



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
Third Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Families and Communities

Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General  
Consideration of Main Estimates

Tuesday, April 4, 2017  
3:30 p.m.

Transcript No. 29-3-2

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**  
**The 29th Legislature**  
**Third Session**

**Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (ND), Chair  
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (W), Deputy Chair

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)  
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (ND)  
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (PC)\*  
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (ND)  
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (ND)  
Jansen, Sandra, Calgary-North West (ND)  
Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (ND)  
McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (ND)  
Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (ND)  
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (W)  
Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)  
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (ND)  
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)  
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (W)

\* substitution for Dave Rodney

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## **Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

### **Participants**

Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General

Hon. Kathleen T. Ganley, Minister

Philip Bryden, QC, Deputy Minister

Wayne Reddon, Executive Director, Adult Centre Operations



3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

[Ms Goehring in the chair]

**Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General  
Consideration of Main Estimates**

**The Chair:** I'd like to call the meeting to order and welcome everyone. The committee is continuing its consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018.

I'd ask that we go around the table and have all MLAs introduce themselves for the record. Minister, please introduce the officials that are joining you at the table. I'm Nicole Goehring, MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs and the chair of this committee. We'll continue, starting on my right, with our deputy chair.

**Mr. Smith:** Mark Smith, Drayton Valley-Devon.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Angela Pitt, Airdrie.

**Mr. Yao:** Tany Yao, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

**Mr. Ellis:** Mike Ellis, Calgary-West.

**Ms Ganley:** I'm Kathleen Ganley, MLA for Calgary-Buffalo and Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. I am also joined here at the table by Philip Bryden, our deputy minister and – why am I blanking? – Gerald Lamoureux and Brad Wells.

**Mr. Hinkley:** Bruce Hinkley, MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

**Mr. Horne:** Good afternoon. Trevor Horne, MLA for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

**Drever:** Hello. Deborah Drever, MLA for Calgary-Bow.

**Mr. Shepherd:** David Shepherd, MLA for Edmonton-Centre.

**Ms Jansen:** Sandra Jansen, Calgary-North West.

**Ms McKittrick:** Annie McKittrick, Sherwood Park.

**Ms Luff:** Robyn Luff, Calgary-East.

**Ms Miller:** Good afternoon. Barb Miller, MLA, Red Deer-South.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'd like to note the following substitution for the record: Mr. Ellis for Mr. Rodney.

Please note that the microphones are being operated by *Hansard*, and the committee proceedings are being audio- and video streamed live. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of this meeting.

A total of six hours has been scheduled for consideration of the estimates for the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General. For the record, I would note that the Standing Committee on Families and Communities has already completed three hours of debate in this respect.

As we enter our fourth hour of debate, I will remind everyone that the speaking rotation for these meetings is provided for in Standing Order 59.01(6), and we are now at the point in the rotation where speaking times are limited to a maximum of five minutes. Members have the option of combining their speaking time with the minister for a maximum of 10 minutes. Please remember to advise the chair at the beginning of your rotation if you wish to combine your time with the minister.

Discussion should flow through the chair at all times regardless of whether or not speaking time is combined. The speaking rotation is set out in the standing orders, and members wishing to participate must be present during the appropriate portion of the meeting. If members have any questions regarding speaking times or the rotation, please feel free to send a note or speak directly with either myself or the committee clerk about this process.

With the concurrence of the committee I will call a five-minute break near the midpoint of the meeting; however, the three-hour clock will continue to run. Does anyone oppose having the break? Perfect. Seeing none, we will have the five-minute break midway through the rotation.

Committee members, ministers, and other members who are not committee members may participate. A committee member or an official substitute for a committee member may introduce an amendment, which must be in writing and approved by Parliamentary Counsel prior to the meeting. Twenty copies of amendments, including the original, must be provided at the meeting for committee members and staff.

Ministry officials may be present and at the direction of the minister may address the committee. Ministry officials seated in the gallery, if called upon by the minister, have access to the microphones in the gallery. Ministry officials are reminded to introduce themselves prior to responding to a question. Members' staff may be present and seated along the committee room wall. Space permitting, opposition caucus staff may sit at the table; however, members have priority for seating at the table at all times.

If debate is exhausted prior to the six hours, the ministry's estimates are deemed to have been considered for the time allotted in the schedule, and we will adjourn.

Pages are available to make deliveries of notes or other materials between staff in the gallery and the table.

The vote on estimates is deferred until consideration of all ministry estimates has concluded and will occur in Committee of Supply on April 19, 2017.

When we adjourned on April 3, 2017, we were three and a half minutes into the exchange between Mr. Ellis and the minister. I will now invite Mr. Ellis or other members from the third-party opposition to complete the remaining time in the rotation. You have six and a half minutes.

**Mr. Ellis:** Great. Thank you, Chair. Minister, thank you so much again for being here today. Staff, thank you as well for being here today. When last we spoke, at 10 p.m. last night, I was about to talk a little bit about courthouses and specifically Sherwood Park. I guess, first of all, Minister, thank you for, I think, providing the funding for the Red Deer courthouse. Thank you so much. I know, certainly, as a visitor to Red Deer and from what I've heard from people in the area that it certainly is something that's been desperately needed.

Sherwood Park has never had a courthouse, and my understanding, although I've never been there, is that there is something that's existing in a strip mall. At one time it was number one on the list of next to be built. Can you maybe let us know where it is now on the list, and where it is?

**Ms Ganley:** I think that in the process of constantly re-evaluating priorities, it became clear that, certainly, Red Deer had an enormous need. You know, there is need for facilities of various types all across the province. I think on further assessment it was determined by the department that the rooms in that courthouse as they exist were not being particularly well used. There was a lot of continued ability, with some fairly minor renovations, to be able to utilize that

space to its fullest extent, so that was no longer at the top of our priority list.

In terms of where it's wound up on the list, I'm not entirely sure, but I do know that ultimately it wasn't considered to be as high a priority, and I did meet with the municipal officials to let them know that that was the case.

**Mr. Ellis:** Minister, I'm not trying to say that there is a list, but is it still deemed, you know, a priority at this time for the government, or is it that there are obviously other crises that we're dealing with at this time that have taken more of a precedence?

**Ms Ganley:** I think there are some other things that have taken precedence over that. There are a number of places, obviously, that require court infrastructure. We do have in our infrastructure funding about \$70 million for upgrades to existing court facilities because some of them are quite old and a little bit dated, and there are some occupational health and safety concerns in some of those facilities. Yeah, I think it's just a matter of prioritizing it amongst other priorities.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. Well, thank you very much.

Minister, if we could maybe look at key strategy 1.5 on page 100. It has to do with family justice. It refers to reforming the family justice system. I guess, what are you proposing in regard to reform of the system?

**Ms Ganley:** There are a number of things that have happened already. A lot of them have to do with streamlining forms to ensure that they're very similar between courts. Currently it's the case that depending on the matter, sometimes the Court of Queen's Bench has jurisdiction or sometimes the Provincial Court has jurisdiction, and that can be a little bit confusing for people. Certainly, one of the things that's ongoing is access to an intake counsellor, who can sort of explain to people what's going on and where they're best positioned. You know, another piece is obviously going to be that call, click, or come in so people have access to that information. Ultimately, going forward, there are a number of things we can move on.

The federal government is also looking at the possibility of what's called a unified family court. What that would do is that it would create a court, and it would have to have the powers of Court of Queen's Bench – like, it would have to be a section 96 court in that way, but it would probably take some judges from our court, hopefully, as well – and then that would have full jurisdiction, so all matters would go through there. I think, you know, that's one possibility, but we do have to wait for them to move on that possibility.

I think in the interim, you know, we'll continue to move forward on ensuring that people have access to information and that we're in particular highlighting for people that there a lot of other, alternative resolution tracks that don't necessarily involve going to court because that isn't usually the best place for families.

**Mr. Ellis:** Agreed. Do we have any timelines, or is it just ongoing?

**Ms Ganley:** In terms of a couple of the things I mentioned, they're implemented already. We have sort of uniformed the forms, but there's sort of a constant look at that because we're constantly receiving feedback from the public and from those intake counsellors about what people find confusing. That one would be a fairly ongoing process. You know, we're constantly receiving feedback from the judiciary as well. So those don't have, I would say, a discrete timeline on them, but we will continue looking at them.

**Mr. Ellis:** To your point in regard to the public, as noted in your key strategy, do have any sort of plan – I know it's a very broad and complex issue, as we all know family justice is – for making this less adversarial and more welcoming, I guess? I know it's a poor choice of words.

3:40

**Ms Ganley:** Well, the court system as it stands is for the most part, I mean, barring sort of major changes that might occur if the federal government were to move on their unified family court idea, sort of set up in that adversarial way. You know, I think you're right that it's not necessarily the best process, and I think many . . .

**Mr. Ellis:** It's intimidating for a lot of people, right?

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. People want to have access to that process if they feel that they need it, but I think that continuing to provide those intake counsellors and other resolution streams is critical to ensuring that people know that there are alternatives available to them. Our folks that were forming the family justice system initiative as well are very, very keen on sort of what they describe as kind of a culture shift so that people understand that court isn't necessarily the best place.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

As there are no independent or other members present, I would now like to invite government caucus members and the minister to speak for the next 10 minutes. Ms Miller, would you like to combine your time with the minister?

**Ms Miller:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, please.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you, Minister, for coming and answering all our wonderful questions. Your business plan references the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in R. versus Jordan. Can you explain how the construction of the Red Deer justice centre is going to contribute to reducing delays of matters so they fit within the Jordan timelines?

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. The Red Deer justice centre is a facility that has been, I think, needed in the community for a number of years. We've certainly heard from the judiciary that there can be challenges sometimes in scheduling court matters in that area not necessarily due to judges or prosecutors or clerks but as a result of a lack of physical space to have those matters. In fact, in that courthouse they were holding their traffic court matters in a hotel in order to free up a courtroom in order to listen to other matters.

If a matter comes forward on its assigned day and there's no courtroom to put it in, potentially it's getting put over to a future date. That, of course, risks our timelines under Jordan, particularly given that, you know, it's a fairly heavily scheduled schedule. Going forward, there will be a lot of matters. Sometimes when you reschedule that date, it isn't until significantly in the future, and that creates a huge risk under Jordan. If the problem is physical infrastructure, it's probably going to be a delay that's considered attributable to the Crown, so that would be, I think, a considerable challenge for us.

Especially as populations in Red Deer and central Alberta continue to grow, it's really important to be able to have that space to make sure that everyone can get justice in a timely manner.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you. I want to thank you for your department and ministry being so forward thinking with the Red Deer justice centre.

Having the ability for the facility to expand with the growing population of Red Deer and area was great news.

How will the Red Deer justice centre's focus on ensuring that the justice system is more responsive empower the department's aim to provide other avenues for dispute resolution?

**Ms Ganley:** In addition to the 12 courtrooms that will be in that courthouse and the shell space for four additional courtrooms, up to a total of 16, there will be a resolution wing in that courthouse. You know, many years ago when we were building courthouses, we considered them to be a place where people would go to court, but now I think we start to think more of justice, right? Justice is really just the ability of an individual to access resolution of their matter. Often that resolution is much better served by professionals other than lawyers and judges. Sometimes a social worker or a mediator can do a lot more to help a family come to their own resolution of conflict. I think that really brings us into the modern times and brings us forward in terms of access to justice, not just to court.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Yesterday in estimates there was a reference to time limits under the victims of crime financial benefits program and how some cases, like sexual assault victims, may have their applications rejected due to exceeding a two-year time limit. This doesn't seem consistent with Bill 2, but I understand that work is under way to address this. Can you provide a little more detail?

**Ms Ganley:** One of the things we're actually able to look at with that is that the legislation does provide an ability, in instances where there has been trauma, to extend that two-year time frame. As it turns out, we can effect by policy to ensure that we're saying that the things that are covered by Bill 2 are also prima facie, on their face considered to be traumatic things, and therefore those things would be automatically considered to extend the time frame. In that way we can ensure that people who are coming forward are able to receive the benefits to which they are entitled, and we can actually do that without a legislative change, so that's nice.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Rural crime is an issue we've heard a lot about. Can you speak on whether you've been in contact with the RCMP on this point and about some of the initiatives that you're looking at to ensure that we have safe rural communities?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. I think this is definitely a concern. I have actually been in contact with the RCMP about this for a while. As you will be aware, we have a new deputy commissioner. He has a great deal of background in crime prevention, so I think we're both very much on the same page from that angle, which is, I think, really exciting.

There are a couple of things that people can apply for, too. There's funding through the civil forfeiture fund, which includes funding for crime prevention programs. One example is Alberta rural crime watch, who work closely with the RCMP. This is an issue, you know, that I've had many conversations about, and I think one of the big things is that even in these challenging times and even though Alberta tends to contribute more on a per capita basis to policing than other nearby provinces, we've continued that funding, which is close to half a billion dollars a year.

I think another important aspect was that, you know, when the former federal government ended funding to ALERT, the province stepped up to fill that gap, and I think we've heard from a number of our municipal leaders on just how important that step was in ensuring that everyone has access to those tools.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

On page 102 of the ministry business plan it provides various performance measures, including safety after dark, satisfaction with policing over the past 12 months, and satisfaction with the services provided by employees and volunteers within the criminal justice system. Across the board all three performance measures have targeted increases. How does this budget reflect these goals?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, again, I think the first and foremost piece is that we're continuing to provide funding to policing. That's sort of where you'll see that located in terms of my ministry. Again, that funding for ALERT that I noted earlier is also sort of a key part. I think we have a very good law enforcement team here in Alberta, and they do a great job.

