

Title: Wednesday, March 8, 2006 Public Accounts Committee

Date: 06/03/08

Time: 8:30 a.m.

[Mr. MacDonald in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, everyone. I would like on behalf of all members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to now call this meeting to order. I would like to welcome everyone in attendance, and starting with the hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne, we'll quickly go around the table and introduce ourselves.

[The following members introduced themselves: Rev. Abbott, Mr. Bonko, Mr. Chase, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Morton, Mr. Oberle, Mr. Prins, Mr. Rodney, Mr. Rogers, Mr. VanderBurg, and Mr. Webber]

Dr. B. Miller: Bruce Miller, Edmonton-Glenora.

[The following staff of the Auditor General's office introduced themselves: Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ireland, and Ms White]

Mr. Cenaiko: Harvey Cenaiko, MLA, Calgary Buffalo, Minister of Public Security and Solicitor General.

[The following departmental support staff introduced themselves: Mr. Bauer, Mr. McGhan, Ms Shoush, Mr. Skeet, and Mr. Warner]

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Corinne Dacyshyn, committee clerk.

The Chair: The agendas for this meeting were sent out on Monday with a note reminding members of the procedure agreed to regarding the speaking order of members at future meetings.

I would like to advise that on Monday I tabled the committee's report outlining its recommendations for the changes to the Standing Orders approved at the last meeting and that now it's up to the Legislative Assembly to handle those recommendations.

I would like to advise everyone at this time that everyone should have received the government's responses to the Auditor General's annual report from the Minister of Finance, dated February 27, 2006.

I would like to remind all members that the Public Accounts Committee this morning is examining the Auditor General's report from 2004-05, the hon. minister's annual report from the same fiscal year, as well as the government of Alberta's 2004-2005 annual report. Questions are to be directed on how money is used and spent. This is not a policy committee.

Okay. Any visiting members from the Legislative Assembly who are not members of this committee certainly are welcome to participate, but they cannot vote on any matters that come about.

May I have approval of the agenda, please?

Mr. Rogers: I move, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Rogers. Moved by George Rogers that the agenda for the March 8, 2006, meeting be approved as distributed. All those in favour? Opposed? Seeing none, thank you.

For our meeting this morning with the hon. Mr. Cenaiko, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security, I would now welcome his opening remarks, which hopefully can be limited to 10 minutes or less. Then we'll hear from the Auditor General on his report respective to the Solicitor General's department.

Before you proceed, hon. minister, I would also like to welcome the hon. Member for Edmonton-Calder.

Please proceed.

Mr. Cenaiko: Thank you very much. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Co-chair as well as Mr. Dunn. It's indeed a pleasure for myself and part of our executive team to be here this morning.

As well, I did want to make a note that I do want to thank the Auditor General for the opportunity of meeting with him. Shortly after I became minister, I met with the Auditor General to look at the ministry from the previous year's perspective as well as ongoing into the future. I think the relationship is critical for a ministry to work with the Auditor General throughout the year, not just when the report comes out. So I do want to thank Mr. Dunn for the opportunity to meet with him on an ongoing basis.

I'm pleased to provide you with an overview of the Solicitor General's achievements in 2004-05. Our department's name was formally changed to Solicitor General and Public Security in June 2005.

The success we've accomplished represents the hard work and dedication of the department. Today I'm joined by some members of our executive team. With me are Eric McGhan, the Deputy Solicitor General and Deputy Minister of Public Security; Brian Skeet, assistant deputy minister, public security division; Neil Warner, acting assistant deputy minister, correctional services division; Jim Bauer, our senior financial officer; Bronwyn Shoush, our director of aboriginal justice initiatives; Annette Bidniak, our director of communications; and my executive assistant, Peter Davis.

Our ministry has an incredible responsibility to ensure safe and secure communities for all Albertans to live, work, and raise their families. In 2004-05 we met this responsibility through four core businesses: policing and crime prevention; victims' programs and services; custody supervision and rehabilitative opportunities for offenders; and security services, which includes security for government buildings and employees as well as crisis management planning.

Our strong economy attracts new business and new citizens, but it also attracts criminals. Our ministry took a number of steps in 2004-05 to enhance the feeling of safety in Alberta's communities. Part of that enhancement came by providing law enforcement with the resources they require to face both old and new challenges. During the '04-05 fiscal year we added \$64 million to strengthen policing programs and services in the province, a 56 per cent increase. This increase during that year, '04-05, enabled us to introduce a \$16 per capita grant to assist 50 municipalities in Alberta that pay for policing, including Edmonton and Calgary.

We also eased the financial burden of towns with populations between 2,500 and 5,000 by raising the population threshold at which a municipality becomes responsible to provide for its own policing to 5,000. That means that towns with fewer than 5,000 people no longer have to provide for their own policing. They now receive policing from the provincial police service at no direct cost to the municipality. While the threshold change in the Police Act was not formally proclaimed until the summer of 2005, interim arrangements were made in '04-05 for the province to reimburse the policing costs of municipalities affected by this change.

The Alberta Solicitor General also provided \$2.9 million to Project Kare. As many of you know, Project Kare is a joint RCMP-led task force of 45 police investigators, four of whom are from the Edmonton Police Service. They also include analysts and support staff assigned to investigate high-risk missing person cases across Alberta. Over the last two years the government of Alberta has contributed \$6.6 million to the project to meet staffing and operational demands. We remain very committed to this project, so much so that the deadline for the \$100,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of an individual or individuals, which was set to expire at the end of this March, has been extended indefinitely.

We have also taken a number of steps to protect society's most vulnerable. Alberta was the driving force behind the creation of the National Sex Offender Registry. The Sex Offender Information Registration Act was proclaimed in February 2004 and came into force December 15 of 2004. The registry is an important tool for police investigating sex crimes as the Sex Offender Information Registration Act provides access to current and reliable information about sex offenders in Canada. It is being implemented in Alberta by the Sex Offender Registry Centre of Alberta. Both Project Kare and the National Sex Offender Registry are prime examples of police agencies sharing information in order to make Alberta's communities safer.

To encourage integration among law enforcement agencies, our ministry continues to support the Alberta public safety network, or APSNet. The Alberta public safety network is a project proposed by the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police, which supports integrated policing by allowing the various police agencies in Alberta to electronically access each other's records management systems. APSNet is a communications system designed to enhance the effectiveness of policing and heighten the level of public safety by allowing all police in Alberta to share case information and intelligence. The system is being developed as we speak by the Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta and will be integrated with the RCMP new records management system, which just came in this past year.

Plans were also developed in '04-05 to implement the MLA Policing Review Committee report recommendations. During this review, consultations were held with various stakeholders to determine what legislative changes were needed to enhance police accountability. Bill 36, the Police Amendment Act, was introduced in the Legislature in the '04-05 fiscal year. It became law in June of '05, providing for greater civilian oversight of the police complaints and disciplinary process and relieving smaller towns of policing responsibility, as mentioned earlier.

8:40

We recognize that safe communities are a shared responsibility and that we cannot do it alone. To support community initiatives, a revitalized crime prevention grant program was offered to Alberta community organizations, including aboriginal communities, in '04-05. Nearly \$600,000 in grants was distributed to 49 groups for various crime prevention initiatives. The Saddle Lake Boys and Girls Club was one of the recipients of a crime prevention grant.

