

Blue Ribbon Committee on Crime Reduction – Terms of Reference

Background

Implementation of justice reforms to ensure a cost-effective justice system that has the confidence of the public is a key priority of government. One aspect of that reform agenda is crime reduction. Crime reduction programs generally have two goals: to reduce crime and disorder, and to increase public confidence in the ability of the justice system to keep communities safe.

In his report *A Criminal justice System for the 21st Century*, Geoffrey Cowper QC recommended the development of a province-wide crime reduction plan. Crime reduction is identified as a priority item in White Paper Part Two: *A Timely and Balanced Justice System*, as well as in the proposed *British Columbia Policing and Community Safety Plan*.

Specifically, Action Item #8 of the *British Columbia Policing and Community Safety Plan* states: *In support of enhancing community safety, the Ministry of Justice will work with stakeholders to develop strategies to: a) support crime prevention efforts; b) support province-led crime reduction initiatives; and c) support further development of civil/administrative law strategies to enhance community safety*

At present, there are three strands of crime reduction activities in BC:

- Those led by municipalities. For example, the City of Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy, which is based on extensive consultation and collaboration with partners across the government and law enforcement agencies.
- Crime reduction initiatives led by police. Many of these initiatives target ‘hot spots’ or geographic areas with high crime and disorder activities, while others focus on apprehending prolific offenders.
- Crime reduction initiatives led by the provincial government, such as the Prolific Offender Management program and Vancouver’s Downtown Community Court.

Name of Committee

Blue Ribbon Panel for Crime Reduction (referred to as ‘The Panel’)

Purpose and Scope

On June 7, 2013, Dr. Darryl Plecas was appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Crime Reduction. His mandate is to chair a blue-ribbon panel to study crime reduction opportunities. The Blue Ribbon Panel for Crime Reduction will:

- Through consultation with stakeholders, review existing crime reduction initiatives and identify potential gaps, challenges and issues;
- Make recommendations for crime reduction opportunities and next steps including a plan for implementation.
- Deliver a report to the Minister of Justice by June 14th 2014.

Membership

The Panel will be chaired by Parliamentary Secretary for Crime Reduction, Darryl Plecas.

The Panel consists of the following 5 members

Beverley Busson
Gary Bass
Jean Fournier
Yvon Dandurand
Geri Ellen Bemister

Mandate / Responsibilities

The primary functions of panel members are to:

- Conduct a series of roundtables to elicit feedback from around the Province
- Provide advice and recommendations to Parliamentary Secretary for Crime Reduction about possible evidence led crime reduction opportunities.
- Identify individuals with subject matter or other expertise that could assist and provide advice to the panel members
- Liaise with Ministry staff as required
- Create and approve a *report and recommendations regarding crime reduction opportunities*.

The roundtables will bring together relevant stakeholder groups to discuss crime reduction opportunities, as well as current initiatives, approaches (such as environmental design that contributes to crime reduction), successes, gaps or challenges. Roundtable participants will be invited based on their specialized backgrounds and interests in this topic.

The Panel's work will inform the content of a report, from the Chair to the Minister of Justice that includes the following:

- Results from the stakeholder consultation;
- Identification of opportunities for effective evidence-led crime reduction initiatives;
- An overview of current crime reduction initiatives around the province and other jurisdictions and,
- Recommendations for crime reduction opportunities

Meetings

Regular meetings of the Panel on Crime Reduction will be held at least once a month for the duration of the project until June 2014 at the call of the Chair.

Support such as arranging meeting date and times, agendas, minutes and distribution of documents to Panel members will be coordinated by:

Shabnem Afzal
Project Lead Crime Reduction
Ministry of Justice
Tel: 604 218 1549
Email: Shabnem.Afzal@gov.bc.ca

Communication and confidentiality

Unless otherwise authorized Panel members will not publically share sensitive information about the Panel's work. Requests to release information must be directed to Ministry staff.

SUPPORT

The Ministry of Justice will provide appropriate support to the Blue Ribbon Panel for Crime Reduction. The Ministry of Justice will reimburse travel expenses to members of The Panel for their attendance at meetings and roundtables, in accordance with applicable Treasury Board directives.