termination?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — I don't have that information . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, it was about \$40,000 but we can undertake to get that information to you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So if it was determined that there is capacity in the facility as it exists, why was the project initially approved?

**Ms. Scriver:** — If you recall, we closed down the North Battleford Youth Centre. We did a very deep-dive analysis in terms of our trends and our peak counts within the youth custody profile. And at that point in time it was determined that we were going to be running out of capacity for our youth in custody, and that never came to fruition. We have done a lot of work with our youth custody up until this point and it was determined that, you know, the cost to proceed with that project, it just wasn't feasible.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thanks. Now the March 2020 estimates originally had this line item, custody facility land, buildings and improvements, at 9.6 million. These estimates have it significantly higher: 20.248 million. You've done a great job of explaining where that money is going. I just want to know which projects weren't contemplated in the March estimates that are now occurring as of these estimates?



**Ms. Gudmundson:** — So we have the 7.25 million for the design and build on the Saskatoon remand centre, \$1.2 million to replace the urban camp at Saskatoon, 920,000 to install the cultural lodges, 653 for the temporary structures in Saskatoon and Regina, 625,000 for the various custody facility enhancements including the fencing, and I believe that is it. And the number for the Dojack last year was 99,000 was spent on the project.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. So just to clarify, those are all projects that weren't originally considered in the March estimates, but are existing now?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thank you. Could you provide some more detail about this 427-bed unit expansion, the Saskatoon remand centre as it's being described?

[16:15]

**Ms. Zimmer:** — The appropriation will allow the ministry to complete the planning and design required for the facility, and it's anticipated that construction will begin in the '21-22 fiscal year. It's to deal with remanded inmates who are currently mixed in with the regular population at Saskatoon. There are many high-security remanded inmates and many with complex behavioural issues, and the existing facilities weren't really designed to deal with them. So this construction will allow the system to properly manage them and allow the programming that is supposed to take place within the facilities to occur.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is the intention that that building is going to be on the existing Saskatoon Correctional Centre land?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. What's the anticipated footage space of that building?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Well we haven't designed it yet but we do have, I guess, an idea. But I don't know that off the top of my head. I can undertake to get that for you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I suppose my question is, how are you going to be navigating ensuring there is still access to outdoor space as it exists today with a new over-400-bed unit on that land?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — In the studies that were completed previously on this, there was sufficient space. I guess I can't speak to how it's going to end up looking, but I believe that there are mandated requirements that will have to be met.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And the units, will they be single occupancy or dual occupancy?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — It's intended that they'll be double-bunked except in the medical unit, which will be single-bunked.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And like you said, you're just in the planning phase. What is the timeline for the project?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — Well we're working with SaskBuilds and the

Ministry of Central Services right now on determining the procurement method that we're going to use. We anticipate that design will take place over the course of the winter. Construction procurement, depending on the procurement method chosen, will likely occur in the winter and spring with construction to begin sometime in the spring/summer of 2021, anticipating a 24-month construction period from that point. Again, depending on how the planning works out, that's the current timeline.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Just so I fully understand, it hasn't been decided yet if this will be a P3 [public-private partnership] project or has that already been determined?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — It's not been determined. We're doing a procurement-options analysis which has the full suite of design options on the table. And once we go through that exercise, the steering committee consisting of representatives from Finance, Ministry of Central Services, Ministry of Corrections and Policing, and SaskBuilds will make that determination.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you know when that will be completed?

**Ms. Zimmer:** — I was just in a meeting on it today. We're hoping that it will be completed by the end of July.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Great, thank you so much. Minister, can you provide information as to if any ministry programs had a reduction in funding in the 2020 budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — We had one program that had a reduction. It was a federally funded program called the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Program. It was a five-year program that came to its national conclusion from the federal government. It was being funded at approximately \$895,000 per year. At this point in time we're conducting an evaluation of that program that's being done through the universities, and they'll determine what the success rate of that was. But at this point in time that program has been wound down naturally.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What was the purpose of that program?

**Mr. Wilby:** — It was to target high-risk youth in the northeast corner of the province, in particular in Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay, and Deschambault Lake. It was working with them to hopefully address some those criminogenic behaviours. The program had challenges. It had challenges around the risk assessment and other pieces, and in particular the administrators felt it was very clunky to use. Part of that was a language piece as well. So we were able to iron out some of those details.

Anecdotally, I can tell you that there's some indication of light success in the area. But it doesn't appear that the program really was fully operational or fully sustainable just due to some challenges that were there, in particular working with our federal partners there. So as we go forward, we'll look at the evaluation and what it has to say.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Moving forward, what is the ministry doing? The need hasn't gone away, so in terms of addressing the need, are there any plans for programs moving forward?

**Mr. Wilby:** — In terms of new programs in this year's budget, there's nothing there at this point in time, but we continue to

work with those communities to see what those needs are. I think the NYVRP [Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Program] gave us a good base as to what some of those high-risk youth are needing and what some of the requirements are, and also what the agencies in the area can deliver and how best the government can partner with them, and in particular dealing with local First Nations, the federal government, and the province coming in as sort of a tripartite to try to address some of those issues.

Because you are right. I mean the need is clearly there, whether it be the Northeast or the Northwest. We do have a suite of programs of course across northern Saskatchewan, as well our corrections partners do in-community corrections as well to address some of those complex needs of the youth in the area.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, could you provide the total FTEs [full-time equivalent] for the ministry, and what the changes are from last year's FTEs?

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — For the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, the 2019-20 FTEs were 2,313.4. It has increased by four to 2,317.4 FTEs.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could I have some point-in-time capacity counts for the facilities as well?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Again, I knew you were going to ask that question. So the adult custody count, as of today we have in-centre 1,555; 848 of those are remand and 704 are sentenced offenders. We're holding three federally sentenced offenders right now. Our occupancy, our utilization rate is 74.3. That's for the adult custody. For youth custody, we're in-centre at 104. We have 36 remanded youth, 42 in secure, 26 in open with a total occupancy utilization rate of 62.3. Did you want community corrections as well?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Please, yes.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Okay. For our youth community daily report, we have a count of 796. Those on probation, conditional discharge are 451; deferred, 25; conditional committal, conditional suspension is 53; and bail is 238. So that's for the youth. And then for the adult community, the count is 6,938: conditional sentence, 980; those on probation, 3,834; and those on bail are 2,039; and then there's 85 that are categorized as "other."

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could I have the in-custody capacity numbers broken down by facility too, please?

**Ms. Scriver:** — So for the Regina Correctional Centre the operational capacity is 782. Are you asking for operational? Okay.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And what they are. Like, what the capacity is and what the numbers are.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Today?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Okay, so June 15th is the point in time that I have. So at the Regina Correctional Centre there's 506 offenders; the operational capacity of that is 782. Prince Albert Correctional

Centre, 384 with the operational capacity of 496. Pine Grove Correctional Centre, 115 with the operational capacity of 166. The Saskatoon Correctional Centre is at 458, 507 operational capacity. Sask Hospital has seven with an operational capacity of 48. Impaired Driver Treatment, we have 12 clients there with their operational capacity is 30. White Birch, because it's shut down right now, there is an operational capacity of 16. Whitespruce Provincial Training Centre, total count 29, operational capacity 39. And then Besnard Lake is 23, and occupational capacity is 25. Would you like the youth?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Please.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Paul Dojack, total count right now is 57, operational capacity is 82. Kilburn Hall, 25 with an operational capacity of 45. Total count at PAYR, the Prince Albert Youth Residence, is 16 with an operational capacity of 26. And Drumming Hill, we have five youth with the operational capacity of 14.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now do you have a point-in-time count for perhaps some time in the month of February or early March, prior to the pandemic?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Does April work?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — No. I'm assuming that those numbers would have started decreasing in April too.

**Mr. Larsen:** — Thank you, Minister. Dale Larsen, deputy minister, Corrections and Policing. Ms. Sarauer, the point in time I have is from March 1st to today, just for adult custody.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — From March 1st?

**Mr. Larsen:** — From March 1st to today.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Mr. Larsen:** — So the highest point that we experienced around that time was March 16th and we were at 2,083 total adult custody. The pandemic happens right around, we've gauged it at the 15th of March. We reached the low end on the 14th of May, and we were at 1,449 at that time.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you have that — I might be asking for too much — do you have that broken down by the first number that you gave me, the March number? Do you have that broken down by facility or is that just total?

**Mr. Larsen:** — No, I have it not. It's total. I have different remand and sentenced numbers, but that's it. We can get those for you though.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Did you say you have the remand and sentenced separated?

**Mr. Larsen:** — That's correct.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could I have that?

**Mr. Larsen:** — Sure. On the March 16th date our remand numbers were 1,160 at 55 per cent, and sentenced were 922 at

44.3 per cent.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And that's of what date?

**Mr. Larsen:** — March 16th.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — March 16th. And then could you remind me of what the current one is?

**Mr. Larsen:** — The current date?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes.

**Mr. Larsen:** — Current date as of today is 1,755 total custody; 848 of those are remand and 704 are sentenced.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So what initiatives did the ministry make as a result of COVID-19?

**Mr. Larsen:** — In relation to ensuring COVID doesn't come into facilities, or in relation to the criminal justice system?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Well everything, but let's start with ensuring COVID didn't come into the facilities.

[16:30]

**Ms. Scriver:** — So we did a lot of work to ensuring that the virus did not enter into our correctional facilities, and to date we have had no offenders test positive for the virus. We have put in significant mitigation strategies to where staff come to the front door and we're asking them the questionnaire, to reducing staff and contracted personnel footprint within our facilities. So they can't walk, you know, wherever they want to in our facilities. We suspended projects. We allowed certain positions that don't require to be in the office or in the facility to be in the facility. If you can work remotely — for example, the shift scheduler — they could work remotely. So we were very diligent in looking at positions that we could actually have them work from home.

Social and professional visiting was suspended. We established COVID committees at all the facilities, because you can appreciate staff had anxiety. And so we had committees where they could come and talk to a fellow staff member just to, you know, talk it through and understand what was going on.

We restricted the movement and placement of offenders within the facilities. We created designated units, cell areas. So we currently — and we are still maintaining this — 14-day assessment units, isolation units, quarantine units, and what we deemed as clean units.

As I said earlier, staff screening upon start of shift, the self-assessment, washing, sanitizing your hands, and the management presence at the door just to answer questions, just to allow staff to understand, you know, why are we doing this? Screening and checklists in conjunction with sheriffs and police on all new admissions. We updated medical screening for all our new admissions.

We increased our communication to staff and offenders about contagious disease protocols. We had unlimited access to soap and water for all offenders. Restricted and controlled access of

hand sanitizers to offenders. It was available to offenders, but it was under staff guidance, and that's for particular reasons.

Video capability for contracted physicians, so our GPs could actually see a client remotely. Telephone communication was set up with elders and chaplains, because we didn't want them coming into the facility because a lot of our elders and chaplains are older and may have compromised systems. So we allowed them to get cell phones so that the offenders could call free of charge and without it being monitored or controlled, so that they could still get their spiritual and cultural needs met.

Social distancing practices when able were implemented. It was difficult in some areas in terms of eating in a dorm setting and, you know, the spacing of tables and what have you. We kept like offenders together — living together, recreation together, program together, work detail together. We were treating each unit like a family pod because we didn't want cross-infection.

Significant emphasis was placed on extra cleaning detail, contracted cleaning services. We brought into the facilities fogging, spraying, and deep cleaning services.

Ongoing communication with public health services staff and other correctional facilities. I do have to say that through the pandemic that the communication and the information sharing and teamwork from the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority], from the Ministry of Health, from public health, from our advocacy groups was unbelievable.

Increased the used of video court. We had additional free calls for offenders so that they could contact their family. There was daily updates to staff by the management director. We had regular updates with the union. Hard copy updates were provided to the offenders. Periodic updates to our stakeholders: EFry [Elizabeth Fry Society], John Howard, the Ombudsman, the advocate. You know, they're interested in what goes on in our facilities.

PPE [personal protective equipment] was used when necessary and when circumstances warranted, and that was based on the guidelines and the protocols and direction from public health.

Open custody and reduced offenders kept to their property, so they weren't allowed to go into the community when everybody else was, you know, isolating at home. Open custody, both localized and central.

We consulted with public health and infection control, like I said. And then we are presently right now developing protocols for continuously masking with our OH & S [occupational health and safety]. And I have to also say that the occupational health and safety branch and at the local levels, the committees were very active and it was a very robust process through this whole thing.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — You had mentioned, and one of the initiatives I heard about was the 14-day isolating of new arriving inmates which I think you just indicated is ongoing. Is that correct? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . How long is that planning on staying in place?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Well we still have cases of positive COVID in the North and in Saskatoon. We do know that our staff are . . .

You know, the restrictions to public activities are now lifted. We're going to have staff that are going to be going places and it's imperative of us to ensure that we keep our facilities safe. We will be keeping those protocols in place until we determine through our meetings with the SHA and the Ministry of Health and the chief medical health officer to say you know what, you may consider lifting those restrictions. But right now we have had no positive cases of COVID-19 within our facilities and we want to keep it that way.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Of inmates

**Ms. Scriver:** — Of inmates.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes. Understanding the nature of the situation we're in while balancing the discussions we've had in the past about administrative segregation and the like, what are you doing to balance those two competing mandates?

**Ms. Scriver:** — So when I say quarantine and isolation, when they're quarantined, they're still out. They're not locked in their rooms. When I say isolation, it's until the test comes back, we know what's going on — and again, it's all on the advice and direction of public health. In terms of administrative segregation, do you want me to get my notes and give you the point-in-time?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — We'll stay with COVID for now and move on to administrative segregation later so I don't forget about all my COVID questions.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Okay, sure. Okay.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So can you describe what the . . . I understand the isolation piece, but for the newly admitted inmates, what that 14-day quarantine looks like?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Actually I'll get . . . Doris Schnell, executive director, offender services.

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — If I could, I'd like to do a bit of an interruption here. As I was listening to the process and the list that Ms. Scriver went through with respect to putting their pandemic plan into place, I must say I again am extremely humbled and grateful. And that gratitude goes out to ministry officials and it goes out to the staff at all of our correctional facilities, and it was amazing to watch. And really, the proof is that we have had no COVID-19 cases of inmates in our correctional system.

And it is due to the pandemic plan put into place in a diligent way, professional way, strategic way by the officials — Heather in particular, but there are others, and we all should be mighty proud of this group that operated under these extreme circumstances. And it's extreme circumstances at the best of times. Under the pandemic it became quadruple what it normally is. So I am grateful and I am humbled and I want to thank you.