The Alberta Solicitor General also partnered with First Nations organizations and RCMP K Division to deliver a youth mentoring project entitled *The Fifth Season: The Healing Season*. Inuit singer, songwriter, and aboriginal role model Susan Aglukark facilitated interactive workshops with youth in nine aboriginal communities on issues such as self-esteem, goal setting, and overcoming drug and alcohol abuse. In total over 450 aboriginal youth and 3,500 community members took part.

Investing time and resources into crime prevention and safer communities is a great benefit to all Albertans. The Eden Valley prescription drug abuse pilot project is another initiative that the Alberta Solicitor General and Alberta Justice have taken on that shows great promise for the future. In '04-05 our ministry, along with a number of provincial, federal, regional, and agency partners, worked with the Stoney Bearspaw band at Eden Valley on a community and youth development approach to address prescription drug abuse, suicide prevention, and family violence in the community.

The project was developed in response to a direct request for assistance from the leadership of the community. It focuses on relationship building, promoting respect for the law, and developing

a support network for the community. We continue to provide assistance to Eden Valley to help them develop their safe communities action plan. The preliminary results from this pilot project are very encouraging to us. They show that the community is more empowered and members feel more hopeful to address issues that deal with building a safe and healthy community. The results also indicate that promising best practices will emerge from this pilot that will benefit other communities across the province.

How do we know when we have safe communities? We measure this through the public's perception of safety in their homes, safety in their neighbourhoods, crime rates, and victimization rates. It's satisfying to know that the majority of Albertans report that they feel safe in their homes and communities, a sentiment that has been consistent over the past several years. It's good to know, but it's not good enough for us. We want all Albertans to feel safe and secure in their homes and communities, and I am proud to say that in 2004-05 Alberta had the lowest overall crime rate of the four western provinces for the 12th straight year. Property and violent crime rates both dropped and are the lowest in western Canada. Our target for the victimization rate in '04-05 was 25 per cent, and while our result of 26 per cent did not quite meet our victimization rate target, I am confident we will reach our target next year.

This leads me to discuss our victims programs and services. Recognizing the needs of victims in the criminal justice system helps restore balance in our society in a humane and fair way and is an important goal of our justice system. In July '04 the Treasury Board approved funding for the 37 government-accepted recommendations from the 2002 victims of crime consultation. In the '04-05 fiscal year eight recommendations were successfully implemented while progress is being made on an additional 23. Work has not begun on the remaining six recommendations.

Many of the recommendations require extensive changes, including legislative amendments or the creation of new programs and services. Some of the successfully implemented recommendations included increased overall funding for approved grant applications via police-based and community victims assistance programs. Funding rose from \$2 million to \$3.2 million a year.

In 2004-05 a total of \$3.2 million was provided to 88 victim assistance programs in Alberta, a 61 per cent increase over 2003-04. The increased funding meant that the minimum base grant to these victim assistance units increased from \$2,000 to \$8,000 per year and the maximum allowable grant increased from \$75,000 to \$100,000. As well, the financial benefits program continued to experience considerable growth in applications. In 2004-05, Mr. Chairman, 1,831 new applications were received, and awards of \$8.4 million were granted on 1,106 cases.

It's our responsibility to ensure that victims are treated with dignity and respect. We fulfill this responsibility by striving to ensure that they receive information about our programs and services, assistance with the criminal justice process, and that eligible victims receive financial benefits promptly. Overall, the majority of victims in Alberta report that they are satisfied with the services they receive, and 98 per cent of Alberta police services or RCMP detachments have or have access to a victim services unit. Alberta Solicitor General exceeded its targets by 2 and 3 per cent respectively in both of these areas, and we will continue to work hard to ensure that the experience of victims in the justice system is positive.

In fact, to illustrate our continued dedication in this area, a couple of days ago we launched a victim services awareness campaign. The campaign consists of radio ads and a series of posters that provide information about victim assistance programs. The campaign slogan is *Victims Deserve to be Heard* and encourages victims to report

crime to police and to contact their local victim assistance program. This campaign was developed in consultation with stakeholders that deliver services to victims of crime, including the Police Based Victim Services Association.

It's also our ministry's responsibility to assure effective and efficient supervision of offenders while they are in custody and to offer them opportunities to become law-abiding citizens. In 2004-05 the Alberta Solicitor General admitted 28,485 offenders to remand and provincial correctional facilities – 28,485 offenders. We have maintained our status as the province with the lowest cost per diem in the country by housing adult offenders in correctional facilities. Like every other government department we are accountable to the public for how we use their tax dollars. The lower adult offender costs reflect the importance this ministry puts on operating and managing correctional facilities in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. Our ability to do this was cited verily by the MLA corrections review, that found that, overall, Alberta correctional centres are well managed and cost-effective. Additionally, 99.7 per cent of offenders who were released temporarily from a correctional facility for work, education, or on a compassion leave program did not reoffend during the period of temporary absence.

Young offenders are also given a chance to learn from their mistakes through an alternative to the formal court process called the youth justice committees. The Government MLA Corrections Review in 2002 recommended that we continue to support youth justice committees and expand the program, so in 2004-05 the government of Alberta provided \$325,000 in assistance to 109 youth justice committees across the province.

Youth justice committees are an essential part of the youth justice system. With their help Alberta has reduced its reliance on youth custody while still maintaining the second lowest youth crime in western Canada. Young offenders who complete the extrajudicial sanctions program, administered by the majority of youth justice committees, will not receive a young offender record for the offence that led to their participation in the program.

Extrajudicial sanctions can include committee service, education programs, essays, and written or personal apologies to the victims. This alternative is open to youth who have committed a first or second offence and have accepted responsibility for the crime. Youth charged with serious or violent crimes or with a history of repeat offences are not eligible. We know that these youths are more likely to violate their probation, so it makes sense that closer supervision will mean that more violations are detected.

The success of our probation or community supervision programs has declined somewhat in the past year and is below the target we were hoping to achieve. In late 2004 the ministry hired an additional 12 probation officers. We believe that a change in supervision standards allow these officers to focus more attention on the higher need and higher risk cases, both adults and young offenders. It's important to make the distinction that the courts select offenders to be supervised in the community. The role of community corrections is to enforce the courts' orders and report violations.

In addition to probation success, we measure rehabilitation of offenders by the level of offender participation in our work, education, treatment, or life management programs. The actual number of hours of community service is declining partially because fewer offenders are available for work programs and partially because more offenders are choosing to pay their fines. However, the proportion of offenders in the eligible population that participate in programs is very high, surpassing our estimated target in the past year.

8:50

Another recommendation from the MLA review of correctional

services is the use of electronic monitoring. This involves offenders being outfitted with an electronic bracelet that cannot be removed without corrections staff being alerted. The ministry started looking at the idea in early 2005, and a pilot project was launched in September 2005 and is ongoing as we speak.

We are constantly hearing about population pressures in our remand centres, and this segment of the inmate population is growing beyond forecasted expectations both provincially and nationally. It's an unexplained phenomenon. However, in late 2003 correction services developed a series of options for managing remanded offenders and relocated many of them to other correctional facilities. We are still actively looking at all options to help us alleviate overcrowding in our remand centres.

That's the time, the cut-off point that you want me to take, Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: No, hon. minister. We thought that opening remarks would be 10 minutes, not until 10 to 9.

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, it's very good though. I see that everybody's paying very good attention because it's very interesting. I could go on for a couple more minutes.

The Chair: No, Mr. Minister. We have a long list of questions already to direct your way, and we have to hear from the Auditor General.