Ensuring that police are able to spend more of their time on the street and less doing sort of paperwork is another critical part. Certainly, you know, in our ministry the e-ticketing initiative as well as having police freed up by not presenting at bail anymore will have an impact on the number of front-line officers available. Those things will be very good, but we also need to ensure that police are not being used in other ways that are not best suited to their skills. By ensuring that people are properly housed and that they have access to proper income supports and proper mental health supports and by maintaining those services that all Albertans rely on, I think we do a very good job of ensuring that police are dealing more with actual crime and less with sort of social disorder that results from people not having access to the services that they need.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Albertans agree that there is a need for collaboration between the provincial and federal governments when it comes to building safe communities. Can the minister explain how the \$85 million provided for policing assistance to municipalities as noted on line 7.7 ensures municipal leaders have the necessary resources?

3:50

**Ms Ganley:** That line in the budget will increase with population growth. That just ensures that those grants continue to represent the growing population of those municipalities. And it's not just in that line. In addition to that, municipalities receive return of fine revenue, and fine revenues went up fairly recently, actually just before we took office. Those tickets were increased. That provided a lot of additional funding. I know that certainly in Calgary they have used that to hire additional front-line officers, and I think that that's a great thing. But all municipalities will have that additional revenue available to them as well. Of course, again, ensuring that we continue to fund ALERT I think is a critical piece of that because, you know, those are some things that all communities have access to.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

On line 7.6 it indicates over \$11 million in First Nations policing. Can the minister detail what supports are provided through this funding?

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I would now like to invite the Official Opposition and the minister to speak. Mrs. Pitt, would you like to combine your time with the minister?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Please.

**The Chair:** Minister?

Go ahead.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Excellent. All right. Thank you. Welcome to day 2. Let's go back in.

Key strategies 3.1 and 3.2: your strategies focus on rehabilitation, improved technology to enhance correctional operations. What new technologies is the department investigating?

**Ms Ganley:** Right. I think there are a number of pieces that we've been working on to ensure that we're able to give more timely access to justice. Some of them, that I think we discussed, a little bit at least, yesterday, include ensuring that e-disclosure is available. That was piloted in Edmonton. I think it's been rolling out to Calgary, and then we're trying to increase it province-wide. That decreases the amount of time it takes for disclosure to travel from the Crown to the defence lawyer, hence allowing the accused person to make a decision sooner and allowing the matter to ultimately get to trial sooner. I think that's a big piece.

But a lot of it has to do as well with court case management strategies, ensuring that online scheduling is available. In some courthouses we have a counter where people can make early appearances so that they're not using up court time in order to do that. Those are a couple of pieces there. We've also been working with the Crown prosecution office to ensure that files are electronic, and that's, again, being rolled out across the province. That just makes it easier in terms of making a note. It can travel sort of province-wide. Making sure that we have consistent access to data and consistent coding of data so that everyone can see the same thing are certainly, you know, some of the strategies we're working with in terms of technology moving forward.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Does the province have a GPS monitoring system?

**Ms Ganley:** I don't believe that we do, no.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. What other technologies are used for supervision?

**Ms Ganley:** Supervision is generally done by individuals. You know, there are phone visits. There are site visits. Depending on the conditions of the individual, there may be various testing for drugs and alcohol, that sort of thing. That's sort of one manner of monitoring.

With respect to what you're probably referring to, ankle bracelets, I think the challenge thus far is that the cost-benefit analysis has not come out to the positive. Thus far there hasn't been a consistent implementation in a jurisdiction in which they consistently work in a reasonable manner. They tend also to go over budget, usually fairly consistently, and people seem to find ways around them with a disturbing frequency, shall we say. So right now it seems that we still have better track of individuals if we continue to use the human element of monitoring.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Do you know what the total dollar figure of programs to supervise and treat high-risk offenders is, and how does that spending compare with other provinces?

**Ms Ganley:** I mean, depending on where you're talking about that treatment being accessed, some of that treatment will be in various correctional centres. When a high-risk designation is sought, the person – I don't want to say always – usually will have gone to federal prison because usually it will be a sentence that is longer than 10 years. There is a lot of programming there. There is access to some treatment and programming also in remand centres, and then when the individual is released, there's sort of increased monitoring that's possible. Because those are resources that are shared between the provincial and federal governments and because

they're also resources that will be shared amongst offenders, it would be really difficult to sort of estimate what the cost is for any individual person.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Let's move to outcome 2 on page 101: "Albertans are safe and protected through focused work on a preventative model of community safety." In the description of your outcomes you claim that "the ministry aims to shift over time from a reactive model to a preventative model." Now, justice by its very nature is very reactive. It is about restoring balance and ensuring justice for victims. However, there is a need to help with the reduction of gang activity and drug use and to increase the use of community involvement. Why is there no specific target to reduce gang activity?

**Ms Ganley:** I think that that shift to a preventative model is well supported by the policing community. I think more and more that the more we can intervene earlier, the better we are. You know, crime rates obviously have gone up a little bit this year, but they have historically been trending downwards a little bit. I think that's to a large degree because of our increased understanding of how these sorts of things work and because of ensuring that we are providing people appropriate supports along the way. We provide civil forfeiture grants that go to community funds that often work on gang prevention. There are also units within the individual police services that deal with those sorts of things.

Of course, the landscape is ever-shifting – you know, you get rid of one, and another one tends to spring up – but I think that ultimately, at the end of the day, the most effective tool is to build resilient children who aren't likely to fall into that. That's ensuring that kids are supported through school, that they're in a classroom environment that isn't too large, that they continue to be monitored by the adult, and that they have access to all the tools they need in order to turn into productive members of society.

Another thing is ensuring that those children feel supported in their families, so the child tax benefit is certainly something that will support a number of families and lift them out of poverty. That will assist long term in ensuring that those children don't fall into that sort of lifestyle.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Is that preventative measure reflected in your budget?

**Ms Ganley:** No. These are measures that are reflected throughout government. Obviously, spending to ensure that children have adequate access to education would be in Education; the child tax benefit would be in Community and Social Services.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Are there savings reflected in your budget or in another budget because of these preventative measures?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I don't think that we're going to necessarily see direct savings. As the population of the province continues to increase, if you can hold those sorts of things flat, if you have a bigger population and the same amount of crime, essentially your crime rate has declined. Those measures obviously take a long time, so you wouldn't see an effect right away. When you're talking especially about early childhood intervention, which has proven to be enormously effective in this sort of prevention, you know that you're going to see the payback for that 20 years down the road, right? While you don't see it in the budget, for that individual and for that family that's a world of difference. For that community that's a world of difference.

**Mrs. Pitt:** How do you track that? How do you measure it?

4:00

**Ms Ganley:** I feel like if I had the answer to that question, I'd be the head of some university somewhere. Certainly, it is the case that there are a number of different statistical sorts of methods that PhDs and folks who study this utilize to ensure that those sorts of upstream interventions are effective in individual cases. Part of it you're going to see in the long term in crime trends, you know, but those things are affected by a number of intervening factors, and they tend to be pretty far off in the future. Ultimately, they're measured in terms of safer and resilient communities. They're measured in terms of the lives of families that are affected, at the end of the day.

**Mrs. Pitt:** So my assumption is – and correct me if I'm wrong – that we should see savings in a correctional capacity or rehabilitation eventually, down the line? Is that the goal here through the preventative measures in other ministries?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I mean, certainly, at the end of the day, I think the goal is less so a budgetary one and more so one of ensuring that families and communities are safer, so . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I would now like to invite the third-party opposition member and the minister to speak. Mr. Ellis, would you like to combine your time?

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thanks. Minister, I just want to talk a little bit about the sheriffs, if we could. On page 190 of the budget, line 7.9, I see that our fine sheriffs are seeing a capital expenditure of \$448,000 for a second year in a row. Can you maybe expand a bit on what those funds are for?

**Ms Ganley:** Line 7.9. I'm there now. So you're saying that in line 7.9 we're seeing . . .

**Mr. Ellis:** I saw \$448,000. Sorry; I have to open it up myself. Or can we just talk about the sheriffs?

**Ms Ganley:** Okay. It was capital you were asking about. We have about half a million dollars in capital there: \$0.4 million for IT, furniture for the sheriffs operation control centre, and equipment purchase, so primarily for enforcement officers; and \$0.1 million for fish and wildlife enforcement equipment purchases, including ATVs and boats.

**Mr. Ellis:** So in regard to the sheriffs, I mean, other than typical retirements that occur in any sort of operation, we're not seeing any increase or expansion with that department anywhere in regard to human resources?

**Ms Ganley:** I don't think we're seeing an increase in this budget year. There had been a small increase previously, when we brought some of those folks from the SCAN unit back in, but in this case, no, we're not seeing an increase.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

If we can go to page 189 of the government estimates, it shows that First Nations policing funding has remained stable. You know, what I've seen is that almost every other operating expense has been increased, though. Maybe you can provide some explanation as to,

I guess, why there hasn't been a change to funding for that particular area.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Actually, I'm happy to talk about that one. At this point most of that money is paired with money from the federal government, and that's to allow additional officers to be on certain First Nations. Those officers sort of liaise directly with the community. There's a large crime prevention function that works very well.

Historically the federal government for the last number of years has been unwilling to increase that funding. The province had stepped in and put in some additional funding to our First Nations police services just because they were a little bit challenged because the federal government had left their cost per officer at the same amount for a really long time. We actually just saw that Canada is adding \$81.9 million to First Nations policing. Obviously, we don't know how much Alberta is going to get or how those decisions will be made, but we're actually pretty excited to see that. So you may see increases there in the future.

**Mr. Ellis:** Are we assisting them, them meaning the services on the reserves, in regard to their training to ensure that they meet the Alberta standards set up by your office?

**Ms Ganley:** Most of them are policed by RCMP. We do have three dedicated First Nations police services. Those services use the same policing standards, and I believe they have access to training through – I understand that they partner with some other police services generally on that. But, yes, they are held to the same standards and for the most part do a very good job.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. I mean, Tsuut'ina, obviously, is so close to Calgary that they maintain a relationship with CPS although I don't know about the other services that you are referring to. But, to your point, I would expect that they meet the same provincial standards. So thank you.

If we could talk a little bit maybe about – I know it was touched on yesterday; I forget by whom – the drug treatment courts, if you don't mind. The Calgary and Edmonton drug treatment courts have both offered drug rehabilitation through community programs and strict court supervision. The goal, of course, is to make individuals who pass through these initiatives become fully functioning members of our community once again. I think I'm in agreement with you. I'm totally supportive of that. You know, these have typically been on a trial system. Of course, I think we touched a little bit on the federal funding, and I think that expires in 2018. Can you give me an idea of where we are? Are we looking to fully implement this, or where are we with this?

**Ms Ganley:** Of course, one had been federally funded, and the province funded the other, and then there had been a reduction in the federal funding. Currently they are still funded though I think there could be an expansion there. I think what we're looking at is how to sort of expand that model in such a way that we can get more people through it. You know, currently it's very, very good in terms of what it does; like, the program is, I think, a huge success. I think what we need to look at is ways to ensure that we can use existing government resources, because a lot of it does rely on those resources – and we have a lot of very similarly trained people who can do those things – to sort of expand its ability, obviously finances permitting, at a certain point. But I think that, yeah, we do need to look at being able to make sure that that is as cost-effective as possible so that we can replicate it elsewhere.

**Mr. Ellis:** Have you had any discussions with your federal counterpart just in regard to the successes and to potentially gaining further funding federally?

**Ms Ganley:** I don't think we've had discussions on this specific issue. Certainly, we've had many discussions on things like judges and their commitment to funding on guns and gangs and a number of other issues but not on this one specifically.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. Well, I mean, we are all aware, of course, of the opioid crisis which is facing, you know, Alberta if not North America right now. I just see this as, again, another potential tool in the tool box to help that crisis that we're facing right now.

Minister, in last year's estimates I think I asked you about the expanded drug courts so that citizens of Alberta would have equal access to the system. Is it reflected in the budget specifically anywhere? And I should add, slightly the same but different here, I guess, my other concern, regarding rural Alberta, as well. First of all, is it reflected in the budget? Secondly, is there anything regarding the drug treatment courts in rural Alberta?

**Ms Ganley:** Sorry. Is the drug treatment court specifically reflected in the budget?

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. Is the drug treatment court reflected in your budget?

**Ms Ganley:** It will definitely be reflected in the budget. I'm just trying to find exactly where it is.

**Mr. Ellis:** Sure.

**Ms Ganley:** It isn't in its own line item, but I imagine it will be under – the grant is through corrections.

**Mr. Ellis:** Oh. Okay.

**Ms Ganley:** I knew that the grant was coming from somewhere. That's where it would be reflected.

**4:10**

**Mr. Ellis:** The access for rural Albertans who would have the opportunity to go into that particular drug treatment court system: are they just participating via video, or are they being transported there? What's the process for those in rural Alberta that are in the drug treatment court system, if they are, or is it really just Calgary and Edmonton?

**Ms Ganley:** I believe they're only located in Calgary and Edmonton currently. That's obviously one of the reasons that we're looking at the program and what we might do to sort of expand it to other areas, because I think there are a lot of Albertans that could ultimately benefit from that. In the interim the actual treatment components themselves: we are working on ensuring that we're expanding that though that will be more so reflected in the budget of my colleagues in Health.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. Do we have some of those prosecutors that are going to be going into that area as well, or has that even been determined yet?