**Ms. Schnell:** — Hi. I'm Doris Schnell, the executive director of offender services. So in answer to your question, we did a lot of thinking about what we needed to do in terms of people coming in on admission. We had access to a medical health officer and an infectious disease consultant that we were able to consult with, and it is at their advice that we've done the 14-day . . . I mean, it's a quarantine except we can't quarantine them because we

don't have enough space to quarantine people for 14 days individually.

So they are required to be in their room to mitigate risk, and it's for their own protection and the protection of the other people in the facility as well. They are allowed out of their rooms to make phone calls, to use the shower. As much as possible, depending on the size of the units, there's staggered time out of the units as well. And then there's crazy, intense cleaning that happens in between one person being out and then going back to the room and another person coming out.

The facilities have also done a really good job of trying to get independent activities. You can't really share a lot of things during COVID, but there's been lots of purchase of things like puzzles and crosswords and sudoku, and books are actually a low risk so we were actually able to provide books. So and again we talked about public health with what are some of the things that we'd be able to provide.

So we did a lot of work around that. I think that's . . . oh, tablets. We do have a pilot project at RCC [Regina Correctional Centre] where we have electronic tablets that are loaded up with games and the like, and we actually went and bought some additional ones during this time so that the folks that had to be in their rooms would have more access to the tablets. They're not connected to the internet.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. I appreciate all of that detail. Are the newly-admitted inmates, are they tested for COVID prior to entering the facility?

**Ms. Schnell:** — They're not tested. So the direction we've gotten from Public Health is to test when people are symptomatic. So when people come in, they go into the 14-day admission unit. So if they become symptomatic or anybody in the facility becomes symptomatic, they're immediately isolated and at that point we contact Public Health, and typically they are tested.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How many inmates have been tested to date?

**Ms. Schnell:** — I can get you those numbers. Yes, this is as of June 16th. There was a total of 253 tested — 234 in adult corrections and 19 in youth corrections.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you know numbers for staff testing?

**Ms. Schnell:** — No. We're not typically privy to when staff are tested. Any staff can call 811 at any time or visit their doctor and be tested, so no.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you provide some detail about the . . . It's not really fair to call it an outbreak because it wasn't really a large number, but there were a number of correctional workers in Saskatoon who tested positive for COVID. So could you provide some detail as to what the ministry did after this event to ensure that the spread did not go any further than it did? And what the ministry has done to ensure that we wouldn't see another instance like this again.

**Ms. Schnell:** — Yes, there was six staff from SCC [Saskatoon Correctional Centre] that tested positive. It's unclear, you know, how they became positive. I mean we're never quite certain,

although I think there is some speculation. But really all of the risk mitigation strategies that we use — so the intense cleaning, the maintaining social distancing, the reinforcing the handwashing, the screening staff when they come in with the screening questions, requiring staff to wash their hands when they come in. Heather already talked about how someone is typically at the door and does the screening. So all of the typical risk mitigation strategies were used, continue to be used.

[16:45]

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now as we started discussing, the numbers in the facilities have obviously dropped over the past few months. Could you provide some detail from the Corrections side, so sentenced offender side, understanding you don't really have a lot of control over the remand individuals that come into your facility? But what occurred within the ministry to result in this change in numbers?

**Mr. Larsen:** — That's a very good question. And just to put it in a bit of context, by the announcement of the state of emergency on the 20th of March, we were already approaching 100 offenders less than what was reported on the 16th of March. Approximately a week later we were 200 less and it continued until that May date that I mentioned and now we're seeing a bit of an upturn.

Our IJS vote is currently evaluating all of the data in relation to what actually happened there. Was it primarily related to the announcement of the courts being closed? How much was the input or the lack of input into the system by policing? So were offenders that were apprehended released on more types of conditions and those types of things?

And on the community side for us — people coming out or on short-term remand — how many went to bail, and did bail go up, you know, in reverse order to the downtrend on the custody side? And that's something that we're working close with the Attorney General side and it's a combined effort in the middle to explore what's going on and where we can go to try to analyze this further and what we do with that data further.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. What about the sentenced offenders? The numbers for sentenced offenders also decreased. Could you provide some detail as to what occurred to result in those numbers?

**Mr. Larsen:** — So we have a reintegration leave policy that Heather can probably expand on, even though that's something that's been in place for a number of years. And the downturn in them and the downturn in remand almost mirror each other on a percentage basis. So obviously some of those remand individuals would have moved into sentence. Some of the sentenced people moved out and out into the community. But again, those are questions that we're searching for answers for as we speak.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So were there any changes to the reintegration policy as a result of the pandemic?

**A Member:** — No, there weren't.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So then would there have been sentenced inmates prior to the pandemic who could have theoretically left

on the reintegration policy but weren't . . . and then were because of the pandemic? I'm confused because if nothing changed in the policy, why did we see such a significant decrease in the numbers for sentenced offenders?

**Mr. Larsen:** — There was an increase in the process. Go ahead, Heather.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Your question is, did we change our policy due to COVID-19 in regards to the reintegration leaves? And I can answer, no we did not. But what we did do is we readjusted our reintegration unit . . . the community-training residence, so now they are under the reintegration unit. That gave us an opportunity to readjust our staff. So we have four reintegration officers, one in each correctional facility, and we also now have a director of reduced custody and reintegration. So more oversight was put on the program since the change to the CTR [community-training residence] program.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you describe the change to the CTR program?

**Ms. Scriver:** — An assessment was done of our program, our reduced custody programming, and we determined, just for continuity of case management and to be more efficient, that the community-training residence would fall back under the management structure of the correctional centre. So then the correctional officers that work in the reintegration units would also be on the call-in list for the correctional centres. So this was a staffing efficiency as well as an overtime reduction process.

So we had a director of reduced custody. That person also took over the reintegration leave, reintegration process within the ministry, coupled with the four staff that we had working as reintegration officers. So a different lens was put on. We got the opportunity to put more oversight and a different lens on the programs.

So were there offenders pre COVID that were eligible for reintegration leaves? Absolutely. Did they get out? Absolutely. But I have to say anecdotally that we do community assessments. When one of our clients applies for a reintegration, we contact the family to ensure that they have a place to go home to that's safe.

In the past some families would say no. But in light of COVID, especially with Pine Grove, a lot of families said yes please. I mean the mother is in Pine Grove; their kids are at my house; yes, we will take the mother in. So that became prominent in terms of our community assessments. And did that work in our favour? Absolutely. Did our numbers increase for reintegration leave since COVID? Yes, they did.

We also included reintegration leave numbers with the CTRs. I know this is probably really confusing, but those that were at our CTR in Regina on Smith Street, they applied for a reintegration leave. They were granted a reintegration leave. That was added to our statistics. Prior to that it wasn't, because it was a CTR not a reintegration unit.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. Is there work in . . . You mentioned, Mr. Larsen, that IJS is looking into what's occurred in particular on the remand side. I'm just ensuring that also on the sentenced

inmate side to see why, because I'm still not 100 per cent clear on why the numbers have dropped and what essentially can be learned from this moving forward. Because we're always in here talking about concerns of over capacity and what that's doing to the correctional facilities and the ministry, and now we're looking at a brand new remand facility.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Thank you for the question. So you know, as the deputy had talked about, we are looking at the effects of COVID, but not only on the remand population. I can speak a little bit later about the research and implementation branch and its formation and the work that it's designed to do. So it carries over the remand piece but also looking at that custody and sentence population and what's happened there. And really if you look at that time period, as the deputy again has talked about, it's staggering the number of drops that have come through.

You know, we've got a 584 adult inmate decrease between March 15th and April the 17th. Of that, 367 were on remand and 218 were sentenced. And so of course, of that sentenced population some people are getting out naturally. Their sentence is coming to an end. Some are being replaced by people that are on remand that are getting sentenced, although we know the court's really slowed down other than significant custodial matters.

So how many would have transitioned to there is some of the work that — I'll call it RIB [research and implementation branch] — RIB is looking at and then trying to determine. We do know that crime rates around the province came down significantly, especially in the area of property crime as well. So it's likely less people were coming into the system at that point in time as well, although we did still have them coming into remand.

What's interesting is to look at the percentages, and they didn't vary much. We were about 55 per cent remand before COVID. We're back to about that today. I think at the low point during COVID we were maybe at 52 per cent remand. So those numbers held proportionately quite well. And so what the team's looking at is what's happened through COVID, but also more generally speaking, you know, in terms of what can we do not only with our remand population but our custody population, and are there gains that can be made on both sides of that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Any timeline for when recommendations may come from the work that you're doing?

**Mr. Wilby:** — So the initial piece is to garner the data, of course. And the way I would word it, it's almost like a grade 7 science experiment, right, where you've got to take a look and figure out what your problem is, from there formulate your hypothesis, do your experiment, and then come with your recommendations at the end, or your findings. And I would say we have established the problem or what the question is, and we're looking at the data to figure out what's happened there. And you know, from there we'll look to obviously formulate some initial conclusions and then test them out.

So we've done a significant amount of interviews with folks in the corrections world, with folks in the justice world, the Attorney General world, prosecutors, and such to figure out what changes were made and when were those key changes made and how did the population kind of coincide with that. And then from

there we'll determine what were those — I sound like a statistician here — you know, statistical significant factors that may have caused things, or just anecdotally what happened out there in the world.

So we're hoping to have some of that work done in the not-too-distant future, probably within the next month or so. But from there then it's going to be looking at that. And I think more importantly, you know, looking at it but then, how can we take what we've learned and put it forward into the future. Because obviously we're dealing with a significant event within the criminal justice system, and how can we take some of those lessons and put them forward.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Any preliminary comments that you have on that so far?

**Mr. Wilby:** — I would say what we've been looking at on sort of the remand side of the equation, a global pandemic achieved what we wanted to potentially achieve in the course of three months. So you know, we'll take a look and figure out kind of where that was. But without kind of having, you know, the data analyzed and as such, it might be a little bit premature to provide any comment there.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thanks. I'm looking forward to hearing about that in the future, hopefully. Is there any funding for additional nursing staff in custody facilities in this budget?

**Mr. Larsen:** — I'm hearing no.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I don't understand which ministry is operating the White Birch unit right now. Is Corrections prepared to answer a few questions on what's going on? I don't know what to call it.

**Mr. Larsen:** — Are you asking in relation to the isolation centre?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes. Is it the isolation centre?

**Mr. Larsen:** — Right, it was. It's decommissioned right now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Oh, okay.

**Mr. Larsen:** — Anybody want to take that? Like, I can. I'm just wondering what your question was in relation to that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you just provide some information as to when the isolation centre started and who was operating it and the number of individuals who went through it? And then we can go from there.

[17:00]

**Mr. Cameron:** — Hi. Rob Cameron, ADM of policing. So your question again, just . . .

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What was my question again? I was asking about the isolation unit formerly known as White Birch. Could you provide some information? Just to start, how about when that was converted to the isolation unit, and how that was being run.

**Mr. Cameron:** — So it was converted to the isolation unit in early April. We took over, they set up an isolation centre there,

and it was primarily staffed by our PCSS [policing and community safety services] special constables and sheriff's department.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — PCSS stands for?

**Mr. Cameron:** — Policing and community safety services. Sorry.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Gotcha. No, that's okay. So the individuals who normally work in that unit were transferred out and special constables and other PCSS employees were transferred in?

**Mr. Cameron:** — So when we took over the actual site, there were no other staff there. We came in. It was already, I guess, not being used by Corrections at that time. We took it over as a location that we could set up an isolation centre and then brought staff in to monitor and to care for the clients that were coming.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So there were no inmates in White Birch at the time? Why wasn't White Birch being utilized at the time?

**Mr. Cameron:** — That's a question I'd have to defer to my correctional colleagues.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. I can save that. I'll save that question and I'll keep asking you questions. Just one moment. How many individuals ended up being housed at the isolation unit since its inception?

**Mr. Cameron:** — So at the point when we decommissioned it, there had been five.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Five. And what date was it decommissioned?

**Mr. Cameron:** — One second, I'll have to confer. So unfortunately I can't give you the exact date, but it was about three weeks ago in the last part of May.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is there a reason why you can't give me an exact date? Is it just the officials don't know?

**Mr. Cameron:** — I would just be guessing right now. I don't have the exact date with me right now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, gotcha. No, that's fine. So five individuals were there during the time that it was being utilized. Could you provide some information as to how long each individual was housed there for?

**Mr. Cameron:** — One more time, sorry.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — There were five individuals that were there. How long were each five . . . were for each of the five there?

**Mr. Cameron:** — They were there for the length of their order, the Public Health order which is . . . I believe they are 14 days.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Nobody was there longer than 14 days?

**Mr. Cameron:** — No, I don't believe so, but I'll confirm. No.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And these individuals, could you provide some

information as to how they ended up having to stay there? There's a public health order. What is the authority for the individuals having to be housed there?

**Mr. Cameron:** — The authority comes under *The Public Health Act*.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And that's enforced by the police?

**Mr. Cameron:** — The order itself is issued by the public health authority, so the chief medical officer issues the order. And then the police can be requested by the public health agency to provide assistance, and then the police then can bring the person into the isolation centre.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And then does that go before a judge, or is there any sort of appeal mechanism for that individual?

**Mr. Cameron:** — It doesn't prior to. There's no judiciary process on the front end, although the individual can make application to the Queen's Bench court for a hearing.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Did any of those individuals make an application?

**Mr. Cameron:** — No.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Were they informed of their right to be able to make an application?

**Mr. Cameron:** — That's something I couldn't speak to.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. Do you have information as to the home location of the five individuals that were there?

**Mr. Cameron:** — We may have that, but I don't think I could actually speak about that right now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Because of privacy reasons?

**Mr. Cameron:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. Do you have any information as to why those individuals were refusing to comply with the public health order?

**Mr. Cameron:** — No. Personally I don't have that information as to why they were refusing. All I can say is that they had refused.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And that is because of privacy reasons, or you don't have the information?

**Mr. Cameron:** — I don't have the information.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you undertake to provide that information?

**Mr. Cameron:** — No, I don't believe I could. I think it would be protected under HIPA [*The Health Information Protection Act*].

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So all the information you can provide me about what occurred in the isolation unit is that five individuals were

housed there and that they were not there for longer than 14 days each.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — The cost of that unit, would that be Corrections that would have paid for the isolation staffing? Or who would have paid for that?