Mr. Cenaiko: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Dunn: To the committee, our report starts at page 297 of last year's annual report. Our work at the ministry last year focused on following up a prior year recommendation on provincial policing standards. The ministry has made satisfactory progress in implementing this recommendation to date. Police services are testing the provincial policing standards, and the ministry has set up a compliance assessment team to monitor the implementation of the standards by all the police services across Alberta. Good systems for assessing the compliance of the police services with the standards are critical to ensuring that police services are delivered in a consistent manner throughout the province. We will continue to follow up the implementation of this recommendation in future years and will report our findings through to this committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will take any questions that are directed at us by this committee.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dunn.

If we could start with questions, please. Mr. Bonko, followed by Reverend Abbott.

Mr. Bonko: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 104 of the annual report here it talks about other cash benefits on the first line item there. It's not clear if the position was held by one or two people in that entire year. It says: \$116,548 in other cash benefits. Given that most Albertans don't make that salary in a single year, in benefits how can the minister justify that as a payout?

Mr. Cenaiko: Page 104. Which one are you looking at?

Mr. Bonko: It's under Deputy Minister. It says "base salary" and then "other cash benefits."

Mr. Cenaiko: Yes. Well, I think that has to deal with part of his

pension and everything else in there, but I'll let the deputy minister respond to the cash benefits.

Mr. McGhan: Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, to the question of the hon. member: in the period from April 1, 2004, to March 31, 2005, if you'll recall, there was a provincial election, and there was a change in ministers, and there was a change in deputy ministers. That happened in the Department of Solicitor General and Public Security, and there were actually two deputy ministers. My predecessor retired at the end of November, and then I started in December. When my predecessor retired, he had a significant amount of accumulated vacation built up, and there was a severance amount as part of his contract. All of those costs were during that fiscal period there. I was not the benefactor of that line, unfortunately.

So that's for two deputy ministers, basically one for nine months and one for four months during that period of time but some other significant amounts as part of the contract settlement when my predecessor retired.

Mr. Bonko: Okay. Thank you for that one.

I was just wondering. If we've got such cash benefits that we can pay out, could we not direct some of that money to preventative programs such as the DARE program that are operating in schools and do need that cash injection?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, obviously, we have to pay our employees. In this case, as the deputy minister mentioned, this was an issue where the previous deputy minister retired, and obviously these were the benefits accrued by him and payable to him.

I don't disagree with you that provincial programs such as the DARE program – although we are reviewing that program – are extremely important in the education of our children and/or the education of the community regarding the safety and security of our communities. So I don't disagree with you; I agree with you. We are and will continue to provide funding in those areas of prevention.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Reverend Abbott, please, followed by Mr. Chase.

Rev. Abbott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Minister, for being here with your staff. I know that we talk a lot about money at Public Accounts, and I'm certainly happy that we are spending more money on rural police and that we're helping the smaller municipalities with some of their policing costs. But rehab and restitution are also very much a part of your measures and outcomes, and I've noticed that in your annual report on about page 37 it talks about the completion rate of young offenders on probation. Why is your completion rate of young offenders on probation so low? It talks about the percentage of supervision cases that were successfully completed, and it's around the 62 per cent mark for this fiscal year.

Mr. Cenaiko: Right. I think that we're all aware of the fact that part of the issue that we're dealing with, of course, is dispositions by our judges. We have no control over that. If they're provided with probation, they enter into a program – obviously, the young offenders – that we provide a service to. We monitor their activities and ensure that they report to us.

Again, part of the issue that we're dealing with is that the new federal youth justice legislation I guess you could say tied our hands in the fact that we have to release more and more young offenders

back into the community. It's difficult because the ones that we do hold, for example, are individuals who commit very serious offences, such as the issue that occurred here in Edmonton on the ETS bus this last weekend. So you can see that the ones that we do hold in our centres are for the most serious offences or the most serious crimes that have been effected. The number of other young offenders, when they do get released into the community, it's difficult to monitor them on a continual basis.

I can tell you that we have 17,000 individuals on supervision orders or some type of custody disposition that are in the community – 17,000 offenders in the community right now. How many staff do you have, Neil?

Mr. Warner: Four.

Mr. Cenaiko: How many probation officers do we have?

Mr. Warner: We have about 200.

Mr. Cenaiko: About 200 probation officers looking after 17,000. So they have a pretty full work plate.

So we are working on that area. Obviously that's a concern to us, a concern to me, and I think it's a concern to the public. Again, we have a tremendous team of very professional probation officers and case workers that are committed to the job, committed to this ministry. They don't complain. On the odd occasion you hear from the union; otherwise, they don't complain.

So those are some of the issues that we're dealing with due to the high numbers. As well, we did provide additional officers two years ago, and we'll continue to look at providing additional officers over the next few years as well.

Rev. Abbott: Thank you. My supplemental. First I need to correct a statistic that I quoted. I guess that in '04-05 the actual was 55 per cent. The target was 62 per cent.

If you flip over the page and you look at the completion of adult probation, it's also very low: 60 per cent compared to 65 per cent. I guess I'm wondering if there's any relation between the two and, you know, why the targets wouldn't be somewhat higher as well.

9:00

Mr. Cenaiko: That's a good question. Really, it's the same with young offenders as it is with adult offenders in the fact that the courts have deemed that conditional sentences or probation in the community or some type of community order provides them with the rehabilitation that they need. Now, you may disagree with that, as may members of the public, but on the other hand, these are decisions made by the justice system. Obviously, we cannot direct the justice system how to make those decisions with regard to offender programs and/or the release of offenders back into the community.

Our job and our role, though, is to ensure that we can monitor them, ensure that they are attending the courses that they've been ordered to take. If they haven't, obviously they're in breach of their probation, and they can be or would be arrested by our officers and then brought back into the system to go through the whole process all over again because of the breach of the order.

Rev. Abbott: Great. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Chase, followed by Mr. Oberle, please.

Mr. Chase: Thank you. My question has to do with page 83 of the 2004-2005 annual report. However, I want to begin by thanking you for the respectful manner in which you recognized the value of my Edmonton-Mill Woods colleague's questions yesterday and answered them to the best of your ability. Thank you very much.

Mr. Cenaiko: Thank you, Harry.

Mr. Chase: We all want Albertans to feel secure and well served, and I look forward to your answers today. On page 83 of the 2004-05 report it says that grants increased from \$2.9 million in 2004 to \$51 million in 2005. Could you please explain why the grants increased to such a great amount?

Mr. Cenaiko: The grants on page 83. You're looking at the actual of \$2.875 million to the actual?

Mr. Chase: Basically \$2.9 million to \$51 million.

Mr. Cenaiko: Okay. The increase of \$47.8 million in '04-05 is primarily due to a new grant program to help towns and cities better meet the costs of policing. This is what I mentioned in my opening remarks regarding providing additional funding to municipalities. That was a 56 per cent, I think, increase over previous years. The \$16 per capita is where we went to in that year, 2004-05; it was \$16 per capita throughout every municipality. That was the program at that point in time. That's what the largest increase is there.

Now, some of those funds as well – I think it was that year – moved from Municipal Affairs. It was the old policing grant turned into a municipal grant for policing. Some of those funds moved from Municipal Affairs back to the Solicitor General – I think it was originally transferred over to Municipal Affairs in 1992 or 1993 and became this sort of municipal grant type of thing. We were able to encourage the government to move that back into policing, to direct it to policing versus going into a municipal pot and some of it going to lights and bus stops and bus shelters, you know, saying that that's part of crime prevention. That's where we want to separate that out, to ensure that it was going out to policing.