**Ms Ganley:** No. We're still looking at the model. In terms of prosecutors, I understand that the court uses a prosecutor that already works for the prosecution service.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. All right. I know I'm running out of time, and I'm trying to extend here. Maybe when we touch base in a bit

here, we can talk a little bit more about the opioid crisis that Alberta is facing.

Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

As there is no independent or other party member present, I would like to now invite members from government caucus and the minister to speak for the next 10 minutes.

Mr. Shepherd, are you wanting to combine your time with the minister?

**Mr. Shepherd:** Yes, please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you. Good to see you again, Minister. When we were speaking yesterday, I had sort of brought up the issue of harm reduction. We were talking about that a bit, and of course Mr. Ellis has been going down that road a bit, too, talking about the fentanyl crisis. I had a couple of questions related to that as well.

Of course, harm reduction is incredibly important, but on the other side we want to ensure that we are still protecting against crime and other things that come with the drug trade currently. I know that recently your ministry has increased the provincial funding to fight organized and serious crime – that's the area that, I believe, funds the Alberta law enforcement response teams, ALERT – due in part, as you mentioned, to the federal Conservative government eliminating their grant. Can you give us a bit of a sense, then, on: is this something that you've raised with the federal government now? Knowing that we filled in that gap a bit but that, of course, any assistance we could get would be helpful, have you brought this up with the federal Justice minister?

**Ms Ganley:** I have actually raised this. This would be my federal counterpart in public security. It was one of the first things that we raised, actually, when we were initially having the end to the funding under the former federal government. When the new one came in, we had raised it with them. They have committed to providing a significant amount of money in funding on guns and gangs. We haven't yet determined exactly what that's going to look like. I have certainly suggested that we think Alberta has a very good model and that we would like to see that model supported, going forward, rather than an attempt to sort of, if you will, reinvent the wheel. We've had a number of conversations, I think, on that front.

In terms of, you know, how they will respond to that in the long term, I don't think we have indications yet. But, like I've said, I've found that we work quite well with them. So, yeah, we'll continue to go forward having those conversations, and we look forward to hearing how they plan to deal with that money.

**Mr. Shepherd:** When you say the model, you're referring to ALERT?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Sorry.

**Mr. Shepherd:** No problem. No problem at all. Well, certainly, we've appreciated the action that you've been able to get them to take on appointing a few new judges here in the province, so hopefully we'll make some progress on this angle as well.

As Mr. Ellis was talking about, we still have some serious concerns around the increase of fentanyl and other opioids. Certainly, again, while I'm happy to see that we're working towards safe consumption sites, there are still concerns, I think, amongst the police about, you know, dealers in the area, other folks. Could you give us a sense of some of the other work that your ministry is

undertaking, then? What else is funded in this budget to help tackle this from the crime side?

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. I think our policing partners would agree that this needs to be tackled from a demand side as well, but from the enforcement side, certainly, the Alberta law enforcement response teams, or ALERT, as you mentioned, are definitely one of those aspects. The SCAN team, which was in ALERT but is now back under the ministry, is involved in sort of the shutting down of drug houses, so that's a big piece as well.

We have been working very closely with our policing partners on those harm reduction strategies and how to implement them in a way that doesn't create sort of additional concerns or additional problems within communities. I think they've been very good about coming to the table and having those conversations on how we can best move forward together. Their focus is on ensuring that there are wraparound services so that these people aren't just coming to consume the product but that they also have access to, you know, transitional treatments if they're interested in those treatments or other health supports.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

In regard to that, you were talking there about collaboration with our police forces across the province. I think we all recognize the need for that collaboration, for you to show that leadership and to be working in partnership with them. Can you give us a sense of how the \$85 million that you've provided here in the budget, line 7.7, I believe, is being used, then, to support the municipal leaders to be able to ensure they have the necessary resources for this?

**Ms Ganley:** Policing assistance to municipalities has two components. One is the municipal police assistance grants, and the other is the police officer grants. That first one, the municipal police assistance grant, is based on population. As the population increases, those grants increase to municipalities. Those grants, I think, are a very good thing. They help municipalities offset the costs of policing. There are many other jurisdictions in which municipalities don't receive such grants. There are other jurisdictions in which only returned fine ticket revenue is used to sort of transfer to municipalities, and they don't have those grants coming from the province. I think it certainly shows the commitment that Albertans have to ensuring that municipalities are supported in funding their police officers and ensuring that they have access to adequate resources.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

Moving a little closer to home, right here at the Legislature – perhaps it's not specifically here at the Legislature, but maybe you can clarify for me line 7.9. We see a \$1 million increase for the sheriffs branch. Can you give us a sense of why that increase was needed, where those dollars are going?

**Ms Ganley:** I can, indeed. Again, this provides manpower funding, and that's to maintain existing staff and the important work they do. They do a number of things, including court security, inmate transportation as well as traffic enforcement. They work in a number of different areas, and that additional funding will allow us to maintain those front-line staff.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. Excellent. Thank you.

Taking a look now at the business plan for the ministry, in the business plan you've identified that there is a need to explore some of the gaps and try to identify some creative solutions and strategies to help ensure some excellence in service provision to victims, as people are victims of crime and they're moving through the

criminal justice system, providing some supports there and trying to find some more creative ways to do that. Could you give us a bit of a sense of some of the strategies or programs that you're putting in place, what you're funding through this budget to provide better supports for victims?

**Ms Ganley:** Currently, as the member will no doubt be aware, we're responding to the Auditor General's report on the victims of crime program. That has asked us to do a certain amount of work. Certainly, it's been noted that there has been a growing surplus over probably about a decade now in that particular fund, so the Auditor General has asked us to go and do the work to better understand what the needs of victims are, how to best address those needs, and how to measure whether we're addressing those needs appropriately.

We have completed a gaps analysis on that in terms of what the challenges are going forward, so we'll be working with victims' groups and with other groups going forward to get the rest of that work in place. We are working to have a plan in place over the course of the '17-18 fiscal year. In this year we have increased by \$2.4 million the victims of crime program to help assist victims in a more responsive way, but, going forward, we're hoping to have a more fulsome plan on how to ensure that that money is being appropriately spent.

4:20

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. So you're in the process of developing that strategy?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. Thank you, Minister.

Now let's move on, then. Outcome 3 of the ministry business plan states that your ministry "is committed to finding [some] innovative solutions to improve access to justice" and that "improvements are required to deliver [those] services more effectively and efficiently." Certainly, the efficiency is an important part as we're sort of looking for any places where we can save without compromising the value of the service we're providing. In this sense, can you give us some information on how you're working to achieve those goals?

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. Certainly, some of the pieces were in Bill 9. It reduced warrants for minor offences, but it will also allow for e-ticketing to go through so that we're not dealing with people sort of handwriting out a ticket and then having to type it in one place and type it in another, so that will save a little bit of time in that way.

We're also looking to pilot a body scanner at the Edmonton Remand Centre, and that will, I think, assist our staff in terms of searches and in terms of ensuring that staff safety and inmate safety also are protected, you know, from things like drugs and weapons coming into the centre.

Having Crown prosecutors take over bail I think will sort of allow early eyes on the case to work out what possible deficiencies are, so that may increase efficiencies in the information flow back and forth between police services and the Crown. I think that that's definitely a good thing for everyone.

**Mr. Shepherd:** So some structural and systemic changes.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I would now like to invite members from the Official Opposition and the minister to speak.

Mrs. Pitt, would you like to combine your time?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Yes, please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mrs. Pitt:** All right. Minister, have you ever heard of StingRay or IMSI catchers?

**Ms Ganley:** Stingrays? Like the fish?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Essentially, it's technology that has been known to monitor or, for lack of a better term, spy on people.

**Ms Ganley:** Oh. Okay.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Well, that answers my first question.

My understanding – and this very well may be rumours – is that the Edmonton city police have purchased one of these pieces of technology.

**Ms Ganley:** I'm not aware of that. I think you'd probably be best to ask them. They will have sort of their own budget and their own operational control over that sort of thing. I'm certainly not aware of that.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Just curious.

Okay. I want to talk about corrections. In the budget for municipal police enforcement line items 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 all contain provisions for monitoring and providing oversight to policing services, yet I see no line items under the correctional services department for oversight, enforcement standards, or audits.

Now to line item 8. Do you have any process to ensure accountability of our correctional officers?

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. There are a number of internal processes. They're not necessarily reflected in their own budget line item because we have the budget. Unlike most of the police services, we have the budget for corrections ourselves already. Every time there is an incident in a correctional centre, an internal review is completed about that incident and sort of what can be learned. Sometimes there are improvements that can be made. In instances where there is an injury or a death in a correctional centre, those deaths are reviewed by the Fatality Review Board in every instance for a determination by that body on whether that incident should go forward.

But our processes are under constant review, and incidents that occur within those correctional centres are also reviewed individually. We actually have been working very hard with our friends in the AUPE to sort of set in place a system that is transparent so that offenders can feel that their rights are being respected and that also ensures that our staff feel their rights are being properly respected as well.

**Mrs. Pitt:** What's the name of that process? What would you call it?

**Ms Ganley:** I would just say that it would be an internal review process.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. How do you deal with internal allegations of officer abuse? A little bit more – I know that you touched on it, but if you could detail that.

**Ms Ganley:** Again, there's an internal review, but where there's an allegation that there may be sort of a potential criminal element to whatever it is that occurs, whether it's inmate on inmate or a correctional officer and an inmate, police will be called in to

investigate those instances, so of course they would be sort of an outside body coming in.

**Mrs. Pitt:** What about officer and officer?

**Ms Ganley:** As in between the individual officers? Normally a complaint of one officer about another officer would be handled sort of internally as sort of a human resources issue, and it would probably be handled in concert with the union, who would have some sort of representational rights with respect to both officers.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Have there been any charges laid internally?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, we don't lay charges internally. If charges are laid, they'd be laid by the police in those cases.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Have there been any cases?

**The Chair:** I'd like to just encourage the member to discuss the budget and the line items. If you could make the conversation relevant to the business plan or to the budget, that would be fantastic.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Absolutely. No, it's absolutely relevant to line items 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5, that contain provisions for monitoring and oversight of policing services. I'm just trying to figure out the internal monitoring process for our officers in these facilities as well.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. They're accountable internally but also externally. So with a police service jurisdiction, because they would be the folks that would investigate a crime normally, for any crime that occurred in that jurisdiction, we have ASIRT, which is an outside body that will investigate crimes in some instances where it's likely to prove challenging for the police service and for public confidence if the police service were to do the investigation themselves. In the case of a correctional officer it would be the police who are doing the investigation, so they'd already sort of be a separate entity in that way.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Thank you.

Line item 8.2, adult remand and correctional services, in the 2015-2016 budget – are you there?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Sorry. I didn't want to talk and not have you know what I was referring to. In 2015-2016 the budget actual was \$193 million, yet you estimated your budget was going to be only \$186 million in 2016-2017. Why did you estimate that prison costs would be less than the year previous?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, we were certainly bringing in a number of recommendations to ensure that we were reducing overtime and that we're using schedule software and best practices. You know, the prison population in that year increased significantly, probably more than one might have predicted, so it became necessary to hire additional staff to ensure that we were maintaining the safety of both offenders and our correctional staff.

**Mrs. Pitt:** But why would you estimate that it was going to be less, then?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, again, we were hopeful in terms of, you know, finding efficiencies. When you're looking at budgeting, just doing across-the-board cuts is not usually a very good idea because it's

not very targeted. We were certainly looking at what we could achieve in that division, and we did set some pretty ambitious targets. As it turns out, ultimately, at the end of the day, the safety of our correctional officers has to be the highest priority. Given the sort of rapidly growing inmate populations, it wasn't possible to do that, so we had to increase the budget in the end.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. The 2016-2017 budget fell short of \$16 million from the forecast. How do you explain that \$16 million discrepancy?

**Ms Ganley:** Sorry. This is in corrections?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Corrections.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. Again, that was a matter of our having had to hire over the course of the year due to expanding inmate populations, having had to sort of increase the staff that we had on the ground, and those staff increases did occur in-year. We now have all those people working, which is why you'll see the increase reflected also in next year's budget. But, yeah, over the course of the year it became clear that with increased populations we required increased staff in order to continue to monitor them in a safe way.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Thank you.

Last year it was reported that there were nine prisoner deaths due to fentanyl overdoses. How did they get in? How did the drugs get in?

4:30

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I think, to begin with, that that is incorrect as a number. As far as I'm aware, there were only two confirmed, and there are several that are still being investigated. Sometimes prisoner deaths occur for a variety of reasons, including natural causes.

You know, drugs in correctional centres: that is an ongoing challenge in terms of keeping those things out. We do have a number of monitoring methods in place. Searches are performed. Regular room searches are performed. People are searched as they come into the remand centre. This is a bit of a problem that has been ongoing over a number of years. We have drug-sniffing dogs to assist us with that. But, you know, given the increased deadliness of recent drugs that are now available, fentanyl in particular, that puts a lot of strain on our inmate population. It's very dangerous for them. It also puts a lot of strain on our correctional officers, who have to respond to incidents.

Fortunately, Ontario had been piloting the use of a body scanner, and that appears to be going quite well for them. Knowing that that's likely to work, we're actually looking to procure one in Alberta for a pilot project, and hopefully that will begin to assist with that as well.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Two questions out of that. The body scanner: is that reflected in this budget?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. It will be in the adult remand and correctional centres budget.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Body scanner aside, the other measures used to combat the fentanyl crisis: are they new or increased measures?