**Mr. Cameron:** — So the cost of the staff that were there would be borne by the policing part of Corrections and Policing, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Were the individuals who were in there, were they receiving, for example, meals similar to what was being provided to the rest of the inmates at Paul Dojack?

**Mr. Cameron:** — I can't comment if they were the same meals, but they were provided meals and care within the facility, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — By the staff at Paul Dojack?

**Mr. Cameron:** — That's right.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What about access to nursing staff and mental health supports in that isolation unit? How were those individuals receiving that access?

**Mr. Cameron:** — So every individual inside the centre did have access to medical care, as well as wraparound services.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thank you. Sask Hospital North Battleford, I think you had mentioned in the capacity remarks that there are currently seven inmates on the corrections side. Is that correct?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Yes, that is correct.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What are the total number of beds open right now?

**Ms. Scriver:** — 48.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What is the timeline for opening the remaining beds?

**Ms. Scriver:** — That is subject to the SHA and the Ministry of Health retaining the professional services in terms of psychiatrists, psychologists, and nurses to work in that area.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Last year's estimates you had also mentioned that there were delays because of recruiting psychiatry nurses. What has, I suppose, the ministry has done so far in terms of addressing this if it seems like it's still a problem?

**Ms. Scriver:** — It is an issue. However, that is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and the SHA at this point. I can say that they have been working diligently and very aggressive in trying to retain services because the need is there. And then coupled now with the pandemic and COVID, things have been delayed

but . . .

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Why are there only seven inmates currently being housed there?

**Ms. Scriver:** — There is a restriction on transfers from the correctional facility to basically a long-term care home. So those are the restrictions put on through the chief medical health officer and also the chief psychiatrist at SHNB [Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford].

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So SHNB is considered a long-term care home, not a correctional facility — the Corrections side of it?

**Ms. Scriver:** — There's a dual designation, right. It's a hospital with a correctional facility attached to it. So it is the oversight with SHNB. We provide the correctional staff and some programming. But who gets admitted? We provide the referrals and they are assessed and checked off by the chief psychiatrist at Sask Hospital.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I'm just wondering, if inmates are still able to be transferred to CTRs, for example, why can't they be transferred to SHNB?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Because of the vulnerable population that they have at the hospital.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What is the wait-list for SHNB right now?

**Ms. Scriver:** — I just have to grab my notes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes.

[17:15]

**Ms. Schnell:** — Hello, Doris Schnell, executive director of offender services. So during the period of COVID we weren't keeping a wait-list for SHNB. And part of that is around the typically short sentences that our offenders have. So make a referral, we don't know how long COVID's going to last. We did just receive a communication from SHNB this week that they're looking at referrals with potentially an admission next week. There's some processes that we need to follow. One of the things that they're asking is that someone is tested before they're transferred, so we're looking at ways to work with Public Health to make that happen.

So I know there's a number of referrals that are coming from each of the facilities right now for consideration, and I just wanted to just confirm that we're not in control of the . . . We make the referrals, but we're not in control of who actually gets accepted into SHNB and how many individuals are there.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Who makes that decision?

**Ms. Schnell:** — SHNB has the right to make the determinations around assessment. And then just to add to that, the full complement of clinical staff isn't there, especially the psychiatry. So really SHNB is lending us psychiatry until they can hire . . . So it's one of the existing . . . The chief psychiatrist is really helping to provide service to our folks. So until they can actually hire that psychiatrist for us, it's going to be difficult to have the



full numbers there.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So then is it not necessarily fair to say that 48 beds are open if the staffing complement isn't there to meet 48 beds?

**Ms. Schnell:** — That would be a question for SHNB, but I think it would be difficult at this point for them to have 48 people there with the psychiatry. There's also a vacant psychologist position, so there's a number of positions that they're still trying to staff.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — This is a problem, and I understand the issues associated with trying to hire during the pandemic, but this was a problem that was occurring prior to this pandemic. Why has it been so difficult to hire staff for this building?

**Ms. Schnell:** — Yes, it's Health that's doing the hiring, but it is really difficult to hire professional clinical staff. I think the SHA — well, they are part of the SHA — they experience that problem, I think, across the province. North Battleford's a smaller centre so it's a little bit harder to recruit clinical staff.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — You said that referrals are starting to come in. Do you have an estimate, understanding that it's up to SHNB, of how many will be admitted? I'm curious to know how many will be referred in the next, you know, month or so.

**Ms. Schnell:** — I can get that number for you. I don't have it right now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — That would be great. Thank you. Understanding, as you had said, that there currently isn't a wait-list because you weren't keeping a wait-list during the pandemic, that's as close as the information is that you can provide us as to what the ministry is anticipating the requests will be for accessing the beds that are available.

**Ms. Schnell:** — We can do that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. How many correctional staff are employed at the Corrections side of SHNB?

**Ms. Schnell:** — We'll have to see if we have that with us. We'll just look it up.

**Ms. Scriver:** — So at SHNB we have 59 FTEs that are permanent and 25.6 non-perm for a total of 84.6 FTEs.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Last year I had asked for some numbers around transit service for released inmates. I'm wondering if you could provide me an update on this past year's numbers.

**Ms. Scriver:** — So for '19-20 we have a breakdown by centre of the number of offenders assisted with transit: Pine Grove, we have 27 offenders use taxi, 224 use the bus, and zero were on city transit; for SCC, it's taxi 15, bus 89, and city transit 666; for P.A. [Prince Albert] Correctional Centre, zero taxi, zero bus, zero city transit; Regina Correctional Centre, 135 taxi vouchers and 5 bus tickets.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you have the cost as well?

**Ms. Scriver:** — I do. So for P.A. Correctional Centre, of course, there was nothing. SCC, \$6,000; Pine Grove, about \$13,000; Regina Correctional Centre, \$4,000; for roughly a total of \$24,000.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Now I almost forgot to ask why White Birch wasn't being utilized at the time that the isolation unit was created. Could you provide that information?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Absolutely. So of course, we've been talking about the counts decreasing. So the offender count at White Birch was zero. There were no offenders in it. We were having a full staffing complement in an empty facility. We utilized those resources as our contingency. We redeployed them back to the Regina Correctional Centre to assist with staffing, and the nurse also went back to Regina Correctional Centre to assist with, you know, our pandemic planning. The facility was empty at the time the decision was made to use it as an isolation site.

It now has been empty. It's been sanitized. The Ministry of Central Services came in and they made sure that everything was sanitized. Mark McFadyen, the executive director of custody services, again made sure that when our staff and our offenders go back in there, it's completely void of any type of virus or communicable infections.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is it currently housing inmates right now?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Still the Pine Grove, the remanded females count is low. So they are still at Pine Grove Correctional Centre because we are still using and implementing the protocols of our pandemic and COVID response at Regina.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So I'm curious about this because White Birch is typically used, and please correct me if I'm wrong, for housing female inmates who have court in the southern part of the province. Is that mostly happening by video link now, or is it simply because the numbers are down? Could you provide some more detail?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Yes, you're correct. Video court, we are utilizing video court to its fullest extent when we can and because the numbers are low, that the transports between Pine Grove and Regina, Yorkton, Moose Jaw are small.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. While I have time, I'd like to ask a few questions about the numbers around segregation. So I don't know if you want to grab your notes for that.

**Ms. Scriver:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Do you have the numbers, point-in-time counts for administrative and disciplinary segregation?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Administrative segregation, a snapshot for 2020. At Regina Correctional Centre, the total count at the time of the snapshot, which was March 6, was 683; at that time we had zero offenders on administrative segregation. White Birch, we had 17; at that point in time, again, zero on administrative segregation. P.A. Correctional Centre, 491; at that point in time, zero on administrative segregation. Pine Grove, 188; zero on administrative segregation. Saskatoon, 523; we had one on administrative segregation for a 0.1 per cent rate.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Disciplinary segregation?

**Ms. Scriver:** — So this is a point in time on March 6. The Regina Correctional Centre, 688; there were 20 offenders segregated. White Birch, 17; zero segregated. Prince Albert Correctional Centre, 491; 8 offenders were segregated. Pine Grove, 188; 13 were on a disciplinary segregation. And Saskatoon Correctional Centre, 523 at that point in time; 21 were on disciplinary segregation for a total of 62 offenders provincially. For a total count of offenders provincially, 1,905. Total of those offenders on administrative segregation were 62, for a 3.4 per cent rate.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you provide the average length of time in disciplinary segregation as well as the highest mark and the lowest mark as well, please?

**Ms. Scriver:** — The average length of stay for '19-20 was 9.9 days on administrative segregation. I don't know if I have disciplinary. I do not have the length of time for disciplinary.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you undertake to provide that information, the average, similar to what you did with administrative, but also the longest stay and the shortest stay as well, please?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Absolutely.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. Could you provide how the ministry defines administrative segregation?

**Ms. Scriver:** — Administrative segregation is now defined as a status within a correctional facility subject to a legislative process that may be used as a last resort to contribute to the safety of inmates, staff, and the public by assisting and maintaining the security of the correctional facility. Administrative segregation is a temporary, non-punitive measure, and does not include disciplinary segregation or temporary confinement pending a disciplinary hearing.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Similarly, do you have a definition for disciplinary segregation?

**Ms. Scriver:** — I will have to get you that definition along with the statistics that you asked earlier.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — That would be wonderful. Thanks. Thank you, I appreciate those answers. I've been told that my time is pretty much up, so I do want to take this opportunity to thank you, Minister, as well yourself, Deputy Minister, for answering my questions to date, as well as all of the officials for being here this afternoon and answering my many varied and often scattered questions. I do really appreciate it.

I also want to echo what Minister Tell had said in the middle of estimates. My office received a lot of calls of — as had been mentioned by a few of the officials — concern, worried staff and worried loved ones of inmates about the pandemic and what was going to happen to them and the ones that they love. And the ministry officials have handled a very difficult situation very well so far, I think, and the numbers show for that. We've seen concerning outbreaks in correctional centres in other jurisdictions, and it's great that so far we haven't had that happen here. And that's largely to the great work of, as Minister Tell had

said, the officials.

And I also want to thank the staff in your office, Minister, particularly your chief and your MAs [ministerial assistant] for being very responsive to my inquiries and the inquiries of the folks that were reaching out to my office during a very, very, very difficult time to be working.

So thank you for everything this evening . . . Well this afternoon; I guess we'll be back in an hour anyways. I'll thank you folks again then, I suppose. But thanks for everything, for the folks at Hansard, and everyone for being here and keeping us safe today.

**The Chair:** — Minister Tell, do you have any closing remarks?

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — No. I also will be back here in an hour. So I'll save my thank you to the committee when I'm done.

**The Chair:** — Excellent. So the time being 5:31, we'll take a recess until 6:30.

[The committee recessed from 17:31 until 18:29.]

**The Chair:** — Good evening, everyone. Welcome back. Minister, do you have any opening remarks before we get started?

### **General Revenue Fund Justice and Attorney General Vote 3**

#### **Subvote (JU01)**

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much. Good evening everyone. I'm pleased to be here to provide the highlights of the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's '20-21 financial plan and to answer your questions.

Usually in the past when we've completed these things, I've taken the opportunity to thank the officials for the good work they do year-round. However this time in my prepared remarks, the officials have put the thank you at the beginning in case I forget it or have changed my mind between now and then. So anyway I will read it as they prepared it.

[18:30]

Before I begin my remarks I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all of the Ministry of Justice staff for their commitment and hard work over the last few months to deal with the pandemic. I know the staff have worked evenings and weekends to ensure the services residents rely on can continue. I'm grateful to be surrounded by a team that has, without hesitation, been there for us when we've needed it the most. Mr. Chair, if you'll pardon my bad humour, that's absolutely true.

They have been outstanding and exceptionally risen to the occasion time and again to do things as is required to try and make sure that emergency orders were done, that they were able to deal with everything and give advice to countless ministries as we went through the pandemic. So for that, I want to thank them.

I'm joined by a number officials from the ministry today. With

me at the table is Glen Gardner, deputy minister of Justice and deputy attorney general. I'll have other ministry officials introduce themselves as the need arises.

This budget aligns with our government's goals of keeping Saskatchewan strong and supporting the people of this province through the COVID-19 pandemic. We are undertaking a package of new initiatives this year that focus on enhancing access to justice. This includes new resources for family dispute resolution, protection for vulnerable individuals, and enhancements to our provincial justice system.

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee will also be receiving over \$500,000 in additional funding to better serve vulnerable individuals in our society. We will be taking significant steps over the next year to develop online innovations to modernize processes for ourselves and the public. For example, we are devoting over \$3 million to the e-justice initiative to develop online information and dispute resolution tools. This work will initially be focused on provincial offences, which will allow the public to resolve disputes online without having to travel to a courthouse. In partnership with Corrections and Policing, we'll be expanding the core issues of video technology to RCMP detachments, municipal detention centres, and correctional facilities.

This budget also includes an increase of \$290,000 for addressing interpersonal violence and abuse in our province. This funding will provide for a new community outreach worker and expansions to children-exposed-to-violence programming. The Public Complaints Commission will receive \$350,000 in additional funding to allow it to expand its responsibilities and commence work on increasing police oversight in Saskatchewan. We are also improving our internal practices through expanded use of the paralegal program and the creation of the Office of Tribunal Counsel.

In closing, the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General is taking significant steps this year to improve the administration of justice in our province. We are proud of our accomplishments over the past year and we'll continue to collaborate with our government and community partners to achieve greater success in the future.

The funding for the '20-21 fiscal year will ensure the ministry can continue to provide a fair and accessible justice system for the people of Saskatchewan. Those are the highlights, and now I would be pleased to answer your questions about the 2020-21 plan and budget for the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** — We will now begin with vote no. 3, Justice. Are there any questions? Ms. Sarauer.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Minister, for your opening remarks. And I appreciate the information about the several new initiatives that the ministry intends to partake in this budget cycle. I'm wondering if you could provide some more detail on a number of them. Let's start with the family dispute project.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Chair, we are joined by one of the officials, Kylie Head.

**Ms. Head:** — So we have a program that is new. You've already

seen the legislation pass and the regulations pass on that. It's specifically designed to try to help people stay out of the courtroom. We find that in family litigation, as I'm sure you've experienced as well, that as time goes on things tend not to get better between the former couple. And so the earlier you could settle, the better off the families often are. And it's better to usually negotiate and try to find a way through and come to an agreement that works for your family rather than have that imposed by a judge.