The Chair: Mr. McGhan, did you have anything to add to that?

Mr. McGhan: No.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.
Please proceed, Mr. Chase.

Mr. Chase: Thank you. My supplementary question has to do with sustainability. Why did you choose the grant route instead of sustainable, predictable funding? Why go with ad hoc, unpredictable grants? Can the various districts count on continuing input funding is what I'm getting at. How can they predict?

Mr. Cenaiko: That's a good question. I think the answer isn't complex. The answer is really this. When you talk about crime prevention or policing programs, if you put a street light in this area outside the Annex, it provides a lot more lighting. Is that a crime prevention program? If you build a larger road with a bigger sidewalk, is that a crime prevention program, or could it be tied in? Some municipalities would say: yes, it is. That's what we wanted to get away from. We wanted to ensure that the policing grants were for policing.

When the grants were going out in '04-05, we wanted to ensure that they were committed to ensuring that the funds went to policing,

so we asked them. We don't have a copy of it here, but we asked them to ensure that they would put this money towards policing in their community, so it couldn't be used for some kind of other community program. That's why it's a grant program.

Obviously, the concern that I have, with a policing background, is that we want to ensure that the funding is going to policing, that it doesn't go into the pot that says: well, we need a couple of firefighters too. This was directed to policing for policing whether it was for equipment, whether it was for additional resources, whether it was for new prevention programs in the community, or whether it was to garner community support from various community leaders and get them together on a regular basis to meet and discuss the issues in the specific community that you live in. We wanted to ensure that the funding was there for them to use for policing and not for some of those municipal programs that might be the nice thing to do, and we'll call it crime prevention.

The Chair: Mr. Oberle, please, followed by David Eggen.

Mr. Oberle: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, if I could direct your attention to page 17 of the annual report, top of the page. This is a presentation in a different manner of the same question that Reverend Abbott asked. I just wanted to follow up on that question a bit. Fifty-five per cent of young offender probation dispositions were successfully completed, and sixty per cent of adult probation dispositions were successfully completed. If you looked at that the other way, that would mean that 45 per cent of young offenders either committed another offence or for some reason were in breach of their probation conditions and 40 per cent of adults. You can say that?

Mr. Cenaiko: Yeah, that's right.

Mr. Oberle: Okay. Those numbers seem, I guess, alarming to me. Recognizing your comments about the justice system and feelings on putting offenders back in the community for rehabilitation, can you frame those numbers for me? Do you know how they compare to other provinces or Canadian averages?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, I'll ask Neil to answer that, but I can tell you this, though. Again, as I mentioned earlier, really these are – you don't want to say the worst of the worst – young individuals that will reoffend. Neil might correct me on this. They probably have a 90 per cent chance of graduating into an adult offender system. That's not good.

Since the Youth Justice Act came in years ago, we did see our populations decrease roughly by half in our young offender centres. Our population in our adult offender centres as well decreased with new court dispositions and offender programs ordered by the justice system. Now we are getting a clientele that is very hard core and that is dangerous. Obviously, the programs we have to provide to them have to be measured in order to look at the success rate. Hopefully, none of them will reoffend, but they are very serious offenders.

Neil, I'll maybe let you talk about national issues.

Mr. Warner: Thank you, Minister. I believe those numbers are comparable across the country. We may be a little lower in terms of success because, ironically, we do the job a little better than some places. Some of these unsuccessfuls are a function of how well we monitor these offenders, and we do that very well. For example, we're more aware of breaches of probation than perhaps some other jurisdictions might be. It's an irony of this measure. But, certainly,

the minister is absolutely right. The YCJA has a number of hoops to jump through before someone is put into incarceration, and as a result we get a much more serious type of offender than was once the case.

[Mr. VanderBurg in the chair]

9:10

Mr. Oberle: Okay. Thank you.

I have another, perhaps more general question about this section, I think. While I find the performance measures and targets useful here, unless I missed it somewhere, on crime rates in general I don't see anything about drug-related crime. I'm wondering if it would be useful to include measures and targets about that in future as it's obviously a very public issue.

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, that's a good question. We have to remember that we only facilitate offenders that are two years or less unless they're young offenders who have been sentenced to a maximum of five years. Otherwise, our offenders are two years or less, so any of those other programs over five years would go to one of our other institutions: Edmonton, Bowden, or Drumheller.

Neil, can you address the drug issue?

Mr. Warner: Yes. I think that we do track. We ask offenders to report their drug use when they come in, and we've been tracking that for a while. That may be, in fact, a measure that we could look at in future.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you. We'll move to Dave Eggen, but I'll ask my colleagues all around that table: you know, we've gone through four questions; we have 16 more. If you'd like to tighten them up, we could get through more. If not, we'll have the minister do a written response to the questions.

Go ahead, Mr. Eggen.

Mr. Cenaiko: Yeah. We'll try to speed up.

Mr. Eggen: Or be shorter, I guess.

The Deputy Chair: It's your call.

Mr. Eggen: Okay. No worries.

Thanks for coming this morning. My question is to do with page 16 of your report, ensuring safe communities in Alberta. You have the public perception of safety as a target of 82 per cent, and 77 per cent of people feeling reasonably safe in Alberta. I'll just ask very quickly: I presume that this is one of the performance measures that you would like to use, to increase. Yeah?

Mr. Cenaiko: Yes.

Mr. Eggen: Okay. What I'm not seeing in the budget here is a specific focus, say, on putting more police on the street. Of course, perception is the public's perception, whatever it happens to be. Right?

[Mr. MacDonald in the chair]

Mr. Cenaiko: Exactly.

Mr. Eggen: I'm just looking to see why there's not a focus on increasing the overall FTEs as a proportion of the population of

Alberta. My understanding is that the province is growing rapidly, yet we're not meeting a per capita increase that would be commensurate with that population increase.

Mr. Cenaiko: A very good question, Mr. Eggen. The short answer is that in 2004-05 the funding for municipalities, as Mr. Chase talked about regarding the increase in funding, was sort of the first year of a turnaround in funding to municipalities. You are right. There was an increase in funding to municipalities in '04-05. Obviously, in '05-06 you're aware of the increase of nearly 200 officers. Of course our budget is coming out and has been announced for March 22, so again we'll see additional officers out on the street as well.

That's the short answer.

Mr. Eggen: Okay. That's good, yeah, for the sake of brevity here. I guess we've had a number of people expressing their concerns about the judicial system releasing people onto the street faster. You mentioned a number which intrigued me: 200 probation officers for 17,000. Is that young offenders?

Mr. Cenaiko: No, that's total offenders throughout the province.

Mr. Eggen: Total offenders.

Again, you know, back to that performance measurement of people feeling reasonably safe, wouldn't it be reasonable to focus on the reality? If it's your perception that the judicial system is releasing more people onto the street earlier, your side to react to that would be to increase the amount of probation officers in proportion to the number of cases that are out there.

Mr. Cenaiko: That's another good question. I think the caseload per officer is such that they have a caseload and a geographic area that they actually monitor their offenders in. Obviously, some areas are more remote throughout Alberta, and places like Edmonton, Calgary, and Red Deer have a more concentrated number of offenders. So that's an area that, of course, we want to keep looking at, but it's also a question that you may want to ask the Minister of Justice when he's sitting here regarding those orders.