**Ms Ganley:** No. Those are the measures that have been in place.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** For the next 10 minutes I'd like to invite the third-party opposition to speak with the minister. Mr. Ellis, did you want to combine your time?

**Mr. Ellis:** Sure.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Ellis:** Minister, who scheduled six hours for this?

**Ms Ganley:** We sure did.

**An Hon. Member:** It's those House leaders.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. We'll talk to them later.

I guess, Minister, this is more a question for your deputies than yourself. I don't expect you to know it off the top of your head. When we were talking earlier about the drug treatment courts, you had mentioned that it was in corrections. Can you maybe give me an actual line item – maybe one of your deputies can – as to where the funding is for the drug treatment courts.

**Ms Ganley:** Apparently, that is in line 8.4.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. Would that be all of it, or is one specifically the federal funding and one the provincial funding?

**Ms Ganley:** As I understood it, the federal funding on that had ended, and it's now provincial funding that's provided for drug treatment courts.

**Mr. Ellis:** For all of them now?

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. If I'm incorrect, I will correct myself at some later juncture.

**Mr. Ellis:** It's a big ministry. I don't expect you to know details on everything here.

Thank you so much. You said line 8.4. Is that correct?

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah, 8.4.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

I know you've touched a lot on the victims of crime, so I don't want to belabour that, but one thing that I didn't note is that department officials had told Public Accounts that identifying the needs of First Nations and Métis populations was among their priorities. Do you know what the status is of that work that's being done for those folks?

**Ms Ganley:** As I understand it, gaps analysis has occurred on that work, and we will sort of move forward on that basis. I think there is probably still to come some additional sort of formal engagement, if you will, to ensure that all of those voices are being appropriately heard.

**Mr. Ellis:** These communities – I think someone has touched on it already today – are experiencing spikes in crime. Can there be an expectation or a willingness for them to obtain more funding?

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah, I think that that is what we are looking towards. I don't want to presuppose the outcome of the work that we're doing with the Auditor General. Obviously, there will be some back-and-forth conversations there. I think, you know, that there are certainly early indications that victims' groups are challenged in terms of their funding, First Nations and Métis groups in particular. There can also be some challenges in rural areas generally, the reason being that they don't necessarily have access to all of the same services. One of the things that we will be examining is how to ensure that we're best addressing that so that everyone can get access to services.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

If we can maybe talk a little bit about FOIP – and I do say this with the utmost respect – the Privacy Commissioner has been fairly critical of Justice and Solicitor General’s office specifically, and I’m sure you’ve taken actions. Maybe you can expand a little bit on what you’re doing to ensure that FOIP requests are dealt with in a more timely way. Is that reflected at all in your budget?

**Ms Ganley:** It is indeed. Some of the staff in terms of increased FTEs that you’ll be seeing in this budget that’s coming forward include an increase in FOIP officers from 10 to 18. Those backlogs had obviously been building over a long time, and we’ve had significant staffing challenges in terms of turnover. We’ve been working hard to make sure that we have the right folks in those positions and that we are staffed up in a more general way to ensure that we’re handling those because ultimately, really, what we were looking at was just sort of an increase in volume. We’ve actually already started to see clearance rates improve, so we’re starting to sort of get a handle on that backlog going forward. So, yeah, our year to date is starting to look better. We’re increasing those clearance rates, and as we go forward and all those people come on stream, we’ll see definitely faster processing, which I think is important to all Albertans.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. It’s obviously an ongoing process that you’re dealing with. Thank you.

If we can maybe talk a little bit about the opioid crisis. Of course, the police, as you know, are on the front line of the crisis as well as a lot of our medical workers. But in regard to policing – crime, of course, has spiked in Alberta – is there a specific line item in your budget that reflects this opioid response, or is it something that is kind of throughout?

**Ms Ganley:** In terms of response, obviously, the primary response from the government is situated in Health. I think that, for the most part, our policing partners would agree that that is sort of the appropriate approach to take on that one. It is my view that that increased funding that we came through with for ALERT will assist on the enforcement side because obviously they do a very good job of that. You’ll be aware of that intelligence sharing. That dovetails very nicely with the Border Services Agency. In fact, they’ve had significant seizures going forward. So that’s certainly a piece of what we’re doing.

Of course, in terms of the response, again primarily on behalf of our partners in Health. I think we have a support role in the sense of adding additional funding to the office of the Chief Medical Examiner, so ensuring that we were able to bring on two additional medical examiners and a data person. I think that will help us a lot in terms of getting better data. We’ve changed the way we’re reporting those deaths. We’re doing sort of regular reporting in terms of fentanyl, and we’re also looking at deaths that occur from multiple-drug toxicity to determine if we think that an opioid was the main causal factor because we think that that data will help our health professionals determine how best to address it.

**Mr. Ellis:** You mentioned regular reporting. I know that Dr. Swann, of course, has been very vocal about this. What are we looking at? Quarterly? Monthly?

**Ms Ganley:** Currently we’re doing quarterly reporting out of the office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and that, I think, allows us to make sure that we’re using the best data possible. There is, of course, as there is in all things, sort of a weigh-off between time and accuracy in terms of waiting for autopsies to be completed. I think it’s really important for the public – they certainly want to

know, and I think that that is obviously their right – that when we give them numbers, we are as confident as possible or at least, I would say, reasonably confident that those numbers are correct.

4:40

Of course, going through those files where you have multiple-drugs toxicity and all the different tests that maybe you needed to determine sort of what is the primary causal factor, this again requires some significant medical expertise and is sometimes as much an art as a science, you know, making sure that we get those numbers accurately so that we can be confident and proud in what we’re saying. You will notice that even with the numbers we release, when we release them, there do tend to be little changes when it’s determined that ultimately a cause of death was different than we thought it was.

**Mr. Ellis:** Of course, I think we’re in agreement that having regular reporting is vitally important, especially when you are giving direction to your department in order to help solve this crisis that we’re facing right now. I do agree with you. This is a health issue, but as we know, we need to work together. You have a role in this, just like anyone else within the government and ourselves on this side as well.

With the regular reporting that, hopefully, is going to be coming, will this assist you in giving direction? I say “direction” loosely because, I mean, certainly I don’t want you to affect any operation of the police service. Will it assist you in giving a bit of guidance to ALERT, you know, on what they were going to be focusing their attention on? Maybe you can expand a bit on that.

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I think that the information is probably very useful to those folks in determining where they focus their attention. You know, ALERT is directed by a board, and it is often directed by input from the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police. If we perceived there to be challenges . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

As there is no independent or other party member present, I would now like to invite members from the government caucus and the minister to speak for the next 10 minutes. Ms Miller, are you wanting to combine your time?

**Ms Miller:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you. Given the need to ensure that Alberta’s justice system is sustainable, what sort of efficiencies have you been able to find within the justice system?

**Ms Ganley:** Oh, that’s a potentially long conversation. I think, you know, that there are a lot of different things. Certainly, when we came into office, a review had been conducted into the very tragic death of Constable Wynn, and that review had suggested a review of the overall bail system. We launched that review, and that was a completely independent review. In fact, the authors of the review went so far as to say that they were very pleased that the government did not sort of stick its fingers in, if you will, and that they were able to do that in a completely objective manner.

I think that that has had a number of good results. It certainly indicated that one of the most important things to ensure that we are balancing the need to keep communities safe with the need to respect the rights of people who are going to potentially be detained in advance of being convicted of a crime was that we needed to ensure the appropriate flow of information between parties. We’ve been very fortunate to have been working on a number of systems

that deal with electronic flow of information and ensuring that Crown prosecution offices and police as well have access to that sort of information. A lot of those efficiencies are to be found just in ensuring that you have a list of what's relevant and what needs to be sent and keeping that going.

You know, we had different views amongst stakeholders as to how best to proceed in terms of Crown prosecutors at bail hearings, so we went to the court and asked them for a determination as a first step. Ultimately, that determination was that Crown prosecutors would present at hearings, so I think that that will find considerable efficiencies in terms of the police. The Crown will take on the cost of doing that, which will allow multiple police officers, who otherwise would have been waiting in different jurisdictions to appear before the justice of the peace, to no longer have to do that waiting. That will certainly be one method.

Another thing we did, obviously, was Bill 9 in the last session, which decreased the amount of time that people spend on data entry both in terms of warrants but also in terms of tickets. Those will now go electronically.

Mediation services are certainly, I think, a big part of that, ensuring that people understand what their options are and know that they have access to those options so that their matters aren't necessarily landing in court in instances when those matters don't need to land in court. A lot of that, really, just is about access of those individuals to that information, so knowing that those systems exist. I think our sort of call, click, or come in, one-window approach, where someone can just go and ask a question – in old design courthouses could be a little bit overwhelming and confusing for people.

You know, there are filing windows for the Court of Queen's Bench, for criminal court in Provincial Court, for Provincial Court, civil. You know, it was confusing for people. They didn't necessarily know where they were supposed to be. Allowing them to access that information I think will improve efficiencies a lot, and it also ensures that they're given access to those resolution methods as well as ensuring that there is someone monitoring the case as it comes in. As a family court case comes in, doing that intake work to make families aware of what's available for them I think is a big piece of it as well.

Yeah. I think that's a number of different things. One of the other interesting things we've done is that we've amalgamated three of our enforcement branches into one shared quartermaster's store. That allows for efficiencies in terms of equipping our officers as well.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Okay. Government estimates indicate almost \$4.5 million in capital investment, which is an increase of \$1.6 million compared to Budget 2016. Can you explain what these funds will be used for and why there was a need to increase by \$1.6 million?

**Ms Ganley:** That's primarily in terms of capital assets, specialized equipment. That includes telecommunications equipment for enforcement branches and boats and ATVs for the fish and wildlife enforcement branch. You know, there's been some fiscal restraint, I guess, going around the government, and I think we needed to see some of those new assets coming on stream. The Ministry of Justice actually uses quite a lot of technology, so you'll see often that someone can make remote court appearances from one place to another. The capital equipment will also involve laboratory and scientific equipment, so just equipment all throughout the government.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

On page 188 of the government estimates it shows a \$7 million increase for the Alberta Crown prosecution service compared to Budget 2016. Why is this increase necessary, and how will these funds be spent?

**Ms Ganley:** Primarily, there are two factors that are driving that increase. You know, I think we worked very hard throughout the ministry to make sure that we're doing our absolute best job to find efficiencies in all of these sorts of different areas, but a couple of things happened last year. One of those was that the Jordan decision was released in July, and that really just changed the landscape. Essentially, that was the court saying to us that we needed to provide access to justice for accused in a more timely manner than the system had been providing previously. That created a massive change for all provinces across the country. You'll actually see an injection of resources in other provinces in addition to Alberta. That will help us to begin to deal with that Jordan decision, to ensure that we have the necessary prosecutors in courtrooms. I think it's something that we'll have to continue to monitor going forward. It's certainly a good first step in ensuring that we're able to respond to that.

Another portion of that funding deals with the court's decision with respect to bail. We sought in supplemental estimates money for this. We had already piloted having Crown prosecutors at bail in Edmonton, and that was to ensure that ultimately if the court decided, as it did, against us or ultimately if we determined that it was better to have Crown prosecutors performing bail, we would be prepared.

**4:50**

It also would have given us a little bit of data if we were ultimately making that choice on what we wanted to do. We hired those first 10 people in-year, and then we're going to be hiring 15 more to present bail throughout the province. Those are sort of the two components that go into that increasing budget. You know, I think that as the ramifications of the Jordan decision play out here and in other provinces, we will have to continue monitoring that going forward.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

How do the numbers for Crown prosecutors compare to previous years? We've heard there hasn't been an increase.

**Ms Ganley:** When we have completed all the hiring, we will be at 360 Crown prosecutors in total, so that is more than there have been at any time in the past. Obviously, that includes some Crown prosecutors who will be dealing with bail. Currently we believe that number to be 25. If ultimately we don't need quite that many, then we may be able to have those people doing other work at the same time. This will be sort of a net increase in the number of FTEs, which is why you saw that net increase in FTEs go forward in the budget.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Page 188 also shows a \$7.5 million increase to resolution and court administration services. Why is this increase necessary, and how will these funds be spent?

**Ms Ganley:** That increase is necessary, again, because of the Jordan decision. You know, again, throughout government we've been sort of dealing with some hiring restraint through these challenging economic times to ensure that we're doing our best job to be the most efficient possible for Albertans. When the Jordan decision came down partway through the year, it became clear that

that was going to be a significant challenge for us. Again, we sought some money in supplemental estimates and then additional money, so budget over budget. That increase allows us to retain 45 staff we've been . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

At this point I'd like to call the five-minute break. We will set the timer, and at the expiry of the timer we will resume.

Thank you.

[The committee adjourned from 4:52 p.m. until 4:58 p.m.]

**The Chair:** I'd like to call the meeting back to order.

For the next 10 minutes I would like to invite the Official Opposition and the minister to speak. Mrs. Pitt, did you want to combine your time?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Just a little bit of cleanup questions on 8.2, remand and correctional services. What is that cost of treating drug-related health incidents in remand and correctional facilities? If you have the numbers in breakdown by Calgary and Edmonton.

**Ms Ganley:** You know, if someone is experiencing whatever sort of medical distress, corrections officers will respond initially, so obviously there's a use of time there that would be difficult to quantify. Ultimately, AHS will be responsible for the hospital treatment, and I don't think they break it down in direct costs like that, much like they wouldn't be able to say that any one individual Albertan costs the health system a certain dollar amount. I don't think that they track those numbers in that particular way.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Don't we have on-site health facilities?