And so this is a new program where we're trying to use that model in the family context. So it's a mandatory program that after the completion of opening your file with the court and filing your documents, then before you can do anything further with the court, you have to go through one of the various options for the processes. So there's a variety of options.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I'm curious to know more about the variety of options. When this originally came through, as you remember, the legislation, the details were still very much in the works. I understand that this largely mirrors what happens already in civil litigation, but if there are more options than the way civil litigation works, I'm curious to hear more about that.

**Ms. Head:** — There are options actually. So you're right that in a large part it does mirror. The idea is to mirror the civil litigation process. Originally when alternative dispute resolution and mediation were kind of a newer creature on the horizon, it was thought at the time that it probably would be very difficult to put families through that process. And so the choice at the time, back in the '90s, was to restrict it to that civil process. But over time as we've developed in society and found out what a great tool mediation and all of these other tools are, we really do feel that it can apply to the family situation.

So we've got a number of processes here. So one would be collaborative lawyers. So that qualifies under the legislation. And so what I would like to say, I guess, is that this is not a government program. What this is, is it's a court process. And so not everybody has to come to the Government of Saskatchewan for their service, and that's where it varies from the civil process. So the civil process does go through the Dispute Resolution Office, but there's a lot of options here on family side where it doesn't ever have to come to government. We don't have to see the file or touch it. So the first being the collaborative lawyers, which you'd be familiar with, so I won't go through that.

But a new option as well is family law arbitration. So family law lawyers who have at least 10 years of experience working in family law and who have taken certain minimum qualifications set out in the regulations can be qualified and recognized by the minister as an arbitrator. And so the thought on that is that family law lawyers would specialize in that, rather than taking existing arbitrators who may not know a lot about family law and trying to plunk them into the family law context.

The next option would be family mediation. And for this we really want to encourage the private mediation sector to grow. So you can come to the DRO [dispute resolution office] and get services. We do have that option, but it's not the option that we're really promoting. What we want to do is we want to see a robust service of mediation grow up throughout the province. Because there's all sorts of areas that can use mediation, that would really

benefit from it, not just family but, you know, all sorts of different files and disputes. And so we really would like to see that grow, and so we're working closely there with ADR Saskatchewan and with other partners to try to develop and get more qualified mediators throughout the province. So you can come to the DRO, but we certainly . . . it's just an option; it's not a requirement.

And then the other option is parent coordination. And so these parent coordinators, it's a new career. So we got this idea a little bit from Manitoba, I'll confess, where they've already got that in place. But it allows . . . not to decide issues of custody and access and those sorts of big issues; that'll be set out in your agreement. But parents, even though they have an agreement, sometimes have a hard time really implementing it or agreeing on what it is that they should do or how they should interpret it or how to communicate with each other. And so this family coordination process would have somebody who is really skilled in this area who would work with the parents and try to get them to figure how are summer holidays going to work, and how can you communicate with each other more effectively, and try to work them through basic issues like that, hopefully in the end helping them to avoid ending up back in court.

So that's sort of always our goal, is to help people to reach a positive agreement that both sides are happy with rather than ending up in court and having something imposed on you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How is this program working for, in the instance of an individual? I'm thinking of someone who, for example, is dealing with a partner who is not willing to participate in the court process. Are you able to note them for default, for example, without having to go through mandatory mediation?

**Ms. Head:** — Eventually if we can't get them to comply, there is a process whereby you can be exempted from the requirement. But we really wouldn't want to start there, of course. We would be trying to do everything we could to get the family to work together, to bring that partner in. I'm sure the judiciary would be very frowning on anything that was going to court that didn't go through this process and would be helpful in that area as well. So we are trying to push people through this process and get them to recognize the value.

Ultimately there is a provision in there where we can provide a certificate of exemption or the court can provide a certificate of exemption. And so there's a very limited number of cases where we were thinking about using that, and they're set out again in the regulations. So it's situations like if a child has been kidnapped, things like that, so fairly extreme circumstances. Generally just because somebody's not totally willing doesn't mean we're not going to work with them because there's a lot of people that come into processes that aren't happy when they walk in the door. So if we didn't try to work with people under those circumstances, there would be a lot of people walking away. So we can't let them out the door that quickly.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How is this going to work for individuals of limited income?

**Ms. Head:** — That's where the government process could work for those individuals. So under our family mediation fees, they

are sliding fees, and they are done according to income. And we did want to preserve the opportunity for low-income individuals in particular to access the government program.

So if you look at the fees, they do slide up considerably. A higher income couple could come to the dispute resolution office and request service, but they will pay just as much for that service as they would out in private industry. They can go get a mediator on the street for the same price as what we will charge them. They will not get a break. It's going to be the low-income couples that are going to have an opportunity under that sliding scale to access services from the government at a more subsidized rate.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now I think the challenge in this area is similar to the challenge often heard in civil litigation in that it's another hurdle for individuals to have to go through before achieving their resolution through the court, if perhaps that's the stage, or achieving or ending up in pretrial where a lot of files are resolved. More expense on the individuals in terms of not just accessing these third party services but also for their counsel to also assist them through that process. Has the ministry looked into whether or not this actually is, as has been said by the minister, going to increase access to justice or if it will in fact be a barrier to accessing justice?

**Ms. Head:** — Most people in family files never end up having a trial. So on average there's about 4,000 applications that are made to the court in Saskatchewan every year for all different family matters, and there's about, on average, 50 trials per year that are held. So most people never proceed all the way through to the trial phase. It's a question of, when can you settle? At what point can the parties deal with each other reasonably to come to that agreement?

We find in the family context that by the time you finish filing your affidavit, sometimes people are more upset than they were before. And so our thought is that if we can get to those people before they have to file the affidavits, before they have to reveal all the reasons they're angry with their spouse, in writing, in a very legalese document, a very formal document that can cause a lot of hurt feelings, that they may be willing to consider alternatives that are better for their children, that are better for their families, early on before they get into exchanging all those hate-filled affidavits.

And so that's where this process comes in, is we're hoping that they're never going to get to those later stages, that they will be more willing early on to be reasonable and really think about what's in the best long-term interest of the family, especially when they have children involved.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — The Family Matters program, is that still operational?

**Ms. Head:** — Yes, it is.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And how does that play into this?

**Ms. Head:** — So the Family Matters program would be separate. Family Matters is free. And so if we were to make this freely available and have it qualified under this particular program, nobody would ever go to a private mediator out in society. And we really do want, as the Ministry of Justice, to encourage the

development of this professional mediation community. We really do feel, not only in family law but all sorts of areas, that this is a very useful skill, a very useful profession that we want to see grow in the province. And so we would not want to undercut it with a free service that everybody could come and access from the government. Again there are options available for low-income individuals, but most individuals can afford a mediator.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I thought that mediation services were accessible through Family Matters. Is that no longer the case?

**Ms. Head:** — They are accessible but not for this particular purpose.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — They don't qualify for the completion of that.

**Ms. Head:** — No, because otherwise everybody would just want to pick the free service. Who would pay anybody to do a mediation for them if there's an opportunity for the government to pay for it yourself?

Now there is a mediation session that is accessible under Family Matters, but it's only limited to three hours. That's it; it's not a long term. It's not the sort of thing where it's going to help you work through your divorce necessarily. It's not enough time to do that and it's often not accessed by people.

Most people who are accessing Family Matters are not coming for that free mediation. They're coming for other resources which we then steer them to, either in the dispute resolution office or family justice service or out in the community. We try to work with people and make sure they connect to the service that they need, and oftentimes it's not that mediation process at that step.

[18:45]

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And what will the ministry do to monitor the impact that this change might have to low-income individuals?

**Ms. Head:** — So we will have to monitor that for sure. Right now the process is starting off very slowly because of COVID. So you'll know that we only have started a pilot in Prince Albert. That was where we had selected last year to start the pilot. It started January 1st, but so far we're only aware of six files post COVID that have occurred.

So it's going to be a very slow start-up and we certainly will be watching for impact for low-income and impact on others and impact on, you know, settlement. We want to do a full evaluation of the program, of course, and so that would be developed in time. But right now we have a very small number of files so I really can't report any outcome to you yet. It's too new.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Fair enough. So just to be clear, the requirement for mediation is only operational in Prince Albert right now?

**Ms. Head:** — Right now it is, yes. Everywhere else it would be optional. You could do it voluntarily, but it's mandatory in Prince Albert, in that judicial centre.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Great. Thank you so much. The next program you had mentioned, Minister, was some initiative for the

protection for vulnerable individuals. Could you provide some more detail on that?

**Mr. Crook:** — Rod Crook, Public Guardian and Trustee. We've got a significant rebase of our budget this year from 3.4 million to a little over 4 million. The rebase reflects some significant increases in our number of clients over the last few years. So there are two pieces to the rebase. The first is that we've had to add a couple of staff over the last couple of years to handle the workload associated with the rising client levels. So this rebase funds those positions and the salary pressures that we've had over the last couple of years. The majority of it is for six new positions. There'll be two new trust officer positions, two assistant trust officer positions, and two financial clerks. We have a high volume of transactions, over 100,000 transactions a year, which has been on a pretty steep trajectory. It's gone up about 35 per cent over the past five or six years. So the rebase allows us to handle that, plus it positions us going forward to meet the needs that are out there.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I'm curious to know, any understanding as to why your services have been increasing over the past five or six years?

**Mr. Crook:** — That's a variety of things where we're seeing a pretty significant increase in the number of vulnerable adult clients. It's everything from the demographics and aging of the population. We're seeing a lot more elderly people. But also we're seeing quite a few younger people with different types of issues, whether it's addictions, mental health, and those younger clients tend to be a fair amount of work given the type of situation that they're in. So it's been a variety of things.

There's a significant amount of financial abuse that we investigate. That, over the last few years, has really increased. At any given time we have about 40 to 60 active financial abuse investigation files. So there's a, you know, wide variety of things out there that we're involved with. And the rebase positions us very well going forward to meet the needs that are out there, as well as covering these salary pressures.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — The member will be aware that we also made changes to the legislation to allow applications to be brought to set aside a marriage where it was regarded as being without full capacity or without the understanding that was necessary. And we're probably not far enough into that to be able to comment, but that was the companion piece to the rebase was that we wanted to make sure that vulnerable seniors, vulnerable adults were protected.

We had the operations through the Public Guardian and Trustee's office, as well as the legislation to allow that and I'm not sure whether I'm aware of any particular applications that have been made on it. And it's a challenging thing to try and identify what type of application it is or isn't or when it's appropriate. Somebody said oh, you shouldn't be taking this to the courts to decide, but I think it's impossible to do it just based on a handful of rules.

I had somebody call my office and said that, you know, they were terribly worried — it was an adult child — that their dad was being terribly taken advantage of by this woman that had married him and talked about all this list of abuses that the new wife had

done. And that, you know, the property was being transferred into joint names. There was assets in hers. There was travel being taken. And I said, how long ago have they been married? Well last night was their 25th wedding anniversary.

So you can't generalize or you can't make assumptions that this is or is not. And it could well be that the situation I mentioned, there may be one that's a far shorter period of time. So we think by having created that legislative framework that we're in a position for people to make applications to deal expeditiously to protect vulnerable people and to make sure that we're doing it in an appropriate and fair manner. So I don't have anything to add other than that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you for that. Minister, I'm wondering if you can provide me some further information on the e-justice initiative that you had mentioned.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Yes. We had this under way for several years trying to sort of get where it needs to be. And the idea would be it would cover a lot of the summary offence tickets, a lot of the administrative enforcement that's done through conservation officers, a variety of other things, as well as working towards the administrative tribunals, residential tenancies, and a bunch of others.

But I will let the deputy minister and some of the officials go on. They've done an enormous amount of work on it, and I'm hugely supportive of that because I think it's a type of initiative— and I give them credit for it — that will promote or create access to justice that was not there otherwise, both from the parties as being either a defendant or an applicant or whatever the case may be.

I think it's just an absolutely right thing to do to take things off of the staff of a tribunal or . . . [inaudible] . . . and to get it done, where people can do things either online or with the assistance of somebody like CLASSIC [Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc.] or whatever else. So anyway I see that Kylie is back there so I don't think I'll need to go on much longer.

**Ms. Head:** — I just realized I didn't introduce myself the first time. We were probably supposed to say our names. It's Kylie Head, just for the benefit of the recording. So this is a really exciting project to be a part of. It's something that's very inspirational for people I think who are kind of working in the access to justice area.

We are looking very much at what British Columbia has achieved, that they have taken a lot of files out of the traditional court system, and they're just having such great success with it. It's something that a lot of provinces across the country are now considering replicating, or doing in their own unique fashion because of course it wouldn't be exactly like what British Columbia is doing.

But it's to give people the opportunity to deal with some of these matters that are perhaps less serious but would take a lot of time out of their day to deal with, for example, people who are going down and want to do something with a traffic ticket. Lots of times we find people are coming to court and they don't really know what the law is. They don't have any advice. When they come

down, they spend a little bit of time talking to the prosecutor. Oftentimes it's very basic questions that, if we had helped them in a different way, they wouldn't have had to take time out of their day to come down to court and deal with this.

So for example, some people might come down and say, you know I got this red light ticket or I got this speeding ticket and I wasn't driving the car. And I was at work and I can prove it. And then, you know, we have to break it to them that that's not how the legislation is set up. The ticket goes to the registered owner. There's no defence in what you've just told me. And we've all taken up a lot of our time in our day, and they've perhaps had to get child care and they had to, you know, come downtown to the courthouse and take time off of work, and for nothing, right.

So the first element of this particular project would be to build an online system where people can have a guided pathway where they can discover this sort of information for themselves. When you google things looking for advice on the internet, you get all kinds of crazy stuff that shows up, right. You don't know if it's reliable. You don't know if it's even Saskatchewan law. You know lots of times when you google things you get American law that shows up very first on the screen. And if you're somebody who is perhaps not as educated, you might be trying to rely on something that's not even Canadian.

And so this would be a system that would really help people to help themselves and to navigate and make better choices. And lots of times we think just having that little extra help, recognizing that they don't have a lawyer will help them to navigate the system and reach a good resolution, just that step alone.

After that step, once we have that process set up and running, then there would be other opportunities built into the system, which could go up to as far as potentially having online dispute resolution or an online adjudication of some sort. So it would depend on the type of file, and there's lots of issues that have to be worked through for that of course, but that would be the ultimate goal would be in some areas to have the opportunity for an online adjudication where you would have essentially an affidavit hearing. There might be an opportunity for video hearing, which we're seeing in some cases works well in this COVID world, and not have a live, in-person trial per se for all of these various files.