Mr. Eggen: Okay. Thanks, then. Just as a written – you don't have to answer it now, but I'd like to see the methodology on that reasonably safe thing. It seems out of place with what the public perception is of feeling safe on the streets. I would like to see how you sort that out.

Mr. Cenaiko: Yeah. We can clarify that for you in a written submission.

The Chair: Thank you. Written clarifications are through the clerk to all members, please, hon. minister.

Mr. Rogers, followed by Reverend Miller.

Mr. Rogers: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'd like to thank you and your team for a very comprehensive report. On page 25 you talk about the strategy to reinstate funding for crime prevention and restorative justice programs. Could you elaborate for us, Mr. Minister, on some of the success that you've had in supporting grassroots initiatives in order to promote and enhance community security and safety?

Mr. Cenaiko: Sorry, I missed that, George. What strategy number: 1.6, 1.5?

Mr. Rogers: Page 25; it talks about the strategy to reinstate funding.

Mr. Cernaiko: Okay; 1.6. This area deals with looking at strategy regarding crime prevention and the opportunity regarding crime prevention programs. Through the approval of Treasury Board in 2004-2005 funding for crime prevention grants was reinstated, and the Alberta community crime prevention grant program run by this ministry provided 49 community initiatives with nearly \$600,000 – \$596,000 – to support a variety of grassroots safety and crime prevention programs throughout the province. These are programs that are initiated by the community, that are initiated by community leaders that want to look at various programs to make their communities safer and secure.

The Alberta community restorative justice grant program was also established in '04-05, and it was designed to deliver restorative justice processes that meet the needs of victims but as well of offenders and the community. This is where all three participate at the table together in looking at solutions to some of those offences that may have been committed out in the community. So 13 initiatives received over \$335,000 of Alberta community restorative justice grant funding as well.

So nearly \$1 million was provided back to the community regarding restorative or crime prevention programs.

Mr. Rogers: Thank you, Mr. Minister. My final supplemental, just a more general question. In your opening comments you spoke of your success in keeping the cost of housing inmates down in Alberta, and I refer to a recent report that suggested that it costs on average about \$85,000 federally to keep an inmate annually. How does that compare in Alberta, not necessarily exact numbers but can you comment on that type of a relationship? Are we doing better in Alberta?

Mr. Cernaiko: The newest numbers that I just got last week show that we're at \$102 per day per inmate in the province of Alberta. Federally I believe that the cost is around \$258 per inmate per day.

I really have to give credit to our senior executive team, who provide the programs within our corrections facilities very cost effectively. We are always exploring new initiatives within corrections to ensure that. You know, we want to ensure that the programs are there, but as well we have to ensure the safety and security of our officers.

So, you know, I'm proud that it's \$102. On the other hand, if it was \$150 per inmate per day, really, what are you getting for your value? So it's different in other provinces. But here we are exploring at this point 12-hour shifts versus 8-hour shifts to see if that will decrease the numbers of sick time and overtime that have been instituted over the last few years.

9:20

We're looking at new opportunities as well. These are issues that relate to the professionalism of our officers that work in these facilities, and we want to ensure their safety and security but, as well, provide the offenders with the programs they need and ensure that the food and the amount of food and calories that they get per day meet the Canada food guide. Actually, right now it exceeds the Canada food guide's recommendations for food and calorie intake.

The Chair: Thank you.

Reverend Miller, please, followed by Doug Griffiths.

Dr. B. Miller: I want to stay on that same topic because you have many times kind of boasted about those statistics on page 44 of

\$101.51 and the second lowest in Canada for housing inmates. Isn't this directly related to the fact that there is so much overcrowding? For example, in the remand centre if you have double-bunking and so on causing all kinds of problems, how can you boast of this statistic? Do we have Third World conditions in our correctional institutes in Alberta? What kind of policy is this?

Mr. Cernaiko: Well, I'm not boasting at all. I'm saying that we're very efficient. We definitely aren't in a Third World position. If you go to a Third World country – I know, Reverend Miller, that you've travelled. In fact, I'm sure that when you were in Turkey, you may have seen some deplorable situations there. So, no, this is not Third World. This is a phenomenon not just in Alberta; this is a national phenomenon, where they are double-bunking and triple-bunking, so to speak, throughout Canada. It's happening right across Canada. So it's not just Alberta. Right now we are looking at new opportunities, new initiatives.

We have a new Edmonton remand centre on our capital request in our budget. But, again – and you're probably well aware – what would the constituents in your community rather have: a school or a remand centre? I'm sure they'd vote for a school versus a remand centre. This is true though. If you went to any community, they'd say, "We want more schools," and the remand centre is going to be at the bottom of the list.

So what do we have to do over the next little while? We have it in our capital request. Hopefully, we're going to have it funded, but we have to look at alternatives, which we are. We're looking at ensuring that the bed count, for example in Medicine Hat or Peace River, is to the maximum that we can so that we can transfer prisoners that are sentenced to all of our outside facilities away from Edmonton. We are now starting to utilize some of the pods at Fort Saskatchewan for remand. Even if we did get the money today for a new remand centre, we still have five years to go to continue to provide lodging for remanded offenders.

We've met with Canadian corrections to look at possibilities of working together on a program there. I haven't had the opportunity to meet with the new minister, but the previous minister, Anne McLellan, and I met and discussed this at length. We're also looking at the option of Grande Cache as a sentenced offender centre, not a remand centre but a sentenced offender centre, which, again, will free up some space in the interim at Fort Saskatchewan. Obviously, remand presents issues where offenders want to meet and seek advice from their legal assistance or lawyers regarding their cases.

So those are some of the issues that we're dealing with regarding that. I don't boast that the cost is the lowest, but I am very supportive of the professionalism of our officers as well as the executive team that we have that run a very, very progressive program within our eight correctional facilities.

The Chair: Thank you.

Your follow-up question, please.

Dr. B. Miller: Yes. I think it's a very serious issue. You know, most of my constituents are really fearful of what happens when inmates get out after they've only been there a couple years.

Mr. Cernaiko: Yes.

Dr. B. Miller: So my question is about the costs, the low costs. I mean, you mention programming here. I had a tour of a couple of correctional centres, and I don't see that much programming. Fifteen per cent of inmates are mentally ill. I don't see many

programs that are in place to deal with it. These people are going to get out, and if their programs are undercut in terms of costs, then how is that in the interest of public security?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, to be short, Mr. Chairman, the average length of stay in our remand centres is 13 days, so there is no programming in there for remanded offenders. In our corrections facilities the average is 33 days. So it's pretty difficult unless we know that they're long-term offenders, when we can provide various programs, whether it's conflict resolution, if it's courses regarding drug rehabilitation that they may need, alcoholism, life management skills, those types. We have to look, obviously, at the length of time the inmate is going to be serving. Again, the average in our sentence correction facilities is 33 days, so that's not a lot. We can only provide them with so much, I guess, education or so much programming service to assist them when they are released. I mean, we can't hold them in there longer if we wanted to. Warrant expiry means they get out, and they're on their own there; then they're on probation. So we have to monitor that.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Griffiths, followed by Mr. Bonko, please.

Mr. Griffiths: Thank you. Mr. Minister, I want to thank you up front. You've given some of the most candid and detailed answers I've ever heard at Public Accounts, so thank you.

I ask every minister the same question. There are three types of measurements when it comes to success. There are satisfaction surveys; there are outputs, what you're generating; and then there are outcomes. I think that outcomes are the most meaningful and realistic of any measurement. So I'm wondering what your department has done to improve, for instance on pages 16 and 17, the measurement ability of your department, to measure the success it has, to move more from satisfaction surveys through to outputs and finally on to outcomes to measure the success of your department's initiatives.