**Ms Ganley:** In some. In the remand facility in Edmonton, certainly, there are on-site health facilities. In some facilities it's transportation out of the facility to a health area. Some of them do have on-site. In more serious cases it can be the case that they do have to transport out even when we do have those on-site health facilities, so it just sort of depends on the circumstances.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Who picks up the tab for the on-site health facilities, then?

**Ms Ganley:** Those are run by AHS.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Oh, okay. Are there any drug treatment programs available to inmates through Justice, or is that again Alberta Health Services?

**Ms Ganley:** Alberta Health Services will have carriage of opioid replacement therapies, and if someone is going into a specific bed for that sort of treatment, that will certainly fall into Alberta Health Services. In terms of Justice, you know, when you're in a correctional facility, there is access to a number of meeting programs. There's access to counsellors for someone to talk to, and if you're an indigenous person, there will be access to specific supports for that. Then there can be access to supports like meetings for support groups.

**Mrs. Pitt:** What line item would I find that support under?

**Ms Ganley:** It will depend, again, on what facility you're in. Adult remand and correctional centres, line 8.2, will have programming

in those centres contained within it. Then youth offender centres, line 8.3, will have programs for youth contained therein.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. In the interests of just bringing some questions to a close, the officer-to-officer complaints within the system: what branch investigates those internal complaints?

**Ms Ganley:** Again, that would be a human resources matter. A complaint, as I understand it, could be made within corrections, but I believe – is there a recourse to HR? Yeah. So it's all human resources that would do that. I mean, obviously, if there's an allegation of criminal misconduct, the police would investigate that, but generally it's HR.

**Mrs. Pitt:** It's just HR. Okay. And what line item would that be?

**Ms Ganley:** So 1.5 has HR.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Is that the ministry, then?

**Ms Ganley:** Ministry support services.

**Mrs. Pitt:** HR in ministry is responsible for internal officer-to-officer complaints?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Is that true of management and officer relations complaints?

**Ms Ganley:** If you're talking about, you know, an officer complaining essentially about their employer, in some cases – if it's one specific other individual, it may be handled by HR. But if you're talking about someone complaining about their employer, that would be the grievance process. That would be the union bringing that forward on behalf of the employee as against the employer for not providing whatever it is.

**Mrs. Pitt:** In that case, it would be the union and the ministry?

**Ms Ganley:** If it went to a grievance procedure, yes, it would be human resources that would act. Well, is it specifically? Human resources would act for the employer and then potentially a lawyer, depending on how far down the chute that process got. Then, yeah, the union would represent the individual employee.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Is the proper term "grievance procedure"?

**Ms Ganley:** I think technically it's grievance arbitration. Well, grievance procedure might be . . .

**Mr. Bryden:** It is actually grievance procedure.

**Ms Ganley:** It is grievance procedure. Arbitration is the final step. Usually there's a procedure by which these things are attempted to be resolved, and most unionized employers will have that sort of procedure set out in their collective agreement.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Excellent.

I want to go back to talk about technology a little bit more, and I brought up StingRays as an example. If the Edmonton police force were to purchase new technology to use in enforcement, would the minister be consulted, and would that reflect in the budget upon the purchase of that?

**Ms Ganley:** I think that generally in terms of the procurement of individual police services, they are permitted to do that of their own volition. Obviously, they have to comply with policing standards

that we set out and with the sort of overall governing law in the country.

5:05

**Mrs. Pitt:** So there's no process for discussion between the police service and the ministry, no approval process?

**Ms Ganley:** If they're interested in discussing it with us, we're always happy to listen. In general those sorts of operational decisions – they decide they need, you know, a second helicopter – are made internally based on their budget allocations and what their choices are.

**Mrs. Pitt:** So if the Edmonton Police Service made a decision to purchase spy equipment, the ministry has no oversight?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I don't want to say that they have no oversight. I feel like you're suggesting a violation of some sort of law. There are obviously law enforcement standards that permit us to do audits that would provide some sort of oversight. I don't think that I want to speculate too much in terms of what specifically would happen in a problematic case. Generally they have been pretty good about determining what their operational needs are and procuring their equipment.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Thank you.

I don't know what my time is here, but let's move on.

**The Chair:** Two minutes.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Two minutes? Okay. Perfect.

Maintenance enforcement orders, line 6.2, family support order services. Is this the line item that deals with the administration of MEP?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. This would deal with the administration of the maintenance enforcement program as well as the child support recalculation program.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Sorry. My bad. I guess we talked about this yesterday.

**Ms Ganley:** It was rather late.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you. That's what I thought. It wasn't my dream.

Okay. Performance measure 3(a), then: let's go there. This statistic, showing that 100 per cent of the offenders in the temporary absence program do not incur new criminal charges, is a positive report on this program. The question is: how many offenders participate in the program, and how are they selected?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, it appears that we achieved our target last year. In terms of the percentage of offenders . . .

**Mr. Reddon:** In terms of the number of people that completed . . .

**The Chair:** You're going to need to come forward and speak at the mike and introduce yourself, please.

**Mr. Reddon:** Sorry. My name is Wayne Reddon. I'm the executive director of adult centre operations. In terms of the percentage of successful completion it refers to the period of time that they're out on the temporary absence. It doesn't mean that they may not reoffend sometime down the road, but at that time it is.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. We're going to come back after.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I'd like to invite the third-party opposition, Mr. Ellis, and the minister to speak. Would you like to share your time?

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, one of our colleagues had mentioned something in regard to communications earlier. That brought me to thinking back to a conversation I think we had about a year ago regarding concerns in regard to police infrastructure in communications, which had been ongoing, of course, well before your government came to be. Are there any line items in regard to infrastructure for the communications issues that are certainly facing the Calgary Police Service but also in regard to other police services in Alberta?

**Ms Ganley:** Sorry. Just to clarify, when you say communications, do you mean the radio?

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah, the radio. Sorry. The old Motorola radio. That's what we used to keep in there.

**Ms Ganley:** In terms of line items I do know that the AFRRCS units, the Alberta first responder radio communications system, came on stream earlier this year. We had an unexpected test of those units in the Fort McMurray wildfires, and they actually performed very, very well. We were very proud to be able to have so many, multiple, fire responders all on the same system so that they could communicate at the same time.

Services will sort of transition on to that at their own pace. Our employees have transitioned over already primarily, I think. RCMP from various jurisdictions are transitioning on. As I understand it, Calgary has not made the final decision as to whether they will transition on. We will make that available to them if they are ultimately interested in making that decision. If they do, they will probably transition on considerably later.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. My memory as well is that Calgary was the last or has not made a commitment to this. Aside from Calgary, though, have all the other police jurisdictions in Alberta made some form of commitment to this new radio system?

**Ms Ganley:** I certainly understand it's the majority. The RCMP definitely. They obviously represent the majority of our policing jurisdictions. Other than that, yeah, I'm not at this moment totally sure if everyone has signed contracts, so we'll have to report back to you with that.

**Mr. Ellis:** But to your point, the infrastructure is in place – we'll call it the resources available – for our police services to sign up if it does meet their needs. Is that correct?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. We do have the infrastructure available for everyone to join in if they're interested.

Sorry. I'm actually going to jump in because I have now remembered that I meant to correct myself earlier. When I said that we didn't get federal funding for drug treatment courts any longer, that is incorrect. We, in fact, get half a million dollars a year from the federal government, and that is what goes to support those programs.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. And staying with that thought process there, as we get away from the communications side and go back to that, would any of that money that the Alberta government was able to receive

from the federal government go to your department for any of the initiatives for drug issues?

**Ms Ganley:** Sorry. Which money?

**Mr. Ellis:** I think your government was able to receive about \$7 million from the federal government, and B.C. had received \$10 million for the drug . . .

**Ms Ganley:** Oh. With respect to fentanyl.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah.

**Ms Ganley:** My understanding is that that will be situated in Health, so primarily it will float through Health funding. If I'm wrong about that, I'll let you know.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. Yeah.

Continuing on the train of thought with regard to the opioid crisis – and we had touched on it earlier regarding ALERT – has ALERT requested any more funding to address the opioid emergency and, certainly, the pressures that they're facing right now from the public?

**Ms Ganley:** At this point no. We remain hopeful that our ongoing discussions with the federal government on the gangs and guns funding may yield some fruit. But at this point I think we're looking to ensure that they're able to maintain the functions that they currently perform, and for the most part most of our services are quite happy with what they are receiving through that. I think, like all resources, that will sort of be an ongoing thing to watch. I wish we had taken government at a time when there were lots and lots of oil revenues.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. I wasn't there either.

Referring to all police services in Alberta, have any of them specifically asked for assistance in dealing with the opioid emergency? So aside from ALERT have any of the other police services asked you?

5:15

**Ms Ganley:** We do have sort of ongoing conversations when I visit with the AACP about this issue. Usually we're the ones who set that on the agenda to have those ongoing conversations, but I think it's important to all of them as well. Certainly, we have been approached by a number of services indicating that they're looking for sort of an alternative for people that has wraparound services, essentially health support. Normally when we talk to them about that, it is about sort of replacement therapies and other treatments that are available for individuals and ensuring that we're continuing to flow funding to health and ensuring that health has those options available for people. Generally those conversations – yeah – centre around ensuring availability of treatment and ensuring that we're continuing to provide housing and other supports to people so that they are able to deal with their struggles with substance use as they move forward.

Again, a lot of the requests sort of centre around ensuring that we have wraparound services. The ongoing conversations that we've been having about supervised consumption: they have a really strong interest in ensuring that, you know, it doesn't look like it does in Vancouver, which is to say that it isn't just a place where someone goes to inject drugs and then that's the end of the story. They are really, really focused on making sure that those people who are accessing those services can also choose to access other treatment options and also have mental health supports available,

and that is the model that we're working on with community groups now.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

I know we'd had discussions regarding naloxone kits being available to first responders. Specifically in your department it would obviously be police and peace officers. Are you providing the police services the naloxone kits, whether it be the nasal or the needles, and if so, is it reflected at all in your budget?

**Ms Ganley:** Again, that will come through Alberta Health Services. They do provide free access to injectable naloxone. They provide the nasal, but I believe there's a cost associated with that because it's a little bit more expensive than the injectable form.

**Mr. Ellis:** So if I was a police service in Alberta, I would have to contact the Health department in order to receive the naloxone?

**Ms Ganley:** As I understand it, that procurement occurs through Health. So if you're wanting injectable naloxone, I think that you can get it directly through Alberta Health Services, but with respect to the nasal it would be purchased. I'm not sure whether that's through Alberta Health or elsewhere.

**Mr. Ellis:** Do we know if we have enough to meet the demand at this time?

**Ms Ganley:** We have significantly increased the availability of those kits. The first responders have access to as many of them as they want. In addition, they're situated in a number of different community groups, and any private individual can get access to that without a prescription. We have sort of a massive increase in the number of those kits.

**Mr. Ellis:** I'm assuming – please correct me if I'm wrong – that you have them readily available in your corrections facilities as well.

**Ms Ganley:** They are readily available in the corrections facilities as well.

**Mr. Ellis:** Are the corrections officers trained in a way to use them?

**Ms Ganley:** They are trained to be able to administer naloxone in the case of an emergency. Obviously, you know, after that initial response we would want a health professional coming in to deal with that individual, but they are trained to do the initial emergency response.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

As there are no independent or other party members present, I would now like to invite members of government caucus to speak with the minister for the next 10 minutes. Mr. Shepherd, did you want to combine your time?

**Mr. Shepherd:** Yes, please. Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Shepherd:** All right. Minister, just looking through the business plan here at key strategy 1.2, I note that it talks about working with partners and indigenous people. It mentions some specific programs and also talks about wanting to strengthen that relationship between the department and our indigenous stakeholders and enhance access to justice by assisting them in

obtaining fair and culturally sensitive treatment in the justice system. Now, of course, our government did commit to work with the federal government in their investigation into missing and murdered indigenous women. So I was just wondering: are there any resources that are provided in this budget to support this particular outcome in terms of our co-operation with that federal investigation?

**Ms Ganley:** Primarily, for anyone from the province that needs to participate, the province will sort of bear the costs of that. The federal government has some costs associated with providing support workers to people who are undergoing that program and the commission itself. We'll move around, and that was one of the things that we conveyed quite strongly, I think, to the federal government, you know, that that commission needed to go and meet people where they lived. They couldn't be expecting the families of victims to be travelling to Ottawa to have those conversations with them. I think that's gone very well, and the federal government will be providing sort of support funding.

There is also some increased flow-through funding for aboriginal court support workers, and they may ultimately be involved in that. The province itself, you know, will be working with those individuals when necessary, and we will be providing the support for our department to appear, but primarily it's the federal government that will be providing support to families around appearance at those tribunals.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

In regard, then, to the aboriginal court worker program, is that something that's funded through your ministry?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes, it is. That appears under justice services. That would be program support and would include indigenous initiatives. Those are the Gladue writers, and that is represented in 6.1. So there was a small increase coming from the federal government for the indigenous court worker program, and that's reflected there.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. So that's going to allow for more workers to be provided, then, through support?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Oh, fantastic. Do you have a sense at all of how effective that program has been so far? Is that something, then, where we've seen some increased efficiencies by providing that additional support?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, again, providing support for victims doesn't necessarily have financial ramifications, but it certainly does have ramifications for the lives of those victims down the line. In terms of predicting alternate futures, it's difficult to say, but there is, certainly, some evidence that someone who has been the victim of a crime themselves can ultimately get involved in a criminal lifestyle if their issues aren't dealt with, you know, because they'll have a sort of ongoing trauma from that. I think that ensuring that support workers are there to provide that support so that people feel that the justice system is there for them and they feel like they're part of that system is very, very important. I think that that will have some positive ramifications. Ultimately, it's difficult to measure, but it will have huge positive ramifications for the lives of those individuals who are able to access the court system in a way that's less intimidating.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. I understand. So these workers, then, are there to support victims in court as opposed to defendants?