When we look at sort of the history of Western Canada, really a lot of these files, a lot of these matters — things like speeding tickets — are not as serious as criminal files. But we really do treat them the same way as criminal files because that was what existed. That was the courthouse that existed. That's where everything went. It went all into the same system. So what we want to do is try to look at that again with modern eyes and see what makes rational sense and what's better for the citizen.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What are the timelines for this project?

**Ms. Head:** — So right now we're in the development phase for this quarter. We did go and were successful in getting additional money for this year. So we were looking at trying to develop it for a year out from now, but instead we have a really accelerated time frame in which we're hoping by the fourth quarter of this year to have the online information portal portion built that I had

talked about where it would be an educational element for people that they would be able to access to help them be better informed, recognizing the fact that most people no longer have lawyers working through these systems.

Originally we are planning to start with provincial offences. So it's limited in scope to just provincial offences to start. But over time we would be hoping to expand this into other areas such as administrative tribunals. There could be so many applications for this type of software once it's developed. And of course, over time the incremental development cost of each add-on would be less once we build it for the provincial offences.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — How much money has been allocated for this project for this budget?

**Ms. Head:** — So originally in the Estimates book, we had only a half a million dollars. It was allocated just for the development phase, sort of the planning, exploratory phase, and we were to develop a business case and come back for the next year. However, now we have more money that's been allocated to the project so we're very excited by that. So an additional amount of money was allocated and now it's \$3.1 million is the total that's set aside to work on this during this fiscal year.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Just remind me, what do you hope to achieve with that money this fiscal year?

[19:00]

**Ms. Head:** — So we're going to be doing a lot of the systems sort of development planning. We have to go to a tender and find an IT developer to work on this project with us. We are hoping to develop the informational system where people can . . . It would be a guided pathway where people would go to the computer and sort of work their way through what their particular problem is and then come out the other end with some reliable, Saskatchewan-specific advice as to what they should be doing. And then of course we'll be working towards developing that bigger portal as well, but that won't be able to be delivered in the next nine months.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is there any work within the ministry on this project in partnering with organizations who are doing some work in this area already? Like PLEA [Public Legal Education Association], for example.

**Ms. Head:** — Yes. So actually I'm on the PLEA board of directors, and we are working with PLEA on this project. And they're doing some of the preliminary work for us and doing some analysis, looking at developing a survey that would go out to clients of theirs — and Pro Bono is involved as well — and helping us to develop some idea as to what kind of information would be helpful to their clients and how to pitch that in a way that would be accessible and understandable to those clients. So we are working with them as partners on this project.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. Minister, you had mentioned a community outreach worker as part of the work you are doing around interpersonal violence. Could you provide some more information about that as well?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Drew Wilby will try and answer this.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Thank you, Minister. Yes. As part of the budget, we received funding for an additional community outreach worker which will be located in the west central region. So that individual will be designed to go and work on those areas of interpersonal violence, do that emergency crisis outreach that's required in that area.

Of course there was some terribly unfortunate circumstances in Kindersley earlier this year, you know, and we're aware of a lot of the concerns that have been raised there. So this is timely to move this individual into the west central area, so broader than just the Kindersley location.

So that'll include a \$90,000 increase to fund that worker, which will associate sort of the operational cost that's there as well. We're hoping that'll help to respond to some of the domestic violence issues as well as the sexual assault issues that may be taking place in that area of the province.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So that individual, are they employed through . . . Is this money going to a CBO or is this a government employee?

**Mr. Wilby:** — No, we will be contracting for that service. In terms of who we're contracting with, it's still up in the air. I believe we'll go through, you know, an RFP [request for proposal] process for that. But it will be a CBO individual. It will not be a government employee.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Could you define the west central region, please?

**Mr. Wilby:** — For sure. Geographically specific, basically that area west of Saskatoon out towards the border. And I would say, you know, I can't be 100 per cent certain but sort of in that general Kindersley area, north, kind of, up past the No. 7 and down towards, you know, down the No. 4 area there as well.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. Minister, you had mentioned an expansion of the paralegal program. Can you provide some more information about that?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — As you're aware, we had a piece of legislation to allow for greater recognition of paralegals and having paralegals work under supervision of lawyers, and that's sort of part of the ongoing process. But I'll certainly let Linda Zarzeczny provide some more specifics.

**Ms. Zarzeczny:** — Our budget increased 923,000 and 8 FTEs, annualizing to 1.19 million and 14 FTEs in 2021-22, for an expansion to the paralegal program. In my division, which is the legal services division, this year we got 160,000 and 2 FTEs, annualizing to 320,000 and 4 FTEs next year, to bring our total of paralegals to 11. We have 7 now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. I appreciate that information. Kind of on a similar vein, as you well know, Minister, you've been working with the Law Society on an alternative legal services project. Could you provide an update on where that's at?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — It's progressing but progressing slowly. I think the legislation . . .

And there is strong support for doing it, but I think it's a matter of wanting to engage members of the profession in a more direct manner. I'm not sure which official can give us a bit of background.

But I know we proceeded cautiously at the beginning because we were afraid that some members of the profession would be territorial about it, which didn't happen. And it was generally received by members of the profession and by the Law Society as something that they thought was a good add-on, that it would be able to add another layer of access to justice and would be able to make the work of a law office somewhat easier because they would be able to engage the services of a paralegal to either do conveyancing, some limited court appearances, etc. I don't know . . .

**Mr. Gardner:** — I think at this point though, the work of the task team is finished and we've . . . There's legislation that supports that work and the Law Society is now trying to determine what areas could benefit from a limited licensed practitioner and what areas to exempt from the regulations. So it's now sort of being managed by the Law Society.

Was there anything we wish to add? Maybe Darcy?

**Mr. McGovern:** — Darcy McGovern. That's correct. *The Legal Profession Act* was amended after the legal services task team had made a report. But it is, as the deputy minister just mentioned, very much in a developmental stage, that there's now an ability for the Law Society to pass bylaws that would accommodate greater use of paralegals, for example, in different fields. But it's something that they're studying right now and that we need to work with them to continue to encourage them. And I think, as the deputy mentioned, we've very much indicated that it's something that we're willing to work with them to identify areas. But we also recognize that the Law Society is, under the legislation, the lead with respect to developing what kind of areas would be appropriate.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So to summarize, it's in the hands of the Law Society right now. Are there any indications as to timelines for its progression?

**Mr. Gardner:** — I know that they've done a survey of a number of areas where people have been practising in areas that sort of look like the practice of law. They're trying to determine which areas might be exempt from the legislation. These are, sort of, historical practices. It will be a bench decision. They're still working on the categories and the regulations around it, but it could be as early as this fall.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, I know Ms. Zarzeczny provided me some of the FTE numbers, but I'm wondering if you can provide me the total FTE numbers within the ministry and whether or not there are any changes.

**Ms. Gudmundson:** — Mindy Gudmundson. In 2019-20 we had 995.3 FTEs. In '20-21 that increased by 23.5 FTEs to bring it to a total of 1,018.8 FTEs.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Had any ministry programs received a reduction in funding in this budget?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — It was a question you asked with the other ministry earlier, so it was a predictable question. I know they looked at it. They were not able to find anything, but we'll ask them to do a more thorough look to make sure that there is nothing, that there wasn't a changeup. We're not aware of anything right now.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Minister, you had mentioned in your opening remarks programming for supporting children exposed to violence. Could you provide some more information about that?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Drew Wilby. The budget includes dollars for two new children-exposed-to violence programs, so this builds on work that's already being done across the province. We have children-exposed-to-violence programs currently in North Battleford, Prince Albert, two in Saskatoon, one in Moose Jaw, one in Regina, one in La Ronge, one in Sandy Bay, and one in Buffalo Narrows.

And these programs are designed for, unfortunately . . . I mean the circumstances of a child that's exposed to violence, providing significant programming around them to hopefully further develop them so that they don't become perpetrators of violence in the future. And we know if we're going to reduce these issues of interpersonal violence, domestic violence, we've got to start with kids and we've got to start to make changes at that level. So we're excited about these two programs. Let me rephrase that. We're not excited in a sense. We wish these programs weren't available, but we're happy to have the money for them so that we can begin to address these issues.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Where will these programs be located?

**Mr. Wilby:** — So at this point in time, we don't have locations to find. We have a good sense of where that will be. Because of the community interest, you know, I don't think it would be prudent at this point to reveal the locations for that, and those discussions continue. But as soon as we do have that established, obviously we'll look to partner with those groups in that area to provide this. It is a variety of whether it be the health region or community partners that do deliver the programming in the other sectors. So when we do have that, we can definitely provide that information to you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. And is this money federal or provincial dollars?

**Mr. Wilby:** — This is provincial. The children-exposed-to-violence programs are a bit of a hybrid. Some are expensed out of the Victims' Fund. These ones will be GRF expensed, so they are coming out of the General Revenue Fund.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is there a reason why it's coming out of the GRF as opposed to the Victims' Fund?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Not really, other than the fact we see the importance on it. You know, it was a decision we made going into budget, but there was no real definitive reason for that, no.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, there's an increase in funding for the Public Complaints Commission. Can you provide some information as to what this increase is for?



**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — There is an increase of \$325,000, which will allow the Public Complaints Commission to hire some additional staff and to start to develop better methods of oversight of police services in the province. There's three aspects of the program, and there's the legislative change, as you're aware from the bill that was introduced today.

The complaints that were forwarded under the old model, which included just complaints against a specific police officer, were based on the model that had been there since before we formed the government. At the time we formed the government, the commissioner was Bob Mitchell, who stayed actually for 10 years afterwards until he retired and did, I think, a good job, and at the time he started was one of the leaders in Canada. But other provinces have grown and expanded the model.

So in recent years, very recent years, the process was not operating as well as it should. A number of the complaints were triaged and then sent back to the police forces that they came from, saying it's a personnel matter or it's an HR [human resources] matter and dealt with it there. And they would deal with the more serious things that were there.

I met with Mayor Clark and had some discussions with other officers and other municipal officials, and they felt that the program needed to be more robust, more in depth, and I agreed with them. So there will be some additional resources to deal with that.

The second part, which doesn't at first blush seem to be a specific fit for it but it is, deals with harassment of a police officer by someone else in the police force. The concern that was raised, that there was no independent agency or independent entity for an officer that had issues . . . Everybody said, oh well there'll be somebody there, there'll be this, but there never was anything that was external. So this will be a good vehicle to house those type of complaints.

So when a complaint is made, they may refer it to the public personnel secretary or somewhere else in government, or to arrange a mediator or a formal investigation if that's required. They would certainly have the capacity to determine whether an investigation needs to be done, a criminal process, or whether there is other issues that were there. So I think they're a good entity to deal with those type of complaints. So I'll be interested to see how it goes.

[19:15]

The third thing that is under this will be the role of the independent observer or the independent oversight. In recent times there's been independence to it in that the . . . [inaudible] . . . reviews were not done where a serious incident had happened. They were done by another police agency. So if an incident occurred in say, Saskatoon, they would phone Regina or they might phone the RCMP or they might phone the ministry and say, we've had a death in custody or whatever the issue is, and then somebody would be assigned to the file from there.

The problem with that is that the process to appoint somebody is not independent. It's done by themselves, so it's police picking who they want to investigate. So under the changes to the model, the request for a serious incident — and they will be obliged to

do it because a serious incident will be defined — they will have to go to the PCC [Public Complaints Commission] who in turn will say, we are assigning our own internal investigators or we're going to assign investigators from whatever police force they choose to. So they'll work to see who has capacity, who has time, who has particular competence for the type of thing that's there.

They in turn will do a news release shortly after they've been appointed and started the investigation, so that the public will know that pursuant to such-and-such an incident that happened — whether it be a death in custody or unusual use of force that the police has been involved — that there is somebody independent, maybe a retired police officer, maybe not, but somebody that's not a serving member of any force in the province will be assigned and designated as the investigating officer.

That person will work in conjunction with whoever they've appointed to do the resource work with and for them. And then at the end of the process, or possibly periodically during the process if it takes a long period of time, will do public news releases, but at the end will do an appropriate news release. It may be that because of young individuals or ongoing investigations, there are certain things that would have to be redacted, but the goal would be to release as much information as possible both at the outset and at the end of it.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And the money again, the money that's in this budget, the over \$300,000 will be to hire staff for this project?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Yes, to hire some additional staff. And also the Chair had been Brent Cotter, who is now a senator — I've talked to him on the phone a couple of times about orderly transition — who had worked under the old model. So it's time to find some new members for the commission who'd take on the new responsibilities. We look to them to provide us some direction and guidance and provide reporting to us as to how the new structure might look, how the processes might be as far as selection of . . . what the triggering events for the various processes that would need be there.

So we're in the process of doing recruiting for it right now and I'm hopeful that we will have some information to report in the very near future and would be glad to have an off-line discussion with you about it someday when you're in the Chamber.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Sounds good. Thank you, Minister. Let's talk a bit about Justice's side of dealing with the pandemic crisis that we have going on. Do you have any general comments as to what the ministry has had to do to deal with this unprecedented situation that we're in?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — In both this ministry and in the other ministry, we have had a number of people working from home. And I think it's in the 20-some per cent for each of the ministries? Yes, we'll have the official give it to you. So we've had that.

The court processes we've had to severely curtail. The courts are now dealing with, on the criminal level, are dealing with people in custody, first appearances, those kind of things. They're trying to avoid operating trials though I understand they're starting to pick up the pace. They're doing an increasing amount of video appearances, and that would be the same in both Provincial Court

as well as Queen's Bench. But a lot of the full-blown trials have been adjourned, and we'll have some significant catch-up to do. I've had some discussions with the Chief Judge and the Chief Justice and I know they're anxious to get back to work and do a catch-up blitz.

But I'll certainly let . . . I see my answer was so lengthy, the official went back and sat down — and I thought that I was doing a complete job of answering the question — or became bored and went away. Either way I'm glad she's here.

**Ms. Turner:** — Jan Turner, courts and tribunals. Why don't I start with the Court of Appeal because there is different arrangements in each court. But what I will say at the outset is the courts have been very diligent of putting the directives on the courts' websites and keeping that up to date. So it is a guide for practitioners, for legal counsel, for members of the public to find the specifics about each court at any given time.

One of the things that we've been very pleased with during this time is the operation of the Court of Appeal, and as you know, this is a court that has allowed e-filing for nine years now. And during this very unusual time they were able, for the most part, to just continue with their work. They have adopted Webex for some of their hearings. I don't want to say it was easy for them or that they have never missed a beat, but compared to counterparts across the country and other levels of court, it's been quite impressive in what they've been able to achieve.