Mr. Cenaiko: That's a very good question, Doug. You know, you're right. Obviously, it's a 360-degree turn with regard to satisfaction because, first of all, you have to as well measure the satisfaction of your employees that work for you within the ministry. I'm very honoured to be responsible for 2,300 extremely dedicated individuals, whether they're in corrections, whether they're provincial protection officers, whether they're in any of the programs that we have. Part of my role as the minister is to ensure that they have the tools they need to do the work out there on the street and within our office.

The satisfaction that we want to see from the programs we provide, whether it's through funding or whether it's through police programming or crime prevention methods, will provide us with, obviously, that perception by the public that they live in a safe community as well as the perception by the public that the police are well trained, are responding to the concerns. So it ties in with the number of programs. We have to work very closely with the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police regarding standards, regarding ensuring that the programs out there are in place.

Obviously, the Auditor General's concerns regarding audits and measuring those standards I take very seriously, and this past year we hired six individuals that are actually doing the audit of the standards that were requested, I believe. Now we're doing that, and we can be able to measure. So there shouldn't be a difference in programming, whether it's in Medicine Hat or whether it's in Grande Prairie or Fort McMurray to Crowsnest Pass or Calgary to

Edmonton. Programming and/or standards have to be in place, and they will be in place so that the community shouldn't be able to say: well, we have a better police service than you. The programs have to be in place, and obviously the municipalities are responsible under the MGA to provide policing. But it's standards within policing and the conduct of policing that we have to be very careful of.

9:30

So when you talk about satisfaction rating, it goes from our ministry to our ministry's employees to policing programs in the community and then to the public. Again, the public's comments and satisfaction surveys come back, and those are the ones that we do really want to measure. I'd like to ask the public a lot more questions, but we're sort of limited to these in our business plan. Obviously, these are the ones that give us direction on how well we are doing, what we can do to change, how we can ensure that we're meeting the needs of the community.

It's not just money, and it's not just about – you know, I disagree with Mr. Eggen, some of his comments regarding putting 500 more police officers out there. It's not the issue of just putting more officers out there. It's the issue of: how do we deploy a service model that will provide better policing to all Alberta?

So we have to look – and that's what we're doing. We're working with all our police agencies in the province to look at new service delivery models of policing and law enforcement. The law enforcement matrix is a continuum that starts with the security industry and goes right up to the highest trained police investigator that we have in the community. You know, normally homicide investigators and internal affairs investigators come with those highest levels and highest degrees of capabilities with regard to investigations.

So does that answer your question? I see that the chairman is looking at me here. I'm rambling, he's saying.

What's your second question, Doug?

Mr. Griffiths: My first supplemental to the minister. I'm wondering if I might have missed it in the report, but three measures of outcomes, really significant measurements, that I didn't find in the report were the rate of recidivism, like reoffences, over lifetime not just during parole; conviction rates, you know, how many people were charged over how many people are actually convicted; and community engagement levels. That would be three outcome levels. I'm wondering if I missed them in there or if they were done.

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, the conviction rates wouldn't be us, Doug. That would be Justice that would keep track of that.

The recidivism rate: we keep track of that. I mentioned it briefly earlier, but I can just repeat the fact that in our facilities because of the fact that we have a higher degree of serious offender, the recidivism rate of those individuals when they leave and are on probation is higher. I think the statistic regarding young offenders is 40 per cent.

Mr. Griffiths: After probation.

Mr. Cenaiko: Neil, can you provide me with the stats on that?

Mr. Warner: Yes. For young offenders I believe it's 55 per cent successful and 60 per cent successful for adult offenders.

Mr. Cenaiko: So 40 per cent for adult offenders reoffending and 45 per cent of young offenders reoffend.

Mr. Griffiths: But not while they're on probation. I mean over lifetime, if they come back five years from then, if there's a measurement for that.

Mr. Warner: Minister, if I may supplement here. The issue of recidivism is a very complicated one, and I know that my predecessor, Mr. Arnold Galet, was working very closely with the national group, the heads of corrections, to come up with a measure that everyone could agree on so that we're comparing apples with apples on recidivism. But it's the stuff of university doctoral dissertations on, for example, how long you go to consider success and a number of measures. It is being worked on by CSC at the national level.

Mr. Griffiths: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bonko, followed by Mr. Rodney, please.

Mr. Bonko: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. The Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security quite often does private contracts with numbered companies. That's in the 2004-2005 blue book, supply and services, but it really doesn't give me an identification as to what and who the services were done for. I've got a specific search here that I did on corporation 734607 Alberta Ltd. for \$68,750, but it doesn't tell me who the company is and what the contract was for. Perhaps I could have a little bit more information.

Mr. Cenaiko: Now, is this out of our business plan for '04-05?

Mr. Bonko: Yes.

Mr. Cenaiko: Do you have a page number for this?

Mr. Bonko: Well, that would be on page 965. That was in the blue book, though.

Mr. Cenaiko: I don't have the blue book here, so we'll respond to you in writing.

Mr. Bonko: Okay. Like I said, I just provided you with that so you knew where I was coming from then.

Mr. Cenaiko: We do contract out with food agencies and a number of other things, but we'll find out what that is.

Mr. Bonko: Okay. The other one I would ask would be for the same sort of thing. It was a corporation search. It was for \$362,474. Again, if we don't see any line-by-line items, how do we know what we got for that service? How do we know or measure that service with no contract?

An Hon. Member: Could you tell me what that page number was again.

Mr. Bonko: The first or the second one? The first page was 965, and the second one I would ask would be on 961.

Mr. Cenaiko: Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to respond to that. That's just normal contracted procedure. We don't have the information in front of us, so we'll provide a written response.

Mr. Bonko: Perfect.

The Chair: Sure. If you could provide, again, in writing through the clerk to all members, we'd be very grateful.

Mr. Cenaiko: We'll do that at the first available opportunity.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Rodney, please.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As a testament to the capacity of my colleagues here, I had two really good questions; they've already been asked. As a testament to our Solicitor General, they've both been answered very well.

I'll just slide in a quick comment if I may. I do look forward as chair of AADAC to working with the Solicitor General to provide even better programs in the future. But I do want to say that when I see the performance measures on pages 16 and 17, I want to echo the thoughts of Doug Griffiths that the more we can do to provide outcomes is great, but I want to compliment you on the fact that you've got your five goals and the statistics right up front here.

I'll just end with this point. I've had the opportunity to visit facilities for youth and adults here, youth and adults in the Third World, and I've talked to offenders, and I've talked to employees, and indeed it is a very, very different reality. I just want to compliment you and encourage you and your staff and thank you. It's a very difficult job, and you're doing a great job.

Thank you.

Mr. Cenaiko: Thank you very much, Dave.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Chase, please, followed by Ray Prins.

Mr. Chase: Thank you very much. A singular question. In order to sustain the Alberta boom, we need a permanent supply of workers. A large number of potential workers are currently incarcerated. What skill or academic rehabilitative type programs in 2004-2005 were offered to longer-term inmates to give them a second chance to contribute while productively serving their sentences?

Mr. Cenaiko: Harry, I'll pass that on to Mr. Warner, and he'll respond.