**Ms Ganley:** It is defendants. Sorry. I was thinking of a different program.

**Mr. Shepherd:** No problem.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah, they are there to support people just navigating the justice system, essentially.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. Then that might indeed provide some efficiencies in sort of taking out some of the delays in the system and helping people navigate through more quickly?

**Ms Ganley:** Potentially more quickly, yes, but also potentially in a way that's just sort of less intimidating for them. If you've ever come into contact with the justice system before, it can be very overwhelming for people.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Understandably. I guess that's in line, then, with the act to modernize provincial offences and others trying to make the system easier for people to work through to sort of resolve difficulties and challenges in that respect.

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. And to ensure that they're in the right place.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Absolutely. In regard to the act to modernize provincial offences, in drawing up your budget, then, was there any anticipation of what kinds of efficiencies that might bring or what kinds of changes that might bring into the flow in the courts?

5:25

**Ms Ganley:** Again, what you'll mostly see is a savings in time. You'll see sort of court workers who are otherwise able to dedicate their time. You know, given the increasing populations coming through the justice system, I think that time is very important. You'll also see an increase in time on behalf of police, so they will be able to dedicate more time to be on the street dealing with more serious matters.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Thank you.

As I noted earlier – and we've sort of talked about it a bit – we do have some new judges that have been appointed by the federal government to the Court of Queen's Bench and some other areas. With those new judges in place, do you anticipate that we're going to see some increased efficiencies or savings from having that additional capacity?

**Ms Ganley:** Obviously, we're very happy every time the federal government comes forward and makes judicial appointments because Alberta has been struggling significantly and particularly in the Court of Queen's Bench. We've seen sort of ever-increasing times as a result of that. I think that the appointments we've seen thus far will certainly help us.

The federal government has also recognized 12 positions that Alberta had created, and in the fullness of time, when we see appointments coming forward for those positions, I think that they will help a lot, bearing in mind that, ultimately, at the end of the day, these positions bring Alberta in line with other jurisdictions throughout the country.

Currently we have the lowest number of federally appointed justices per capita, and that obviously creates challenges even though our courts work incredibly hard to ensure that they are as efficient as possible and that they are hearing matters as quickly as possible. Certainly, I've heard comments from members of the bar

that they're very happy with their judiciary and the way that they're willing to sort of come in early to hear matters or have things go later. I think that, at the end of the day – you know what? – at a certain point the system just needs more resources.

Yeah, we're very happy to see those positions recognized. As a result of those recognized positions, we now have 15 judicial vacancies on the Court of Queen's Bench in Alberta. We will be very happy to see more appointments made as time moves forward.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Of course, then, to move those new judges into place, there's going to need to be some additional support staff to sort of man the courts and be there to support them. Is there funding within this budget to anticipate those needs?

**Ms Ganley:** At this point the funding isn't included because those justices haven't yet been appointed. There is support staff – in discussions between the ministry and the courts we had made determinations on the number of support staff that would be needed to support additional justices when Alberta created those positions. Arising out of that discussion, we have sort of a number of staff that will go with individual appointments. Once we start to see those appointments made, once we see the three previous vacancies filled and we start to see those 12 vacancies filled, we will see more court staff, yeah. You know, if they manage to make those appointments soon, we'll actually probably see a little bit of an increase in the budget over the course of the year.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

One of the other things I was wondering about. You do talk here about collaboration, both with our partners in law enforcement across the province and, of course, there is going to be some collaboration between government departments. In fact, in many conversations that I've had with some of the front-line service providers, they've been very positive about seeing crossministerial co-operation in sort of dealing with what are some complex issues, I think, that affect a number of people across the province. In that respect, how are you collaborating with some of the other departments to address, I guess, some of these street-level issues, things like these complex mental health challenges, substance use, these sorts of things that can affect health, housing, a lot of different aspects? So what work do you . . . [A timer sounded]

**Ms Ganley:** Hopefully, we can come back to that one.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I would like to invite members of the Official Opposition and the minister to speak. Mrs. Pitt, would you like to combine your time?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, please.

**Mrs. Pitt:** All right. Let's talk about photoradar. Line 2.3, ticket processing: is this the photoradar area?

**Ms Ganley:** That is a portion of money coming into the department that deals with our processing of the tickets. That isn't the full revenue stream coming in and going back out. It's definitely in the consolidated revenue, so it comes into Treasury Board. This portion, so ticket processing, is sort of the portion that comes to Justice and Solicitor General. Historically it was estimated that the processing we do within the ministry was worth about 16.67 – a very precise number – per cent of ticket revenue, so that came into the ministry for processing.

There have been some increases in terms of ticket revenue coming through, and the ministry hasn't asked for complete sort of corresponding increases in the amount of money that we need for processing tickets. We asked for increased dollars based on what we anticipate the increased costs of processing tickets are. We're actually now tracking I believe below that 16.67 per cent. That isn't the full revenue. That's just that portion of it.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Sorry. Line 2.3 is revenue or expenditure?

**Ms Ganley:** That is the expenditure, but the expenditure comes with revenue that's coming in from the tickets.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. That is the 16.67?

**Ms Ganley:** It was originally 16.67, but we're tracking slightly below that as a result of the fact that we haven't increased expenditure as fast as that portion of revenue has increased.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Where is the revenue line, then? Or just tell me how much the revenue is.

**Ms Ganley:** Oh. Sure. It's on page 191, I believe. You see number 3, total ticket processing. You'll see that revenue coming in, so the offsetting piece. It should be exactly the same number.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. You may have answered this, but what is the percentage charged by the province for processing these tickets?

**Ms Ganley:** In instances where the municipality is paying for policing, the province takes, in total, 26.67 per cent. So 16.67 per cent was sort of intended for ticket processing in Justice. Again, as I've said, we're tracking a little bit below that now, and then the remainder sort of goes into general revenue.

**Mrs. Pitt:** That's just for the photoradar portion?

**Ms Ganley:** No. That's for all tickets coming through a municipality. In instances where it's a jurisdiction where the provincial government pays for policing, 100 per cent of that revenue would come back to the province. In instances where it's the municipality who's paying for policing, then the remaining portion would go back to that municipality. But that's on all provincial offence tickets. It's not just on photoradar. It's on both photoradar tickets and tickets that would be written out or, I guess, now computerized with the new legislation coming in.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Does that processing fee go down, then, with the new legislation, with the e-ticketing?

**Ms Ganley:** We've asked for an increase based on what we project to be the increase in ticket volumes, but that has not been as high. It hasn't tracked revenues, so we're slightly below that 16.67 per cent now.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. Is that because you're expecting to process more?

**Ms Ganley:** The reason that we increase every year? Yes, we are expecting increasing volumes. It has been that sort of historically, so we're projecting based on what we anticipate the trend will be.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. How many tickets would that be, and how many are you anticipating?

5:35

**Ms Ganley:** The number in paid tickets that we received in 2016 was \$2,078,372. That's just paid tickets. That doesn't include the people that didn't pay their tickets, which sometimes happens.

**Mrs. Pitt:** What's that number?

**Ms Ganley:** We do not have that.

**Mrs. Pitt:** What is the process to collect those monies?

**Ms Ganley:** In cases where you haven't paid your provincial offence ticket or your speeding ticket, we have a number of civil enforcement mechanisms. One of them, usually the most effective, is preventing you from registering your car. If you have outstanding tickets that have sort of gone beyond when their trial date would have been and no one has responded or paid, when you go to register your car at the registry, you'll be unable to do so until such time as you pay that ticket. That is usually the most effective method and gets us the most, but there are other civil enforcement mechanisms available.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. The anticipated increase in the processing of tickets: is that in anticipation of an increase in quotas for issuing tickets for police enforcement in the province?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, it's in response to an anticipation of increased ticket volumes. As the population grows, generally ticket volumes have been growing. In terms of how individual municipal services manage how many tickets they're giving out, we certainly don't have a provincial guideline that deals with the number of tickets. You know, they give out tickets in instances where they see violations, but how they manage that internally is sort of up to them.

**Mrs. Pitt:** So there's no quota directive from the ministry?

**Ms Ganley:** There is nothing from the ministry, no.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. I'm going to move on to page 189, line item 7.9, the sheriffs branch. How much money was spent on the executive protection unit?

**Ms Ganley:** Okay. As we understand it, that is within line item 7.9. We don't have that broken out individually. Those folks work for the sheriffs branch, essentially.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. What's the FTE for the EPU?

**Ms Ganley:** The total FTE count for the sheriffs branch?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Do you have it for the EPU, the actual and then the forecast?

**Ms Ganley:** I don't think we actually have those particular numbers in terms of who is within the EPU. We don't have those numbers with us, I'm afraid.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Could you get them to me?

**Ms Ganley:** I can.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you.

Just a few on – I'm going to run out of time – fish and wildlife management, 7.10. Do you have the FTE for this line item?

**Ms Ganley:** I know we had a small increase in terms of FTEs. The total FTEs in the fish and wildlife branch in this budget are 172 and a half.

**Mrs. Pitt:** How many poaching-related incidents does this line item address?

**Ms Ganley:** Generally fish and wildlife officers will be the ones who are responding to those incidents.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I'd like to invite the third-party opposition member and the minister to speak. Mr. Ellis, would you like to combine your time?

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, we were chatting in regard to the opioid crisis and that police services haven't specifically asked you for assistance. As we know, crime has increased in municipalities and, of course, in rural areas as well. One of the concerns that I have heard, especially in regard to rural communities – whether it's directly related to fentanyl or not is certainly to be debated – is that there is an increase and a spike in crime, and the smaller municipalities have been asking for assistance. Is there any mechanism, any funding, anything that your department is doing to assist them with the spike in rural crime?

**Ms Ganley:** There are a couple of different mechanisms available. Obviously, you know, with respect to most of those rural municipalities and the small urbans under 5,000, the province pays for policing, but if they feel that additional policing is necessary, there is a mechanism by which they can contract for additional officers for those municipalities. Those tools are absolutely available to them if they feel that they need them. In addition, the ministry provides grants in terms of civil forfeiture, which can go towards victims' programs but also towards crime prevention programs. A number of programs dealing with rural crime are funded through that mechanism as well.

**Mr. Ellis:** As the lever, I guess, for those municipalities to get an extra officer or two – and, believe me, I'm no expert on municipal laws or anything like that – really, it's about going to their constituents and asking to raise a tax of some kind, I'm assuming, unless there's anything that's offered.

**Ms Ganley:** Well, I mean, as with most governments, they would have the option of either increasing revenues or sort of decreasing expenditures in another area. Governments the world over sort of signal their priorities through where they're willing to spend their funds, so I think it wouldn't necessarily require a revenue increase. It could, you know, have a decrease in expenditure elsewhere in order to sort of cover the cost of that.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. Thank you.

If we look at the performance indicators on page 102 of the business plan, property crime and the nonviolent crime severity index took a very shocking increase, a spike in 2015 in Alberta. In fact, you know, Canada's index number was 68 in 2015, and Alberta's was 104. Now, it's widely believed that the opioid crisis, the fentanyl crisis, was a major contributor to that. Is that what the data that you collected is telling you as well?

**Ms Ganley:** I think it's difficult to pin it down directly. Certainly, the opioid crisis is a factor in that. As I understand it, what we're hearing from our police partners is that they think that in some areas there may be some other drugs, some other increase in drug use, meth for instance, that may be also responsible for some of that.

There is generally a tendency for crime rates to co-vary to a certain degree, inversely, I suppose, to economic outcomes. So when the economy turns down, there is sometimes an increase in

crime. The mechanisms for that are obviously complex. I don't want to suggest, you know, that there's a direct link in that way, but certainly there is that sort of co-variance that's generally observed. There are a couple of different factors, I think, at work there in terms of that increase, but I think it is a concern and something that's a concern to all Albertans and that we'll continue to monitor very closely.

**Mr. Ellis:** That's great. If the spike continues to increase – I think it increased in 2016; I don't have the number in front of me – if it increases again in 2017, do you have some strategies in place to deal with this?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, certainly, in terms of dealing with crime prevention, I think it's done on a number of different fronts. Certainly, we will continue to provide funding to municipalities. Alberta, sort of relative to other jurisdictions, pays quite a larger share of the policing cost than is the case in other places, and despite significant drops in revenue we have managed to maintain that. I think that that's something we can all be proud of in that way.

5:45

In terms of moving forward, I think a lot of it really has to do with ensuring that we're continuing to support the services that Albertans rely on, ensuring that people who do find themselves in a situation where, through no fault of their own, they have lost their job can access benefits, ensuring that families who are sort of on the edge have access to things like the child tax benefit. Those things are definitely pieces that will help that in the long term as we anticipate sort of seeing some return to prosperity.

**Mr. Ellis:** You touched on prevention. Of course, on page 101, key strategy 2.1 points to a preventive approach to criminal justice. Maybe you can expand on that a little bit in regard to further initiatives that your department is taking as it relates to key strategy 2.1.

**Ms Ganley:** Certainly. A large part of that will rest in other ministries or with our policing partners. Certainly, you know, one of the things that the department provides is civil forfeiture grants, which can go directly to crime prevention initiatives. A lot of those crime prevention initiatives will be initiated on behalf of police services. Obviously, the RCMP we fund directly, and to other police services we provide support for those.