The Court of Queen's Bench certainly had kept their doors open. All of the permanent court facilities have kept their doors open and arranged for drop-box service or emergency applications to come in the door. Certainly in Provincial Court we've continued to take fine payments. But until the start of this month we really did a lot of screening for anyone who came into the facilities and really encouraged people only to attend if they had urgent matter that they had to do in person.

So for the Court of Queen's Bench, and again the detail is all on the website, they have started a blitz this month. They started it last Monday and hearing chamber applications that had been in a bit of a backlog. So they're doing that for the next few weeks and quite diligently on that, trying to resolve as much as they can or at least find a way forward for some of those matters. As you well know, not everything can be resolved in one hearing. By July they will be in more full operations, including non-jury trials.

We're currently working with the Chief Justice of the court to determine how we will go forward with trials and whether we can do that safely for everyone come September. So it's still a work-in-progress — I'm talking jury trials — how we would do that, the kind of security we would need, and also the kinds of social distancing, cleanliness, every piece of this that would go into having these matters heard.

For the Provincial Court they have opened their doors more broadly on June 1st and that involves all of their permanent locations, including nine of their court circuits. Now as you probably recall, there are 61 court circuits in total, so we are gradually working with a plan of how we can open that up more fully. There is restrictions, as you know, of the number of people that can be in any one place at any given time, the social distancing, all of these different concerns.

It has been a project that has been worked on with the ministry, with of course each court, and with the partnership, with Crowns and Legal Aid, and with Corrections. So I'm sure there's many in this room tonight that can provide very specific details of how that's been achieved and all of the equipment, all of the staffing, all of that that goes into this.

So I'm going to stop there in case you had more specific questions.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — There is one. I'm curious on a few things. Thank you for all of that information. I know it's a . . . Well I don't know. I can't even imagine how much work this has been for so many of you and your staff, and continues to be, frankly.

I'm curious to know on the Provincial Court level, the monitoring of the backlogs that may be accumulating, what sort of work is being done to watch those and to continue to mitigate them going forward?

**Ms. Turner:** — I think my colleague Mr. Gerein would be in a better position to answer that particular question. Thank you.

**Mr. Gerein:** — Good evening. We'll see if I am in a better position to answer the question. Everyone else will be the judge I'm sure.

The Provincial Court, when it engaged in its necessary slowdown to prevent the possible spread of the virus, stayed focused on ensuring that anyone in custody would have their matters dealt with: bail hearings; if possible, sentencings; and so on. And it was a tremendous example of how everyone worked together because the technology unit made sure that video court, that audio systems were working. The correctional people made sure that individuals, rather than coming to court, were able to move within the facilities and speak to their matters. Legal Aid and the private counsel were very adept at conducting things by telephone with their clients first and then of course, over the court's line, and prosecutions did the same.

And so in terms of a backlog, from the custody side of it in provincial court where most of the custody cases at least initiate, it's fair to say that there shouldn't be much of a backlog. It varies a little bit from place to place but that determined effort has kept it under control.

What did happen though was with the non-custodial matters and the essential shuttering of the circuit points, as well as to a large degree the permanent core points as well because you can't have that many people in a location, what then happened is prosecutions made it a point to, if you will, amp up what we had started in about 2017, January of 2017, with our just resolution initiative. And so prosecutors, in the time that was open to them because they were not engaged to the same degree in court, would work even further ahead assessing files, digging in deeper, deciding does this one need to proceed or is it something that can proceed perhaps in a way other than the conventional court system, you know.

For example, again back in 2017, we initiated the Crown caution policy where rather than even sending something through alternative measures, a prosecutor could say, we have reasonable likelihood of a conviction. It is in some ways in the public interest

to proceed, but we believe the public interest can be best served by saying, this is your warning. And upon, typically, getting some assertion that, well this won't happen again; it was a mistake, and so on, then the matter goes in effect to a stay. And we monitor to see if somebody comes back because we certainly recognize if they do. The number of those is approximately double, through this process, in 2020.

Alternative measures and other things have to some degree been affected by the shutdown, but those will now pick up speed as everything comes back online. The effort, though, to assess those was also accompanied by an effort to resolve. And so prosecutors, again, with that initiative started in 2017, when in most instances we are to try to put forward a proposal to resolve matters, has been followed up. And my understanding from the various regional offices is that a number of matters in fact did get resolved through the course of the pandemic because the courts remained open.

The Provincial Court would still deal with even non-custodial matters if there was a way that it could effectively be done, because of course for some people to wait months to resolve their case when they want to take responsibility and deal with the consequences, that's not the best solution. So those move forward.

But now with everything else, we have a number of matters to be resolved that will now, in the course of things, come back before the court and be dealt with. But there's also been a concerted effort at the local level to, from prosecution's side, prioritize the different cases, recognizing the Jordan issues for delay, recognizing the severity of the case, recognizing such things as practical matters with witnesses. If you have certain communities where it is not easy or appropriate for witnesses to be leaving and then go back after court, we have to take that into account.

But again from all indications, and this is true at the Court of Queen's Bench as well as the Provincial Court, the efforts of everyone to come together and pick dates that are appropriate, move things ahead with alacrity, is what's happening.

[19:30]

So it's too soon to say what sort of numbers we're dealing with. To some degree it might not actually be possible for some time because while both CJIMS [criminal justice information management system] and EPIC [Electronic Privacy Information Center] gather all kinds of data, having the reports written or the report software written to pull things out can take time when we don't have that software yet.

I think in time we will see that there's been a lot of effort from a lot of quarters that has made significant difference. So we've been very much aware of it. The key right now is to try to prioritize and say, let's get this done and then get this done and then get this done, with everybody sort of taking their piece. Does that help?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Absolutely. There are so many pieces of what's happening right now that really the ministry has been trying to implement or your office has been trying to implement for a while now, and now it's actually in this time of crisis, it's almost working in a way that it wasn't before.

Moving forward, what sort of lessons or initiatives are you thinking you may be able to continue implementing to ensure, for example, just resolution is working more effectively than it was maybe one or two years ago?

**Mr. Gerein:** — If I may, I'm going to take a little bit of a turn in answering that. Because while we've certainly learned that yet again, as we knew before, early assessment is fundamental, while we've learned that ensuring that you have a complete file as soon as possible is fundamental, reaching out to try to resolve things in concert with defence counsel and through the use of case management hearings or pre-trial conferences is essential.

Something else that's really been demonstrated is that experience in how relationships work are fundamental to the success in a situation like this, and something that we can carry forward. So for example prosecution has, in the last two years, instituted new prosecutor orientation, something we didn't have before, a formalized gathering of new prosecutors. We talk about the prosecution standard. We talk about the role of the prosecutor. We go through some examples in that regard. We emphasize the resolution policy. We emphasize Gladue and so on.

Then what's come from that is realizing that prosecutors who have 10 or 20 or 25 years of experience in assessing files and relationships with defence counsel, relationships with the police, relationships with corrections and with the court have so much to offer. So what we started doing a while ago, it's been put on hold because of the pandemic, but having some senior counsel go out to where there is a collection of more junior counsel and work with them at a much more one-on-one basis. And at times not running cases with them but talking to them about their cases, watching them run their cases, come back, debrief about that and go through to teach about assessment. But we want to continue with that. We want to try to expand it. But we want to take that prosecutor orientation to another level and talk about assessment, have dedicated sessions on this is how this prosecutor with 30 years experience assesses a file.

And we think we'll gain two things fundamentally through that. People will learn sooner the things that others have learned in a more laborious way. But we'll also gain consistency because it's not everybody inventing the wheel themselves. But we take the best wheels and we put them together, and then the machine runs that much better and more effectively for justice.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — We were speaking in estimates earlier about the reduction in numbers for in-custody offenders, both on the remand side and the sentenced side. We've spoken with Corrections already on the sentenced portion of it. But for the remand portion of it, Mr. Gerein, and why the numbers dropped during the pandemic, the description you gave as to the work that's been done to ensure there hasn't been too much of an unsightly delay in files in Provincial Court and Queen's Bench, would you attribute the remand number reduction to a similar set of initiatives? Or do you have some thoughts as to why those numbers have been reduced at this time?

**Mr. Gerein:** — The thoughts I offer are ones that at this point we don't have numbers to substantiate. But in staying in regular and ongoing contact with the regional offices, the remand reduction initiative program and so on, some things have become apparent. Certainly at individual locations it's clear that there

were fewer people coming into custody in the first instance. And you can take that back a step or two and say, well is that because people who might have done something that would see them end in custody have said, because of the pandemic, I will not? Or is it because a place they might normally go is not open, and so they don't end up in a situation where they end up in custody? I cannot say that. I mean one can speculate, one can ponder.

The same with whether or not things are being reported. Can't say. But certainly anecdotally the indication is that we have had fewer people coming in arrested in custody to be dealt with in court over the last period of time. There are also anecdotal indications that that is shifting somewhat. So we factor that in.

We also factor in the fact that in the COVID situation, prosecutors have been aware that that is one of the considerations, and the courts themselves have recognized, particularly with regards to the tertiary ground under section 515 of the *Criminal Code*, that when you're dealing with a pandemic situation, then confidence in the administration of justice demands that one consider how that plays into whether or not someone should be held on remand. And so that factors in.

Going forward, if we look at the sentencing issue, it's fair to say that, because the courts have not been able to operate at their full capacity, there are certain matters that will have not proceeded yet that would have otherwise. And so I expect we will see a number of people over the next while who've been awaiting sentencing. As the opportunity to go through that is made available, we'll then proceed. So whether we end up seeing a bit of a sine curve or the like, we'll know soon. I'm hopeful, but we'll see how it plays out as it goes.

Certainly there have been a number of factors that have played into it, and we're trying to take what we have seen in this and say, is there anything to apply forward? Because one of the questions that remains to be seen is where COVID has been taken into account in regards to remand. Are the individuals who ended up on one path instead of another now going to end up back on that other path again? Or is it going to turn out that no, that worked out well and everything has gone on for the good? We're very anxious to see how that goes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So it's an ongoing analysis by your office to determine what can be used in the future.

**Mr. Gerein:** — Certainly analysis at the prosecutorial level in terms of data collection, numbers, analysis — that falls to others where there are the means to do so. One of the things that I think comes out of a pandemic, I think it's fair to say, is you can end up coming out of it saying hey, we should count that or can we go back and look at this or that. It's not for me to say if that's going to happen. That's not my mandate.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — The other thing that we've done, unrelated to the court system, is we tried to make it easier, more acceptable for the practice of law by the change in execution of wills, the changes that we made for execution at the land titles office as well as the changes that we made that will allow for AGMs [annual general meeting] to be done by electronic methods.

Initially when we went to the ministry and said this is the problem, we're getting an increasing number of phone calls, the

reaction was, well there's nothing prohibiting it. So we didn't think that was a very acceptable answer to give to non-profit organizations that wanted some comfort that they weren't going to get sued on it afterwards. So I suggested to the deputy minister, well you might want to write a personal letter or alternatively we could pass a regulation or do something on the emergency legislation, which we did.

And I think those things they . . . Once again pardon my humour, but the change we made for execution of documents, the change we made makes it easier for the public, make it easier for the profession to carry on as close to as much as they did before. So those things were things that we tried, to be in tune with what the requests were coming in and tried to see whether we could find good ways to deal with them.

The interesting thing that's coming out of that is, as the pandemic is ending or hopefully ending, we're now getting requests saying, well how many of these things are going to stay in place, or we like the convenience of that. So those are some discussions and consultations that will need to take place. But it's something that flowed from the pandemic and added to the general workload of the ministry.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I'm curious to know if first of all, you had mentioned the Jordan principle and how that had been one of the many considerations your office was taking during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, were there any cases who had been dismissed by the court over the past year due to the Jordan principle?

**Mr. Gerein:** — I'm afraid I can't give you data for a particular year. I can say that since Jordan was decided in the summer of 2015, we've had about a dozen criminal cases that have been stayed for delay. A couple of other traffic cases were stayed as well. In looking at those, each one had its own unique circumstances. Some related to witness issues. Some related to delays in terms of the trial couldn't proceed at this time because of external circumstances, or that time. There certainly hasn't been anything that's been systemically identified as a problem. But it's been about a dozen, and I believe there's been about as many applications that have been dismissed.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is that number staying fairly static or is it increasing?

**Mr. Gerein:** — So far it's staying fairly static.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And have any cases been flagged for it due to the pandemic at this time, or is it not enough time to be able to actually know?

**Mr. Gerein:** — The thing about that is in the end, delay applications, of course, are brought by the defence. And so to predict what will happen is something that I can't do. I think it's fair to say that the pandemic is clearly an exceptional circumstance, and the Supreme Court in Jordan recognized that exceptional circumstances typically don't apply. Whether that will be argued and what that argument will be, of course, remains to be seen.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. I have some questions about Gladue reports, in particular how many Gladue reports were prepared

over the last year? I understand that most often in Saskatchewan we do pre-sentence reports, but I want to know specifically Gladue reports.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We'll see what we have for information. As you're aware, a Gladue report is usually something that is requested by the defence counsel so it's not something that from a process point of review is controlled by the Crown.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — No, but it is monitored. I have received numbers about it in the past.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — The numbers exist.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — If nobody has it, if you could undertake to provide me that information.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We'll certainly provide it for you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I'd rather have that than if you have to kill time for 10 minutes while someone tries to find it. You can just undertake to give me the information later. That's fine.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I'll avoid time-killing and we'll . . .

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Although I'm sure your anecdotes will be wonderful . . .

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I'll spare you the anecdotes and we'll undertake to get you an answer.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. Let's move on and talk about interpersonal violence, Minister, if that's all right with you. Is any money in this budget being made available for operational funding for second-stage shelters?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Thanks for the question. Again, Drew Wilby, assistant deputy minister, community engagement. As you're likely aware, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women has committed to reviewing second-stage domestic violence shelters and taking a look in that direction. In terms of your question specifically, no, there is no money in this budget dedicated towards second-stage housing.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I wasn't aware that the minister had committed to that, so thank you for providing me that information. Is there a timeline on that review?