Mr. Warner: Thank you, Minister. The government of Alberta spent about \$2.4 million on programming through Alberta learning for various programs, including high school upgrades so they can do their general education diploma and other areas. Where we have someone for a little longer and we can hold onto them, then our caseworkers identify their deficits in that area, and through these local contracts with, for example, community colleges in the area of the centre the programming is provided at that point.

Mr. Chase: May I ask a supplemental? I apologize. Have you tracked the people who have gone through these programs? Has it reduced the rate of recidivism?

Mr. Warner: Yes. I don't have those figures in front of me, but it has, and I could certainly provide those figures to you.

Mr. Chase: Thank you.

Mr. Cenaiko: Through the clerk we'll provide the additional response to Harry's second question.

The Chair: Yes. We appreciate that. Thank you.
Mr. Prins, please, followed by David Eggen.

Mr. Prins: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'm looking at page 34 in your report, where it talks about facilitating the rehabilitation of offenders. You talk about an electronic monitoring pilot project. You mentioned that at the outset. You also said that you dealt with 28,485 offenders last year. I wonder how many of these were outfitted with these electronic devices. And maybe a little bit of a framework: is there any way to measure the outcomes of that from a rehabilitative or a success factor, or from a financial point of view is it a good idea?

9:40

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, as I mentioned in my comments earlier, the program began in '04-05. This program, actually, that we are looking at is from the province of British Columbia and has proved to work very successfully there. The pilot project that we have right now regarding electronic monitoring – I'll let Neil supplement my answer – is for select offenders only that are in our institutions that we want to look at and ensure that they'll comply with this as well, but it's an opportunity to monitor them electronically. The pilot actually ends in August of this year, in 2006, so we'll have a better understanding of, I guess, the measurement of the success of the program. From what I've heard thus far, it's been very good, very successful. I'll just let Neil comment briefly.

Mr. Warner: Thank you, Minister. Yes, it appears at this point that the bracelets are very good tools for monitoring curfews, for knowing these curfews, but it is important to note that it is early in the process, and we've designed this pilot project for the very purpose of evaluating it. So we're keeping the population small by addressing only offenders who are released on weekends. They're serving weekend sentences, and we're putting them out on the bracelet on the weekends. We're looking at a total of about 40 offenders. The advantage that we have with this smaller population is that we have what we were doing before in Calgary as a direct comparator, which is part of our evaluation plan.

Mr. Prins: Okay. I think my second question has been answered, so I'll pass on that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The chair would like to recognize and welcome Mr. Mo Elsalhy, the Member for Edmonton-McClung, who has joined us and is watching the proceedings.

Mr. Eggen, please, followed by George VanderBurg.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Again I'll be very brief. You piqued my interest with your earlier comment there when I heard my name being mentioned. I'm just curious to know, then, which initiative or initiatives are in place in your budget here from last year that would be in the place of hiring more FTEs here in the province of Alberta to bring up our province to the national average for police officers per capita. In lieu of hiring those new FTEs that I have been pushing for, which main initiative do you see, in your mind, here in this last year's budget that takes the place of doing that?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, again, this budget was developed in the fall of, I guess, '03, but the budget year we're looking at, '04-05, provided for, as I mentioned earlier, additional funding, substantially more funding for municipalities regarding policing programs. I don't have the numbers in front of me regarding how many additional RCMP

officers were provided that year, but it was, I believe, around 100 officers that were provided in '04-05. As we moved into last year's budget, as I mentioned, 200 more officers: 100 RCMP front-line officers, 35 additional RCMP officers were redeployed out of the courts back onto the front line, 60 officers through integrated programs based out of Calgary/Edmonton through the RCMP for organized crime. That's on top of the 61 officers that are in IROC in a greater response to organized crime.

As well, you know, we looked at child exploitation and the need for additional programs regarding integrated child exploitation. We added 14 officers to provide a complement now of 21 officers throughout the province working on – these are provincially funded positions as well. They are funded by the province regarding specific provincial concerns that we have from our business plan. So when you ask the question "Which target or which goal are we looking at regarding front-line and full-time staff?" obviously, both organized crime and looking at opportunities to integrate policing services throughout the province will and have provided us with successes that we've seen in the last year, year and a half regarding the number of grow ops, the number of arrests that have been made regarding some of the larger operations. IROC does a tremendous job in long-term investigations where these are resource-intensive investigations that can take upwards of nine months to a year to investigate.

I'll give you a couple of examples. One was the \$4.25 million worth of ecstasy seized in Calgary. Another one was the millions of dollars of fraud charges that were laid here in the Edmonton area just recently. These are very intensive investigations that take longer term. We're moving from where we were years ago. We're moving forward into the future regarding, as I mentioned earlier, new service delivery models of policing. It's not about just pumping money into the system. It's: by providing resources and providing funding, how can we do our job better?

One of those ways is through integration, where we can pull in the RCMP and the Edmonton Police Service or the Calgary Police Service, working together and capitalizing on the resource potential that we have in these investigators and in these officers. We've been very successful, and we're going to continue to move forward in that direction. Obviously, we have a very close working relationship with the chiefs of police in the province. Through CISA, Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta, through IROC, through the organized crime strategy, through ICE, we're going to continue moving in that direction.

Mr. Eggen: Thanks. Just a very quick supplemental, and you can just write me the results of this one. The new positions that we created from the last budget year that you've just outlined: I would be curious to know how many of those create new FTE positions as opposed to just filling the normal rate of attrition of losing people through retirement.

Mr. Cenaiko: I'll ask Brian Skeet to answer that because, actually, he is working with the chiefs on a new model of looking at it. It's not just per capita. The old basis that the chiefs used to have was with the dollars, the cost per officer per capita as well as officer per population based. I'll let Brian respond because he's working on it.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. You know, in writing is fine for the sake of time.

Mr. Cenaiko: He's working on it as we speak.

Mr. Skeet: My answer will be very short. Thank you, Minister. As I understand the question, it was: how many of those 60 positions in the '05-06 budget are going to actually be new positions?

Mr. Eggen: New FTEs, that's correct. Yes.

Mr. Skeet: They are all new positions.

Mr. Eggen: Of the 60?

Mr. Skeet: Yes.

Mr. Eggen: Right. Okay.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. VanderBurg, please.

Mr. VanderBurg: Well, thank you, Mr. Minister. Through you to Jim Bauer: I'm interested in page 95, with regard to the trust funds under the administration. Your department staff administer these trust funds, but we have no legislative authority. We have, I think it said, about \$92,000 at the end of last year in the fund. What does this cost us out of your ministry to administer in time? Is it half-time staff? Full-time staff?

Mr. Bauer: These are, of course, the inmate welfare trust funds. They are not a large or significant program. I don't have the exact figures or the exact specifics in terms of how much time it takes for our staff, but it is not a significant amount. We do have one individual that is spending a portion of their time in terms of the administration of it. It is a significantly small portion. Maybe a third to half of their time is spent actually administering these trusts.

Mr. VanderBurg: To supplement: because there's no direct accountability back through the ministry on this, have we run into problems with these trust accounts, or are they pretty straightforward, money in and out?

Mr. Bauer: I'm not aware that we've had any issues in the past with the trust accounts. I think they have been handled in a fairly straightforward manner, so I'm not aware that there have been any issues.

Mr. VanderBurg: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.
Reverend Miller, please, followed by Len Webber.

9:50

Dr. B. Miller: Thank you. I am really impressed by the work of youth justice committees, but the money here is paltry, \$325,000 for 109 youth justice committees. That's about \$3,000 each. Now, I assume that the Justice department is involved in the funding too. What does this money support? I mean, surely it wouldn't be enough to support staff resources for these committees. I realize that youth justice committees involve youth volunteers – and it's just tremendous what they do – but I met with one committee, and they just don't have enough financial support.