But a lot of crime prevention, particularly when we're seeing that link, potentially, to substance use I think has to do with ensuring that those folks have access to treatment programs when that becomes necessary. Again, these increases will be reflected in other budgets. Ensuring, you know, access to treatment: a lot of money has gone into that. Ensuring access to mental health support: a fair amount has gone into that as well. Increasing the stock of affordable housing and supportive housing spots. All of those things, I think, overall – and certainly in my conversations with our policing partners they have said that a lot of those mechanisms are really necessary.

They have two benefits, right? It's not just a benefit in terms of, you know, lifting families out of poverty to help support children so they ultimately don't wind up in a gang lifestyle. They also have the impact of making sure that police can spend less of their time on sort of social disorder problems and spend more of their time focusing on crime. You'll probably be more familiar than most people around this table with the fact that ultimately, when other services fail, when health services fail, all of that burden falls on the police to deal with that. Ensuring that we're providing that consistent support to those ministries, I think, helps a lot with that.

**Mr. Ellis:** Are you providing guidance to the police services, or is there a working group or a structure in place in regard to prevention?

**Ms Ganley:** Certainly, it's something that is discussed sort of around the table at AACCP a lot. They do have a number of working groups. Right away I don't know if any of them are specifically targeted at that, but we can certainly look at that going forward. I've had the opportunity as well to meet with the new deputy commissioner for the RCMP, and he has actually a lot of ideas, that we've already been discussing, in terms of those sorts of initiatives. I'm sure that we'll see more of that going forward as well.

**Mr. Ellis:** I know you had mentioned earlier that you formed a working group in regard to the, quote, unquote, carding issue. Can you tell us, you know, the status of that working group and what it's doing and what it's accomplished and where it's at right now?

**Ms Ganley:** That was just really to get input from different services in terms of how to handle the issue going forward and what they thought the necessary steps were. I think . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Ms Ganley:** Ten minutes is short.

**The Chair:** It is. It goes fast.

As there's no member from another party or an independent member present, I would now like to invite government caucus members and the minister to speak for the next 10 minutes. Mr. Hinkley, did you want to combine your time?

**Mr. Hinkley:** Yes, with the minister.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Hinkley:** I would like to ask a number of questions on Gladue reports, which you know is one of my favourite topics. We see in the business plan that there are outlines which outline the importance of the Gladue reports. Can you discuss the training and hiring of Gladue report reporters and how you are ensuring the process is open, transparent, and cost efficient?

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely. Gladue reports are prepared by a roster of community-based writers, and those are under fee-for-service contracts.

**Mr. Hinkley:** How do they get on to that roster?

**Ms Ganley:** There is a prequalification type of a process. That's an open competition. It allows everyone to come forward and to be able to meet those requirements. Obviously, because the document is ultimately going to go into court and the idea behind the document is to ensure that the decider, the judge in this case, has access to all of the relevant information about that offender's history and circumstances and how the legacy of residential schools has played into that particular offender's history and circumstances, we need to make sure that that information is presented in a consistent and comprehensible way so that it can assist the court in fulfilling that function and ultimately can have an impact on ensuring that that history of residential schools is being taken into consideration so we're not sort of double-punishing those individuals for things that ultimately they have already suffered. So, you know, there is a prequalification for that competitive process just to ensure that there is a consistency of quality across those reports.

**Mr. Hinkley:** Well, since a judge may or may not request a Gladue report, are there sufficient or contingency funds for those reporters and reports?

**Ms Ganley:** Currently we have what we anticipate will be the appropriate number. Obviously, you know, that will be driven by demand as those demands come forward. Yeah. Those prequalified writers: as people ask for those reports, there may be more work, and the timing of that work will depend very much on when the matter is going back to court. We think these things are very important, so if ultimately we have underestimated how many reports we're going to have, obviously we'll have to re-evaluate that.

**Mr. Hinkley:** So you do have contingency funds if there are more in any given year?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, currently we've budgeted projecting – as one generally does with a budget, we've sort of projected what we anticipate the demand for that will be. But if ultimately the demand exceeds those dollars, we'll have to find those funds elsewhere, either internally or through a request in the normal process.

**Mr. Hinkley:** Yeah. I guess that would be my concern: if there are a lot of requests in a particular year and there's not sufficient funding, would there be a backlog and would cases be delayed or thrown out because no Gladue reports were done? I'm just wanting to hope that there is sufficient funding for them.

**Ms Ganley:** No. Cases will not be delayed or thrown out if that is the case. I mean, as is the case with all budgeting, we try to do our best job to estimate the number of these things – right? – but obviously costs can vary, especially in a large organization like the government. You know, you can usually absorb those variances from different places. Sometimes you have to go forward. I mean, if suddenly we have 700 per cent of what's expected, we'll probably be going to see my friend Minister Ceci about that. Yeah. The budgeting process is there to anticipate how much we think it's going to cost, and we want to do our best job of guessing – okay; I don't want to say guessing. We want to do our best job of estimating what that number is going to be, but are we going to be perfect? Probably not.

**Mr. Hinkley:** Okay. Thank you very much for the information.

**Ms Miller:** Okay. I've read in the news – and I have actually seen it in Red Deer – of the safer communities and neighbourhoods, or SCAN, shutting down drug houses. They're doing it in communities all over Alberta. How does the budget support this work?

5:55

**Ms Ganley:** The safer communities and neighbourhoods team was something we heard a lot about when we first came into government. When we took office, federal government funding for ALERT under the former federal government had ended. They had ceased that funding, and the result was that ALERT was going to be in sort of a deficit position. SCAN was at the time a team that was within ALERT. What the province did is that we stepped in to fill that funding void. We increased the grant to ALERT by \$2.6 million, but we also began paying for that SCAN team directly out of the ministry. You'll see that reflected in the sheriffs budget.

That team: I think the importance of supporting them cannot be overstated. I think that in terms of communities being able to call in and say, you know, "We think there's a problem house," and being able to have a team to respond because – obviously, you know, they do respond to houses within big municipalities, but they

can also go to smaller municipalities, who may not have a team specifically dedicated to that. They can move around, and they're able to provide those resources and support, whoever the police service of the jurisdiction is, to ensure that they get the appropriate information so they can shut down those houses.

Ultimately, that results in safer communities for everyone because it's not just the case – obviously, a drug house is going to be of concern in terms of drugs being sold out of that house, but potentially that attracts a whole bunch of other sort of social disorder problems. It can be associated with gangs. For the people living in those communities, you know, the families living next door just trying to raise their kids, that can be a significant source of concern.

We're very happy to be able to continue to support that team and to support those families.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

Do you expect that the investments in things like housing, education, and mental health will assist in the overall goal of creating fewer conflicts in the family justice system?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes, I absolutely believe that that is the case. When a family is in crisis in some way, be it, you know, just a breakdown of the family or some sort of problem with violence within the family, a lot of times that can be very traumatic for a number of individuals. Ensuring that parents have the ability to go forward, you know, in that time of dissolution of a relationship to seek support is important not only for those parents going forward, so that they are able to cope with the situation and are able to be supported to find resolutions to the problems, which can be legal, financial, and otherwise, that arise surrounding the breakdown of a relationship like that, but it also assists them in being able to support the children through that.

There is a lot of evidence that adverse child experiences, really negative sort of fighting experiences or trauma that children have when they're younger, really multiply as they age, and that can have huge impacts on their ultimate ability to function in society later on. Ensuring that, you know, if there is a marital breakdown or if there is a situation where someone has to flee a home, there is housing available for those people if they're not able to get on their feet right away or ensuring that no one has to stay in a situation just because they lack resources of their own, I think, is absolutely critical. I think, at the end of the day, that really will impact on those children and their future because when they're exposed to those sorts of things and those sorts of traumas when they're young, we know it can ripple throughout their life. Yeah. I think there's just study after study to support that those adverse child experiences create so many more problems down the line. Ensuring that we can support families to support those children is important.

Ensuring that we're supporting those families for their own sake, I think, is very important as well because ultimately when you're dealing with a situation where you're unable to deal with your housing, it's very likely that you're unable to deal with more complex problems: your legal problem, going into the court system. Once families have those sorts of basic needs met – they have, you know, food and shelter – then they're able to resolve their legal situation so that that stops being a source of stress for everyone involved and everyone can move forward.

**Ms Miller:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

For the next 10 minutes I'd like to invite members of the Official Opposition and the minister to speak. Mrs. Pitt, did you want to combine your time?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mrs. Pitt:** All right. Let's talk about policing assistance to municipalities, line item 7.7. Can you explain to me how each level of government contributes to municipal policing costs?

**Ms Ganley:** This will be different from province to province. We've done a fairly good look at jurisdictions. The western provinces are usually the best comparators. In Alberta, if you are a rural municipality or an urban municipality with fewer than 5,000 people, the government pays directly. We contract with the federal government under the PPSA, and that provides RCMP policing for those jurisdictions.

With respect to municipalities that don't fall into that category, they have the choice of whether they would like to contract directly with the RCMP to have them provide policing services or whether they would prefer to establish their own municipal police force. We, of course, have a number of municipalities that have made those decisions throughout Alberta.

In Alberta we do, I think, a very good job of supporting those municipalities. We flow-through the majority of fine revenue from any fines to those municipalities, but in addition Alberta also provides municipal police officer grants – that's based on a per capita formula – and police officer grants as well.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Is that for both RCMP and city police?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Regardless of what they choose in terms of their police service, we fund them the same way.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. That's based on a population formula?

**Ms Ganley:** The municipal police assistance grant is based on a population formula.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. All right. Now, we've obviously seen a rise in crime rates here. Why has the budget remained the same?

**Ms Ganley:** In terms of those estimates, that will be based on sort of what we anticipate our grants will be, and that's based on population. Those individual municipalities will run their police services. It's still the case that in Alberta those municipalities receive more funding per capita than they do in our western neighbours. In other areas they may only provide grants or they may only provide returned fine revenue. In Alberta we provide both. So, actually, the province is paying a greater share of that municipal policing in Alberta than they do in other places. We have, I think, done a very good job of ensuring that we are continuing to provide that support to those municipalities.

**Mrs. Pitt:** My concern there is that there isn't an increase year over year, right? Either population is not increasing – so the grant formula has changed. Is that correct?

**Ms Ganley:** No, the grant formula has not changed. I mean, it'll depend on the individual municipalities exactly how those grants were calculated, but ultimately, yeah, it's sort of – I can actually read it off:

- Towns and cities with a population from 5,001 to 16,666 receive a \$200,000 base payment plus an additional \$8.00 per capita.
- Cities and urban service areas with a population from 16,667 to 50,000 receive a \$100,000 base payment plus \$14.00 per capita.

- Cities and urban service areas with a population over 50,000 receive grants of \$16.00 per capita.

Those numbers will vary with the populations.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Why is there no increase in that line item, though? I don't understand.

**Ms Ganley:** Well, at this point I don't think we know what those population increases are. As those numbers come in, we may have to deal with that through in-year.

**Mrs. Pitt:** So we're going to see that in supplementary supply?

**Ms Ganley:** Potentially, or through internal reallocations, which is usually the way it's handled.

6:05

**Mrs. Pitt:** Okay. The carbon tax, obviously, is going to have an effect on policing services and operation. Where can we see that factored into the budget in terms of municipal police enforcement? Like, were there grants given to different municipalities to help offset the increase in costs from the carbon tax?

**Ms Ganley:** I mean, those grants will obviously not be located within my ministry. There are energy efficiency grants available to all sorts of agencies. Obviously, the information on those is going to roll out over time, and I'm not best placed to speak to that in particular. Again, in terms of municipal police funding, despite falling revenues in the province and despite the fact that we're more generous than any of our neighbours, Alberta continues to provide that support based on population to municipalities.

**Mrs. Pitt:** To be fair, most municipalities in other provinces don't have the carbon tax sort of coupled onto that, or it's been factored into the budget. Now, that's a new cost increase for this province and our municipalities, and as far as I know, the cars that our police officers use use gasoline, for example, which would certainly have an increase in cost amongst other things that the carbon tax does affect. Operation of their buildings and facilities, everything – right? – would see an increase, yet this line item in particular, as we speak to that, doesn't see an increase. So the cost, essentially, would be taken away from the operation in the individual municipalities, maybe resulting in an FTE or multiple FTEs for different departments.

**Ms Ganley:** Well, fortunately, here in Alberta we don't have a sales tax. So not only will they in other provinces be paying that sales tax on items to which that is applicable – and in Saskatchewan on new construction of any facility – they will also be paying, ultimately, in other provinces some sort of carbon pricing because, you know, unless people are planning to leave Confederation, everyone will have carbon pricing in the future. Certainly, it's the case that all other agencies, municipalities – and that can extend to police forces – will have access to energy efficiency programs to try and sort of move that needle on that.

**Mrs. Pitt:** So there's no provision for increased costs because of the carbon tax?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, we will continue to provide, again, increased support or better support than in other jurisdictions, with Alberta continuing to be the sort of overall lowest taxed jurisdiction by a significant margin in the country.

**Mrs. Pitt:** I mean, in comparison to other provinces it's no doubt that Alberta is by far and always has been the best province in this

country. I would certainly not argue that. However, the argument that we're only just slightly better than the others is slightly concerning because I don't actually want to drop any further than we already are. A carbon tax that has not been placed into the budget as a consideration for rising costs would essentially, at the end of the day, mean we're going to have fewer resources for Albertans. So either we're going to be laying off workers because it's not budgeted, or we're going to see this come back in supplementary supply.