[19:45]

**Mr. Wilby:** — I don't have that, and I would encourage you to direct those to the Status of Women's office. I'll let them know that you're interested in that, or whoever is posing questions at that estimates appearance. But they'll definitely be prepared to answer those questions.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I don't think they get estimates, so I appreciate the information that you are able to provide at this time in any event.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We'll certainly be able to get you the information as to where the timeline is. A lot of the discussion that took place was with the Ministry of Social Services that's

responsible for Sask Housing. And that's where a lot of the potential was, either in existing or new add-ons to Sask Housing, which may or may not be appropriate in all cases. But there was certainly some availability and that was part of the option they were looking at. So I know there's discussions that have taken place.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I know the folks that work in that area appreciate the work that Social Services is doing with respect to the potential housing portion of it. But very, very important to second-stage shelters is also the operational funding for the wraparound supports that need to be embedded in that housing. So just a plug for that as well. I understand that you're not looking at it, but . . .

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Absolutely. The point you make is that it's more than just providing the housing. It's part of the longer term plan so that the individual can move past that portion and get to the point where their life is unencumbered by that. So your point is well taken.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Could you provide an update on what's happening with Clare's Law?

**Mr. McGovern:** — Darcy McGovern. So over the past year since the passage of Clare's Law, we've been working in close concert with the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police and with PATHS [Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan] as the representatives from the transition community to develop two things sequential to the legislation itself.

The first being the regulations necessary under the Act to set the process moving. The second and more important is the protocol. And so under the regulations what's provided for is that the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police — working with PATHS, working with the Ministry of Justice and victim services — can develop a protocol through which information can be requested under the Clare's Law right-to-ask, and through which information can be provided, risk information, to either people who have made that request or, under the right-to-know, any individual who has been identified who may be at risk of interpersonal violence from someone.

And so that's a process that's been ongoing, and I'm pleased to say that we moved to a training stage in February-March which we were able to complete with the police in north and south sessions, with the assistance again of PATHS, to provide for a train-the-trainer model to help the police to develop some expertise with respect to the process.

We were then interrupted by COVID to a degree in terms of moving forward with implementation, but we have been able to, through Webex and Zoom, to continue our process with the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police and PATHS. We've now been able to have our first meeting with the multi-sector review committee, which is the body from different sectors that would provide advice to the police with respect to a particular request.

And we're looking at being able to implement that legislation by the end of this month. And so we're looking at going into a process where we're able to start receiving applications for

request and, after a dedicated effort by quite a few people over a period of time, to start helping out people who we think can really use that assistance.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So the plan is that this legislation will be essentially operational by the end of this month?

**Mr. McGovern:** — On the 29th it's targeted for proclamation, and so that would be Monday the 29th at the end of the month. And we're obviously going to be rolling out some of the communications for that shortly to ensure that people are aware that we're in a position to do that. And as I said, we're very much in the process of . . . had our first meetings with the group that will be moving forward as the review committee.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't thank people like Jo-Anne Dusel and Crystal Giesbrecht and, on behalf of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police, Evan Bray for, you know, their commitment through the COVID process to make progress on this and allow us to hopefully be in a position where we can — I shouldn't say hopefully — where we will be in a position on the 29th to take this forward.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And that will be accessible province-wide or just to specific detachments?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — It may come in piecemeal as they work at getting up to speed. I want to add something on this. We've had this discussion before and we're pleased that it's going ahead and we want it to do what it's supposed to. We've been somewhat criticized before with those saying, well it's not a silver bullet. And it's not. What it is, is it's a tool that's available to the police and to families and possibly a member that's a potential victim, and if it works to avoid a bad outcome for even a small handful of people in a year, it's worthwhile to have done it.

I'm pleased at the police forces that have become engaged, but we still have some work to do with train-the-trainer. The goal is to have it in place by the end of the month. There certainly will be some ongoing issues, and you and I are going to have a discussion about members of the PCC and we can add this to the list.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I look forward to it. And I wasn't even going to criticize you on it this time, Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — It wasn't you. It was the reporters that you baited.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I baited. Could you talk a bit about how the privacy issues are going to be addressed with respect to this legislation before you take off?

**Mr. McGovern:** — Sure. I'm glad to have the opportunity. One of the things that we've had to make clear from the very start with respect to this project is that at no time is personal information going to be disclosed to third parties throughout this process. So the process that's been developed . . . And the protocol is very clear about this. The protocol's a public document. It's on our website. It's on the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police website.

And it makes it very clear that when an individual comes in and

requests information with respect to an intimate partner, that that information then is de-identified before it would ever go to the review committee. So that the information that the police receive in looking at that to try and determine what the past history of Darcy McGovern might be, before they request the committee's advice on what the appropriate next step would be, the name of that individual is taken out of the equation and the only information that's provided to the review committee is the actual circumstances and background that they've been able to determine.

Once the committee then reaches a conclusion based on their expertise as to whether or not the individual's at high risk, medium risk, or low risk, for example, that information is conveyed back to the originating police service who only then would match that back up with the individual who made the original request. So at no time does the member of the review committee know who made the request and at no time does the review committee have any personal information about the individual who the request is made.

And then when there is a disclosure to that individual, it is risk information disclosure. So sometimes people ask whether or not is the entire file going to be turned over. Never. So what happens is the individual's advised whether they're at high risk, low risk, medium risk. There's templates for that.

And what's really important at that stage is to link those individuals up with services so that they can make a plan as to what their next steps will be. And so part of what the committee will do is to ensure that when they receive this information that they will receive it in a way that they'll immediately have victim services available to them. Now I mean obviously if an individual says they don't want it, that's a different circumstance. But what we want to ensure is that when someone gets information that might be startling with respect to their intimate partner, that they're in an environment where they can immediately get assistance in that regard.

Now we have had a little bit of an adjustment that occurred during that two-month delay period that I talked about in which the protocol was amended to accommodate non-contact circumstances. So what previously had been, make sure you're on a one-on-one meeting with an individual in a safe environment had to be rethought a little bit in the COVID environment to be a one-on-one contact through a secure method, as opposed to person to person.

So that did take a little adjustment, but the privacy issues, we've dealt with them by simply removing any disclosure of personal information. And so by doing that, we feel that we're still able to identify the risk information. We're able to have the individual linked up with victim services and with a safety plan, but we don't need to disclose personal information.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now what sort of information is provided to the review committee? Is it simply convictions or is there other information that they receive as well when they're making their decision?

**Mr. McGovern:** — Under the protocol the way it's been written, to use an example, the funnel coming into the review committee in terms of what information they get is cast as broad as possible.

And so it's recognized in that community that the incidents of charging might be much less than the incidents of contact. So you might have 10 calls by an individual with respect to a potential disturbance before you ever have a charge.

And it was very much recognized that that's an important step to be able to say, you know, if there are police contacts, albeit they didn't result in charges but they might lead you to believe that in fact the person does have a heightened risk, that's important information for them to have. It's taken for what it is. It's not the result of a judicial process, but it is an indicator that there has been previous contact in that regard.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. Is there any plan to continue on the work that had begun with the domestic violence death review panel?

**Mr. Wilby:** — I won't make the same mistake. I'll bring my binder with me this time.

Obviously you know, we appreciate the work of the domestic violence death review panel. We released a response. The government released a response to that last year and outlining the recommendations that were there and part of the response to that. We continue through that work and looking at what that is.

In terms of the future state of that, obviously we consider that and where that may go at this point. You know, we're looking at what other jurisdictions have done and just considering our options going forward on that front.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What particular recommendations are being addressed this budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Did you say aren't being addressed?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Are being addressed.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Are being addressed this budget? I think the big one, although it was money that was used from the end of last year's budget, some funds that we had was the public awareness campaign. And we'd begun the work on the development of that. And the ministries of Corrections and Policing and Justice have put in \$150,000 into that for just at the end of last fiscal and going into this year. And of course that work continues. The Status of Women office put in \$50,000 into that as well.

We've partnered with Phoenix Group through a competitive RFP process and we're hopeful, you know, that we will start to see some of the creative come out of that soon. Obviously, you know, we're butting up against some important timelines in the fall and so we're looking for by the end of the calendar year, hopefully, to release the campaign in those pieces. But that work is ongoing.

In addition to that, there's another 290,000 per year in support of our response to the DVDR [domestic violence death review], bringing the total new investment in programs and services and intervention to \$747,000 per year. Some of that work that I had talked about earlier in terms of the crisis outreach and the children exposed to violence, of course, has a direct impact into this area and into the recommendations that were put forward by the domestic violence death review committee.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. So just so that I make sure that I got it, the tender that was put out for the public awareness campaign, that was granted to Phoenix Group?

**Mr. Wilby:** — That's correct.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — With the plan to have that campaign roll out at the end of this calendar year?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Yes, we would like to have the campaign roll out as soon as possible. Obviously they're doing their work. They were able to continue to do quite a bit through COVID, which was good for us, unfortunate for other partners like some of their main folks like the Riders and such, but it allowed them to put some attention into our campaign.

[20:00]

We don't have a specific timeline on that and of course we're very conscious of, you know, the stipulations around the writ period and the such and how we can best do that. So we want to get it out as soon as possible, but we will of course be cognizant of all those rules and regulations.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What about funding for a provincial toll-free number? It's one of the recommendations in the report.

**Mr. Wilby:** — We continue work on that. We've looked at working with 811 over the course of the pandemic and how can they best, you know, take some of those calls that may be coming in, in particular for females largely that are in need of an emergency service and how can they safely do that. And we looked at other organizations as well and where that is.

I would say it's safe to say we're still in exploration phase with that and where that may go. It is definitely a consideration of ours going forward though, and how best to address that piece. I think what's important on that is not reinventing the wheel but looking at what services are available and how can we maybe piggyback on that or refine those services to address some of those needs.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thanks. And just to be clear, there is no funding for a dedicated provincial toll-free number in this budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Not in this budget. I mean, you will be aware of course of the listen line, which is a little bit different than this, but we do have the listen line ongoing. But there is no dedicated funding as part of this budget, but the work does continue on what that may look like.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. I feel like I've asked this every year for the past couple of years, but it's still an issue that needs to be discussed. With the cancellation of STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], there's been a challenge to shelters in helping their clients reach them in a time of need. How is the ministry addressing this fallout?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I'll let Mr. Wilby answer the question as to how transportation has been provided, and there's certainly been money set aside for people that need to leave an unacceptable situation. I don't know how many people used STC before the service was cancelled, but over the last number of years, routes were cancelled every year, so there was less and less

service that was available.

So the ultimate cancellation I don't think made that big a difference because it was the areas in the remote North that probably were the ones where there was people needing to exit a bad situation, and those were the ones where the routes had been cancelled under previous governments over the last number of years or there was more and more infrequent travel. So if somebody was in a bad situation on Thursday and they found out the bus only came once a week or not for four or five days later, it was not a good situation.

And I know it's a politically sensitive issue, so I'll let Mr. Wilby talk about the alternatives that are there.

**Mr. Wilby:** — I appreciate that, Minister, and thank you for the question. There are a few options. Obviously if someone is in desperate need, we've reached out to the transition homes to figure out a best way to get them there. We've also looked at coordination of services in the way that, say, someone in Regina needs a service but maybe there is potentially not a spot in Regina which, I mean, isn't often the case. How do we get them to Moose Jaw or somewhere else thereabouts, especially during COVID? I mean, that was a key consideration. Our message to the transition houses was basically look, if someone needs the service, let's figure it out. We'll figure it out as a partnership and we'll address that together. You know, we obviously don't want to see somebody that's in need of fleeing a violent situation run into that.

We do have the northern transportation and support initiative which provides \$65,950 annually for direct delivery of administration, and that's within the NAD [northern administration district] of course, and delivering that service up there to move people via taxi or other means if they need to move from a remote location in northern Saskatchewan to somewhere where that service is available.

I can give you a few numbers if you'd like. In 2018-19 — and of course those are our most recent statistics; we're still pulling together '19-20 — reported that 32 adults and 22 children were provided emergency services with the northern transportation and support initiative. So it is directly helping those individuals that need it most, especially in northern Saskatchewan. But as I say, there are mechanisms around the province as well if the requirement is there.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is it up to each individual shelter to seek this money from the ministry, or is it up to the individuals who need this money to request it?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Our work right now has been with the shelters themselves and using them as the coordinating agencies of course. They are obviously incredible at what they do and the work that they do and they have, you know, the stipulations and protocols around who that may be that requires it. So our program managers within community safety and well-being, and in particular our interpersonal violence and abuse unit have all reached out to those shelters and had that conversation with them.

Also as part of the budget, we were able to provide all of our CBOs a lift. So across the division that I have which is largely, you know, the CBO sector for the ministry, there's about a

\$600,000-plus lift to the CBOs, which of course the transition houses themselves are a direct benefit as well from that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. And that funding is ongoing?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Correct. Yes. That'll be an annualized funding.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. And, Minister, I just want to respond to what you had said before Mr. Wilby had spoken and the need or the perceived lack of need of the STC bus. And I encourage you to look at the survey on public transportation issues for survivors of intimate partner violence in Saskatchewan that PATHS created in July 2018. And I'm sure your ministry is not unaware of this particular study.

And a point for the record, just read in a few of the responses at the end where one of the questions was, "Can you estimate how many women (families) that your agency has heard from that have been impacted by the loss of the bus?" And some of the quotes that they used in their report include, "at the minimum, 100. I cannot even fathom what are the numbers beyond the scope of our shelter." Another quote, "During the shifts I was on, I can say in the last six months there's probably been about three to five per month." Another quote, "at least a couple per week." And another quote, "estimated four per two weeks."

So still an important issue. I'm happy to hear that the ministry, despite not seeing the importance of STC to these shelters, are still providing funding for individuals who are still struggling to get to places of safety in times of need.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I think we might agree to disagree on the issues around STC, but I think what we can agree on is the need to ensure that somebody who needs to get out of a bad situation is given an opportunity to find alternate methods of transportation out, and I think that's what the ministry has done through the program. I'll leave the debate on STC to those that have it in their portfolios. But I think when somebody is in a bad situation, needs to leave, I'm glad they're able to reach out to the shelters who have been able to provide some . . . and hopefully that can continue on. That should be maybe more immediate, or more direct, where they need to go to. So anyway, thank you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now, Minister, I believe there was a slight increase to shelter funding this budget. Could you provide some information?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Yes, that's correct. As part of the budget, obviously they received that CBO lift that was there as part of the rest of the CBO sector as well. So that directly impacted each of the 12 provincially funded transition houses. In '20-21 we'll provide 6.9 million in funding for the 12 transition house facilities throughout the province.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And what is that percentage of an increase?