Mr. Cenaiko: Can I just get the page you're on?

Dr. B. Miller: It's on page 19.

Mr. Cenaiko: That's a good question. I agree with you. The importance of youth justice committees is tremendous throughout Alberta. As you mentioned, they are volunteers that do provide a tremendous commitment to the members of the community.

Whether it's of an aboriginal nature where elders are involved, the funding that they do receive is for some of those incidental costs that may be required, possibly for the use of a facility, as well to ensure that if elders were used, there may obviously be some costs associated with travelling.

Dr. B. Miller: So the staff resource is not from the Solicitor General side; it's from the Justice side.

Mr. Cenaiko: Bronwyn, can you answer that, or Neil?

Mr. Warner: Sorry. I think we do provide quite a bit of support. I think this number is a little bit misleading because I know that most of these justice committees are in rural areas where I'm aware that they work very closely with our probation offices. They get a great deal of support from those offices in terms of helping them administer their responsibilities, et cetera.

The Chair: Thank you.

I would like to remind the committee that there are four members who are still on the question list. If we could get their questions on the record and the department could respond in writing through the clerk, we would be grateful.

Mr. Webber, please.

Mr. Webber: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll try to be quick here.

Minister Cenaiko, I'm referring to your Sol Gen report, page 26, public perception of safety. Now, I look at the fancy graph down here below, and it indicates that "the percentage of Albertans who feel 'not . . . worried' about their safety from crime when alone in their own homes" averages around 72 per cent the last three years. I turn the page, and I look at the percentage of Albertans who "feel safe walking alone in their area after dark." It is about a 77 per cent average. It's telling me that people feel safer walking around in the dark outside than they do in their own homes. I'm just wondering: is the methodology used here to gain these numbers good enough to get these accurate results?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, I'll let the Deputy Minister of Public Security answer that. That's a good question.

Mr. Webber: You can provide it in writing if you wish.

Mr. McGhan: Certainly, we can provide a response in writing, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member on the process that we use. When you go out with a survey of this type to the public and ask questions, you're most interested in really getting the best possible results, to make sure that we have a basis on which to go forward and to plan future programs and investment and it's evidence based.

You've identified something here. I think it depends on, you know, the questions and who you ask. It takes a courageous person in the first place to go out at night to walk in the dark, and if they feel comfortable doing that as a normal course of action, then they probably feel that 77 per cent. If you're asking people just generally how they feel about being in their homes in the evening, you're asking that group of people. If it's 72 per cent, then it's 72 per cent.

I feel pretty confident in the company that is used to do these surveys. They spend a considerable amount of time designing the question and asking the question and making sure that the results are accurate. I don't have any concern at all about our process or the company that we're using and the results of this. What we need to do is try and get the results, improve the results through a proper approach to this in the future.

Mr. Webber: Thank you. Just a quick supplemental question here with regard to your targets for both. You did not exceed the targets of 75 and 82, and I guess I'm wondering: what programs did you have in place that indicated to you that your numbers would be increased?

Mr. Cenaiko: Well, obviously, programs related to crime prevention that are either provided through the RCMP or through your municipal police services have to be recognized by the community. Again, it's not just the police that can provide these types of programs. Actually, the community has to provide them in conjunction with the police. So there are partnerships throughout this, through all three levels of government as well providing programs. So there are national programs, provincial programs, and municipal programs all regarding crime prevention and safer communities.

Not in this budget year that we're discussing, but this past year we were able to look at two community support officer pilot projects in both Calgary and Edmonton utilizing special constables. Their role here in Edmonton and in Calgary was to work in the inner city, in these higher crime related areas, where the number of crimes is a lot higher than in the outlying, suburban areas. So, for example, in Edmonton-Centre these officers – and I think some of them might fall in the area of the chairman's constituency – were on bikes as well as walking the beat, patrolling those areas as a higher visibility in those high-needs areas. The same was done in Calgary in the inner city and in some of those higher needs areas.

So, again, these are some of the projects that we're looking at regarding addressing and deploying officers but, as well, looking at pilot projects for the future of expanding roles and expanding programs. Again, this is a project that has been in place for some time now in the United Kingdom and has been extremely successful.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bonko, would you like to read your questions into the record for a response, please? We don't have time.

Mr. Bonko: You mean the ones that I've previously asked?

The Chair: No. You're on the speaking list. Or would you like to be removed from the speaking list?

Mr. Bonko: Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't realize I was on the speaking list. I already asked the two, so those would be the ones that I would like into the record then.

The Chair: Mr. Chase.

Mr. Chase: Yes. Thank you. I've passed it along. Alberta has a wide variety of police service provision, from RCMP to city police to special constables. Is there any form of on-the-job practicum training program in place for special constables to rise within the police ranks? Another way of looking at it: are special constables actively recruited by the other forces?

The Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Morton, please, and thank you for your patience.

Dr. Morton: I was going to ask why the statement of expenses on page 98 doesn't include a line item for doughnuts, but I assume that Mr. Bonko's question about the numbered companies will show that

one of those is a Tim Hortons affiliate, and I'll get my answer there.

My question. You've provided some comparative data on crime rates with other western provinces, comparative jurisdiction that way, but I'm interested in the growth of crime over time in Alberta, like over the last decade, and correlating that with increases in your budget. In other words, what is the rising cost of crime? I'd like to know whether the increases in your budget are keeping pace with the increase in the crime rate in Alberta over the last decade. If I could get that information.

Mr. Cenaiko: That's a very good question, and we'll get that to you in writing.

The Chair: Thank you. That concludes this portion of the meeting. I would like on behalf of all hon. members of this committee to compliment and thank the hon. minister, Mr. Cenaiko, and his staff for their diligence in preparing for the meeting this morning. We wish you the very best in all your endeavours in the future. I would like at this time also on behalf of the committee to thank Mr. Dunn and his staff as well.

Mr. Cenaiko: Can I close with just a brief comment?

The Chair: Just briefly, please.

Mr. Cenaiko: I still have about 30 seconds left.

10:00

Mr. Cenaiko: I just wanted to say that it's really, indeed, an honour to have been appointed to this position, to see the calibre of employees that we have both as provincial protection officers and security officers and in our corrections division. These individuals have long been thought of as working in areas that no one else wanted to work in, but I can tell you that going to their graduation after they've completed their training, it's a tremendous honour for me to go watch them. They are very proud of the work that they do, and I'm very proud of them for the work that they do in providing safer and secure communities in the province of Alberta.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Item 4 on the agenda, please. I would like to advise members that further to the committee's direction at the last meeting we have scheduled Tuesday, June 6, as the date to bring representatives from the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission and the Northern Alberta Development Council before the committee from 10 a.m. to noontime and from 1 to 3. We appreciate the co-operation of the two chairs in this regard, Mr. Rodney and Mr. Ray Danyluk.

Item 5 on the agenda, of course, is the date of our next meeting, which is next Wednesday, March 15. In attendance will be the Hon. Iris Evans, Minister of Health and Wellness, and I would like to remind everyone that it would be appropriate to ask questions from the annual report of the Auditor General as well as from the report of the Auditor General on seniors' care and programs.

If there are no other items under New Business, could I please have a motion to adjourn? Motion to adjourn by Mr. Chase. All those in favour? Opposed? Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 10:01 a.m.]