**Ms Ganley:** I absolutely have to disagree with that particular assessment.

**Mrs. Pitt:** How does that work, then?

**Ms Ganley:** I would agree in the sense that I think that Alberta is, in fact, the best jurisdiction in the country, and I think that the numbers bear that out. But, certainly, you know, the purpose of this is to move the needle, to cause people to become more efficient. So as those energy efficiency programs roll out, it saves people not only in terms of the tax on that energy but in terms of the actual cost of the energy itself, right? When you're using less energy . . .

**Mrs. Pitt:** That could mean fewer police officers, though. Like, in this particular case, either they're not driving anymore and we've got more bike cops, which is a problem in rural communities, or the numbers just don't add up. I mean, one has to go. I don't know how a police officer is going to become more energy efficient. That's fine if this is the direction that you're going, but without that increase being budgeted, we're going to have front-line police officers laid off, or we're going to have less administration, which puts more burden on our police officers. Perhaps I'm missing where money is allocated elsewhere. That is essentially maybe what I'm getting at here.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Absolutely. That money in terms of energy efficiency grants will be allocated under Environment and Parks, so under the climate leadership office . . .

**Mrs. Pitt:** How do you make a police officer car more energy efficient?

**Ms Ganley:** Well, there is such a thing as energy efficient vehicles, so as police services procure going forward in time . . .

**Mrs. Pitt:** So are we going to be purchasing new cars?

**The Chair:** I would just like to remind members to perhaps maintain a nice tone. The meeting has been going well so far.

**Mrs. Pitt:** I mean no disrespect. I'm just trying to make things make sense.

**The Chair:** I would just like to caution. Just a nice tone without interrupting would be beneficial to all, I think.

For the next 10 minutes I would like to invite Mr. Ellis from the third-party opposition and the minister to speak. Would you like to combine your time?

**Mr. Ellis:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Ellis:** One of the things I was thinking there: Minister, you had spoken with the new deputy commissioner. Is that correct?

**Ms Ganley:** Yes, that's correct.

**Mr. Ellis:** This is absolutely meant as no disrespect to the RCMP, but certainly this is something that – sadly, they're an organization that has always been stressed for resources, like anywhere else in the country. Of course, with our municipalities utilizing their services, especially the smaller ones and the ones that are under 5,000, the RCMP, sadly, at times have a tendency to overpromise and underdeliver. What I guess I'm asking you is: what conversations have you had, if any, with our new deputy commissioner just to ensure that the human resources that have been allocated to jurisdictions are being maintained? As an example, if a certain detachment has – and I throw this out hypothetically – a sergeant and X number of constables, they're not really getting a corporal and two constables, right? They're actually getting what they are paying for. I don't know if you have any influence over that, but have you had any discussions in regard to that?

**Ms Ganley:** Generally deployment decisions are made by the RCMP. They do that sort of deployment work. If what you're referencing is – I do know that they've had challenges recruiting to some rural jurisdictions in Alberta, and sometimes positions will go unfilled for a while. Certainly, that wasn't in my initial discussion with the new deputy commissioner, but we had ongoing discussions with the previous deputy commissioner on this issue and on ensuring that we are able to get timely access to those resources. I know that internally they consider sort of incentives to ensure that people are willing to take those positions and that they're willing to move around. Certainly, they do work very hard on that. You know, we'll continue working with them going forward.

We do sometimes hear from municipalities about concerns about positions that have been vacant for a while, that they've had challenges recruiting to. But I think those are challenges in terms of rural recruitment that are experienced in a number of fields, so with respect to doctors as well.

**Mr. Ellis:** Yeah. I agree. I'm not trying to be adversarial at all, actually. You know, when we have smaller communities that are almost, some of them, taking a vigilante approach to some of the crime in the area, which I would never support, and we as Albertans have a certain amount of resources that have been assigned and paid for, I guess I would encourage you to have those conversations with the deputy commissioner. That certainly would save the people of those rural communities from having to pay for an officer that, really, they've already paid for, if that makes any sense.

**Ms Ganley:** I absolutely agree with you, and I think we will work with them, going forward, on ensuring that that's the case. I think you're referring to some incidents in Saskatchewan, that they've had challenges in terms of rural policing and some vigilantism, and we certainly do not want to see that come here to Alberta. So, yes, we will definitely work with them very closely to ensure that they are maintaining those resources, and we will continue to work with our municipal partners on what they need in order to fulfill that.

6:15

**Mr. Ellis:** Great. Thank you.

Minister, I think you would concur with me that, you know, the Law Enforcement Review Board is one of those agencies that assists in maintaining public trust. As we look at page 189, the Law Enforcement Review Board funding has decreased. Can you maybe explain why the funding has decreased for the Law Enforcement Review Board?

**Ms Ganley:** I am seeing that it's about \$7,000. It's primarily due to lower than budgeted honoraria payments as a result of fewer than anticipated board meetings in 2015-16.

**Mr. Ellis:** Oh. Okay. Fewer than anticipated board meetings: as an ex police officer I guess that is a good thing.

Are the police services, to your knowledge, being able to resolve their citizen complaints, I guess, before they reach the LERB? Is that really what that boils down to?

**Ms Ganley:** Some of that. We probably didn't quite project the right number of meetings, but it's comparatively a small differential. You know, in some cases that will be through being able to resolve those matters internally, and they do have their own processes generally for resolving those matters. The number of hearings tends to vary from police service to police service and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but the board will do as much work as it's provided. I would assume that some of that, at least, is from police services being able to resolve those things themselves.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

Minister, if I can ask you a question just in regard to photoradar. Please forgive me; I'm not familiar with the formula, if there is a formula, in regard to that. When you receive money from the tickets, how is it distributed to municipalities, whether it be to Calgary or smaller jurisdictions throughout Alberta? Is there a formula for that?

**Ms Ganley:** For jurisdictions where they pay for their own policing, the money flows to the province; 26.67 per cent of that money is retained, and the remainder flows through to the municipalities.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. To all municipalities.

I'd like to take Calgary and Edmonton out of the picture here. When we talk about photoradar in some of the smaller jurisdictions, which – please forgive me here – would have a peace officer of some kind, is there any direction that comes from your office in regard to photoradar, or is that strictly at the purview of the municipality that has hired that officer?

**Ms Ganley:** My office is involved in terms of approval of the devices. It's also involved in terms of – we hear from police services. When they have a photoradar location, they sort of have to file information about why that's necessary and why it increases public safety. The police service of jurisdiction, whatever jurisdiction it is, obviously primarily the RCMP, will sign off on sort of what that plan is. In some cases it will be administered by the police themselves. In other cases municipalities have taken that into their own hands. Then that plan is filed for approval, and it has to meet certain guidelines that are set out by the ministry.

**Mr. Ellis:** Has your office approved – or does it have to be approved? – the drone photoradar, which I've heard about recently, a drone type of monitoring?

**Ms Ganley:** I would guess that that would be a new technology. I'm not aware that that has yet come forward. We haven't yet seen an application for that drone technology.

**Mr. Ellis:** Okay. Just to be clear, even if a police service was, we'll say, experimenting with the technology, before they could actually utilize it, it would have to be approved through your office before an actual ticket could be generated, I guess.

**Ms Ganley:** I don't want to stray too far into giving an interpretation of the definition, but I would suspect that a drone would be a new technology, and it would need approval.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

As there is no independent or other party member present, I would now like to invite members of government caucus and the minister to share the next nine minutes, for the remainder of the meeting. Mr. Shepherd, are you wanting to combine your time?

**Mr. Shepherd:** Please.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Minister. We're heading into the home stretch.

Minister, there was some discussion there with Mrs. Pitt, and I just wanted to follow up on some of those questions. Of course, you were discussing some of the challenges that our police forces may face as part of the carbon levy, but you did mention that they would be able to access some programs to help them with them. In that, then, were you referring to the business, nonprofit, and institutional energy savings program?

**Ms Ganley:** Probably. I don't want to say off the top of my head that I know what all the programs are – I know it's fairly complex through that file – but definitely, you know, all institutions and municipalities will have sort of access to different streams of funding in that way. Of course, with respect to police services, they're sort of in a constant process of procurement, right? Much like they can update their radios to fit with the new digital AFRRCS model, they'll be able to update to newer vehicles as well.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Okay. There are opportunities, then, to realize some savings as they continue to modernize some of their technology. Of course, as we continue to build new spaces, there's the opportunity, then, to increase energy efficiency on some of those as well.

**Ms Ganley:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Well, thank you.

We were also discussing earlier, or just starting to before we got cut off, I guess, the opportunities for your department to collaborate with some other areas of government to help realize some efficiencies and help tackle some of these more complex issues that we're dealing with that we recognize fall under health care. Justice can fall under Seniors and Housing. A lot of things can combine together. In this particular circumstance does your department have any particular collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Parks to help educate our police forces and other, I guess, departments within that come through your ministry?

**Ms Ganley:** I'm not aware of any specifically, but it's certainly possible. I mean, those funds will come from municipal budgets, and generally there is, I think, a lot of collaboration between municipalities and Environment and Parks on those factors. In terms of general collaboration I think that those sorts of relationships are incredibly important.

As I've mentioned in responses to others, I think the justice system ultimately gets that which falls through the cracks of other systems. Problems which have not been addressed in the education system, problems which have not been addressed in the health care system, problems which have not been addressed in the housing system: all of those problems ultimately are visited upon the justice system, and that can be a significant challenge because for each one of those cases there are individuals involved, right? You know, you have an accused person, you have a person who's a victim in the case of criminal cases, and in the case of families you often have

not only partners that are in conflict but children who through no fault of their own find themselves in a really bad situation.

One of the most common complaints that we hear from our stakeholder partners and one of the most common things that we hear or certainly that I have heard since taking office is that they are frustrated by the way that ministries fail to collaborate in some cases. You know, decisions are made to cut funding in education, but those decisions are made without consideration of what the ramifications might be for other areas. Decisions are made to not fund social housing, but those decisions are made without consideration of the ramifications those might have on other areas. Certainly, you know, we hear it from our policing partners all the time, but we hear it from all sorts of different community organizations, that they really need government to work together in that way to be able to address those things.

6:25

You need to build infrastructure so that people can have access to affordable housing in situations in which they need it, but that also needs to be funded, so there needs to be operational funding in some cases. If that housing is supportive housing, that operational funding needs to be in place. Ultimately, those ministries need to be able to collaborate. For instance, say you don't keep up your maintenance on your affordable housing stock. Well, eventually you can't use that affordable housing stock, and that means that more people are on the street.

Those people who aren't able to access housing supports are often at greater vulnerability for needing to seek emergency services, so they're potentially at greater vulnerability in terms of costs to the health care system. They're at greater vulnerability in terms of potentially coming into contact with the justice system, so that often is not helpful to them. I think that there has been over the last little while an increasing realization that those systems need to work together in a more appropriate way, and that can only possibly be good for my ministry, at the end of the day, because we really are the place where all those things come in the end.

Actually, you know, some of the first conversations I had, certainly, with the chief of police here in Edmonton were ones in which he asked the province for more support for health, so more support in terms of ensuring that those wraparound services are available, ensuring that for people who really don't need to go to the remand centre but can't be outside because it's cold or they've ingested a substance or they're just having some mental health challenges, there's somewhere where those folks can go, you know, to find access to better support services.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Excellent. Well, thank you, Minister. I absolutely agree. That's something that I've heard from many of the same stakeholders. I often have the opportunity to speak with representatives from the police service as we deal with some of

these issues in and around Edmonton's downtown, around Edmonton-Centre, and that's very much what I'm hearing as well.

They recognize that many of the challenges that we face now are due to short-sighted cuts that had been made in the past, sort of increasing the number of people that we have on the streets who are dealing with mental health or other challenges, which, as you know, puts pressure on our police forces, eats up resources, and makes it more difficult for them to look after some of the more serious crime and stuff that's happening in the area. I definitely appreciate that you are collaborating, then, with some of our other ministries in the government and that we're working on that crossministerial approach to address this.

In terms of outcome 2.3, I also note that you're looking to "work collaboratively with partners to explore gaps and identify creative solutions and strategies to ensure [better] service provision to victims as they [move] through the criminal justice process." Could you identify who some of those partners would be that you'd be working with on that part?

**Ms Ganley:** There are a number of really fantastic victims' services groups that work with victims. They're largely volunteer driven, you know, so those people are incredibly dedicated to their communities, and they're incredibly dedicated to the work that they do, but in a lot of cases they do find that they are needing more resources. Also, there are the victims of crime themselves who are coming forward and what their experience is in terms of being able to access those support workers.

There's also, I think, a role to be played here, to a certain degree, by municipalities because those folks will sometimes be aware of what services are or aren't available in their jurisdictions and, certainly, police partners as well. They work very closely with the police victims' services units in a lot of cases and a lot of other different groups. You know, they hear a lot what the challenges are for individuals moving through the system. We also have some incredibly dedicated Crown prosecutors who sort of take additional time of their own to make sure that they are supporting the victim going through the process. Obviously, one of . . .

**The Chair:** I apologize for the interruption, but I must advise the committee that the time allotted for this item of business has concluded.

I want to extend a special thank you to the minister, the staff, and all committee members for getting through our very first two-part estimates meeting.

I would like to remind committee members that we are scheduled to meet tomorrow, April 5, 2017, from 3:30 to 5:30 to consider the estimates of the Ministry of Status of Women.

Thanks again for the meeting. This meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 6:30 p.m.]