**Mr. Wilby:** — It's about 3 per cent on their salary budget and 1 per cent on their operating. Of course as we know their salary is their big issue, is putting those salary dollars forward.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mmm hmm. Thank you for that. I know that shelters, while happy to see the increase, are still very concerned with staff morale and high rates of turnover due to years of



reduced increases. Are there any plans for new shelter spaces or additional beds this budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Our focus at present, and as we've talked about with the children-exposed-to-violence program and of course the crisis workers, is to look at . . . We sort of look at three sides. There's the prevention, there's the intervention, and then there's the, you know, the back-end piece. On the corrections side we call it suppression.

In this area, that's not really where it's at. It's more sort of as emergency services. And so we're hopeful that by investing on the prevention, intervention side that, you know, the need for shelters eventually . . . If I could be here in 10 years, I would tell you no, it's gone down significantly. I'm not sure if that's a reality, but that's the hope, of course. So in this budget for a new build or the such, there isn't a new build contained. There is the lift that I've talked about, and then as well the crisis counselling services that we've increased there too. So the 290,000 that's gone to, directly associated with the IPV [intimate partner violence] programs.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Minister, I want to ask a few questions about the Supreme Court carbon tax case. In particular I understand that that work has been, or a portion of that work, has now been contracted to a private law firm?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — That's correct. It's being done jointly by solicitors in house as well as lawyers at MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — MLT [MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman]?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — MLT Akins, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Oh yes, MLT Akins. How much money has been paid to MLT Akins for that work so far?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I don't know what's actually been paid. The commitment is that their fees will not exceed 500,000.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Have any invoices been received by the ministry to date?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We'll have that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — You're undertaking to provide that to me?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Oh wait, she's here.

**Ms. Zarzeczny:** — Yes, invoices have been provided. I can't speak to them in detail because of solicitor-client privilege, but I can tell you that invoices have been received and paid.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — You could provide us with the amount of the invoice though, I'm sure. Correct?

**Ms. Zarzeczny:** — We can do that, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Ms. Zarzeczny:** — Now?

**Ms. Sarauer:** — If you have it, thank you. That would be . . .

**Ms. Zarzeczny:** — The total is approximately \$500,000.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. And that's before it's actually gone to Ottawa?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — They've billed for preparation. I don't know what's been paid, but the aggregate of their bill is not to exceed 500,000. We've had discussions to make sure that it doesn't.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So they are being paid \$500,000 but not any more than \$500,000?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — That's correct. The agreement was it would not exceed \$500,000. I'm not concerned whether we pay them now, before, during, whatever else. And there would be some disbursements on top of that, some travel expenses and taxes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. So in addition, they'll be paid for travel expenses and disbursements.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Correct.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is that for this budget or total for this application?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Total.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We are crossing more than one budget year and we made a decision. We felt it was worthwhile to have another set of eyes on it. They approached us with some different arguments. We met with council in house and decided it was something of significant importance to the province. We wanted to make sure that we had the best options being put forward so we agreed to do that.

We had them review as part of that and look at the applications that were taking place in other jurisdictions because there was similar applications. That was an included function, that whatever work . . . that they weren't formally part of an intervener status, but they were reviewing the documents that were taking place and being filed elsewhere. Because I think it changes the arguments that they may want to put forward at the Supreme Court, or at least certainly other questions that might be posed by members of the bench.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. Oh, Minister, I have a very specific question about something in a Public Accounts volume 2 and I'm hopeful you'll have an answer for me, but if not, you can always undertake to providing me with an answer.

But in Public Account volume 2 for 2018-2019, on the portion that talks about Justice expenses, there is a "BMO [Bank of Montreal] purchase cards — Justice," \$4.6 million. And there's

no further detail as to what that is. So if the ministry could provide some further information as to what that is, that would be great.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I have an official.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Excellent.

**Mr. Tulloch:** — Hi, it's Dave Tulloch, ADM of corporate services. Yes, in government we use the purchase card system and the Bank of Montreal is the vendor through which we go through that. So if you see that all across government, we all go through the BMO and that's how that's paid. Ultimately it gets allocated into the various codes inside the ministry.

[20:15]

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So when I see \$4.6 million in the public accounts, it doesn't mean that it isn't divvied up and accounted for?

**Mr. Tulloch:** — Ultimately it does get reallocated across the rest because it gets . . . if we need some pens and paper in my program, we go through that and we pay it through that. Ultimately it gets laid into the system, but by the time it gets accounted for in the public accounts, it hasn't been allocated at that point.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, thank you. I appreciate that answer. I have a couple questions about the Aboriginal court worker program.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I have Jan Turner to answer those.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Now I am of the understanding that there is a dedicated person in charge of the Aboriginal court worker program. I could be wrong, but if you could provide me some information as to how many Aboriginal court workers do we have at this time?

**Ms. Turner:** — To answer this question, the Aboriginal court worker program's been in court services now for the last two years. We have a dedicated director and she has support staff. I think you're aware that the program works with a number of grants that are provided to carrier agencies across the province who in turn then hire the court workers. I should know this right off, but there's 18 community Aboriginal court workers. Fifteen of those do criminal work and three of them do the family work, and you may be familiar with the roles they play in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Is there any increase to that budget this budget?

**Ms. Turner:** — The program did receive an increase this year of approximately \$36,000, and it did so in exactly the same way that my colleague Mr. Wilby has just spoken about. So all of the agencies received 3 per cent on salaries and 1 per cent on operating.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. So no additional court workers, but each court worker received an increase in their salary?

**Ms. Turner:** — That's correct. Now we are in the process of two

things. We are looking at some reallocation of funding to try to increase the court work service across the province. And we're also initiating a consultation this summer with all the key partners and stakeholders as to really the design and the delivery of the program and how we can better position Aboriginal court workers. This is a very well-known, very valuable program across the province, and we want to ensure that it is playing the very best role it can within both the criminal and family justice systems.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you. You're absolutely right. It is very well known and very, very valuable. And I think the cut that happened a few years ago and the reduction in the court workers is still being lamented by members of the bar and members of the judiciary to this day. And it's also I see in many recommendations, including the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls report, as well as others.

If the ministry's currently looking at potentially finding money for new positions, where would that money be reallocated from?

**Ms. Turner:** — Again that's all things under consideration. I think the conversations this summer, the stakeholders will also be very interested — given the times that we have just gone through — how court worker services are delivered now or have been, how they're currently being delivered, and how we would see that in the future and what role they could play as we're gradually changing our systems a bit. So it will be a very interesting conversation.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you so much. Minister, I'd like to ask you a few questions about sexual assault support services. Could you speak to any change in that funding this budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Drew Wilby. So as I highlighted earlier, there's the crisis worker in the west central region, which will have some impact into this area. And that's a \$90,000 new expenditure that's there. We are providing in budget '20-21, 1.6 million to service providers across the province to deliver direct support to victims of sexual violence. Of course I know you're very familiar with the variety of services that they provide. And then I would also highlight that since '17-18, there's been an almost 35 per cent increase in investment in services for victims of sexual violence across the province, knowing that we can always do more.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay. What is the increase this budget as opposed to last year's budget?

**Mr. Wilby:** — In terms of this budget, it would be that \$90,000 that would be coupled within the interpersonal violence and abuse grouping.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So there is no further increase in funding than that?

**Mr. Wilby:** — They would also benefit from the CBO lift as well. So that 4 per cent would be there additionally with all those CBO partners. So safe to say, across both ministries.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay, okay. I was wondering why one sector would receive it and not the other. So all of the CBOs are receiving that lift?

**Mr. Wilby:** — Correct, yes.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Okay.

**Mr. Wilby:** — Sorry for that.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — No, that's okay. Last budget there was a \$40,000 reduction in the Battlefords & Area Sexual Assault Centre, which was money that I understood was being reallocated to provide services in Meadow Lake. What's happened with that?

**Mr. Wilby:** — That's correct. We issued an RFP on that project. I'll just be honest, the responses were not great. And so we talked to Prince Albert mobile crisis and they were very willing to take that on for the time being. So they are providing that service in the Meadow Lake region. So it had moved from Battlefords because they wanted to focus on the Battlefords region, and now P.A. mobile crisis is providing that. And we'll continue to reassess that as we go forward.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — That response doesn't particularly surprise me. I think North Battleford, when they could no longer do that service, it was a funding challenge. And it doesn't surprise me that there was a challenge in trying to find someone who could do that for that amount of money. What work is being done to address the recommendations in the Saskatchewan sexual violence action plan that SASS [Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan] has presented?

**Mr. Wilby:** — I apologize for the delay. Of course they released the action plan on basically the same day that we released our interpersonal violence and abuse response to the domestic violence death review last year. And the way that we look at that report is it responds to a variety of pieces. It responds to domestic violence, and also there's some pieces there from sexual violence as well in terms of the response that's to both of those issues.

Of course, you know, we continue to work with SASS and look into what their recently released research report, as well, has to say. There are over 22 actions in that sexual assault action plan, and six, of course, were directly connected to the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections and Policing.

You know, I think important to that is the public awareness piece that they highlight, as I talked about earlier with the domestic violence piece. And as we look at interpersonal violence as sort of that overarching umbrella, that public awareness campaign will, you know, hopefully address issues on both sides.

We do know that, you know, there are many factors that would create someone to commit an act of violence, whether it be sexual violence, domestic violence, or others. There's some similarities; there's some very distinct differences. But we're hopeful with the public awareness campaign, as it speaks to in particular men and boys, that it will help to change some of those behaviours and attitudes that they may be endorsing.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — So just so I fully understand, you're hoping that the public awareness campaign that was granted to the Phoenix Group as a result of the domestic violence death review panel recommendations will also address the recommendations around public awareness in the SASS report?

**Mr. Wilby:** — We're hoping that it will help to begin to change that culture of violence that exists. You know, obviously it's specifically focused on domestic violence, but I think it would be remiss if we missed the opportunity to also potentially broaden that out to other areas as well.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — What specific actions in the SASS report are the ministry planning to implement this year?

**Mr. Wilby:** — At this point we continue to review that report. I don't have a specific in terms of what actions will be taken, but what I can do is go back to our officials and provide that to you.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Will the ministry commit to endorsing this report as a provincial plan?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — We receive recommendations from a variety of groups. We're working through what things can and cannot be done, but to specifically say we would endorse a report done by a third party, I think what we would rather do is develop a formal response and an action plan of the government that may span across the services that are provided not just by this ministry but by a variety of others and have something that's more comprehensive and deals with a variety of other issues at the same time. So we'll certainly work to that end.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — And does the ministry plan on providing a formal response to this?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I think we've indicated that the report that we issued the same day that their report was issued is largely a response to that. And I think in fairness we need to continue to work and continue to develop plans and strategies as we go forward.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — That report came out, as you had indicated, the same day this report came out, so it couldn't necessarily respond to a report that just came out.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I think in fairness to the officials, they knew what was being developed. They were having discussions in consultation with the members of SASS, so were trying to anticipate what things might be necessary and trying to work out as things were going. In the same way that a lot of the things that were raised in MMIW [missing and murdered Indigenous women] report were things that were under way some years before the process with developing that report went on for a number of years.

But the work that was done by police officers such as Dale McFee and Clive Weighill as far as sensitizing officers, as far as the need for a national . . . those were all things that were done long before the MMIW report. And I think the same thing can be said here. It doesn't mean to say that we're done or that we've got a cap on it. I think it's very much a work in progress.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I hate that we always have to have this discussion, Minister, and I hope one day we don't have to. But again I want to reiterate the importance of not conflating both domestic violence and sexual assault as requiring the same response. There are some overlaps, and we've had this discussion many times, but there are some significant differences that are required for its ability to be addressed. And it's important in my

mind and in the mind of many stakeholders that it be given the level of attention it needs. And in doing so, have a separate and independent formal response by this ministry would be a positive step forward in that work.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I think that's a discussion we can have. I think we certainly agree to the extent that, even though there is some significant overlap, I don't think either you or I are well served by debating what the overlap is. I think we can agree that there has to be some separation in how the responses are given and how the issues are addressed. You know, I've talked about it being a lot of the same service providers and that. But you're right. There are certainly unique and very separate issues, and we'll have some further discussion about it. So thank you for that valid point.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — I get one more question, Minister. In particular, action 14 recommends exploring some methods to expand the sexual assault nurse examiner training to nurses working in urban, rural, and remote emergency health facilities. Is the ministry looking at that?

[20:30]

**Mr. Wilby:** — Speaking a little bit out of jurisdiction here, but I do understand that the Ministry of Health, Advanced Education, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority are developing a sexual assault examination training program for providers, and those are in remote and northern communities. And again I'd be remiss if I didn't comment on the Philly model — and I apologize for missing it earlier — but the Philadelphia Model that we've implemented, or are looking to pilot with SASS and the Regina Police Service. And that work continues, of course. That's the file review, which is important work associated with this as well.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Yes, it was on my list of questions to ask if I would have had time, and I didn't. But thank you so much for those answers. And if I have two seconds, I just want to thank again Minister, for your answers to my questions today, as well as your DM [deputy minister] and all of the officials for being here this evening and answering all of my questions very well.

And I would be remiss in not commending all of you for the work you've done in this crazy time. It's been a lot of stress trying to manage life and personal lives with professional lives and keeping everyone safe. And keeping things moving in this time has been difficult. And particular thanks as well, Minister, to your staff that work in your office for being very quick and to respond to the inquiries that I sent their way in a very difficult time to be working. And that was very much appreciated. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you. Mr. Chair, I would make some similar comments thanking the staff that are here, the staff in the ministry. They're well spaced out, I see. And in particular to the people that work in my office, Allan, Molly, and Clinton. They're just superb people, incredibly committed, and want to do what's absolutely right.

So, Mr. Chair, to you and to the committee members, thank you for being here. Ms. Sarauer, thank you for the respectful manner in which you've conducted yourself. So thank you for that. And to the staff that are here tonight from Hansard, from Legislative

Assembly Services, building services, and broadcast services, I want to thank them for working in the evening and the challenges that they've faced over the last number of weeks as we've gone through the pandemic. And hopefully we can soon see it in the rear-view mirror. I don't think that's likely, but I'm hoping that it's not too far down the road. Mr. Chair, thank you to you and to Stacey. So thank you very much.

**The Chair:** — I want to add my thanks to all the officials that are here; both ministers; the opposition member, Ms. Sarauer, for respectful dialogue that went on today. It was very nice to chair over. I just want to add my thanks to both Hansard staff and the building staff that are here.

We need to clean up after ourselves before we go, so make sure you take any water bottles and papers and stuff with you when you leave, because we have to now in this time of COVID. So with that, I would ask a member to move for adjournment.

**Ms. Ross:** — So moved.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Ross has moved to adjourn. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. This committee stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

[The committee adjourned at 20:33.]