

# PLANNING FOR NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS

A REPORT FOR THE HONOURABLE JACK ANAWAK

MINISTER OF JUSTICE

NUNAVUT

Prepared by the Nunavut Corrections Planning Committee

Final Report

October 29, 1999

# **PLANNING FOR NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS**

This report sets out recommendations from the Nunavut Corrections Planning Committee. The Committee was established to consider the current and future needs of Nunavut corrections.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee is to review background information about Corrections and inmates from Nunavut, including statistics, current facilities and programs, and demographic trends, in order to put together a general planning framework.

The committee will then identify current and future needs not met by current facilities, and will make recommendations on at least the following subjects:

- a) Programs relevant to Nunavut
- b) Whether any new facilities are required
- c) If so, what kinds of new facilities are needed (size, type of programs, general physical requirements, level of security)
- d) How would such facilities relate to the existing Baffin Correctional Centre?
- e) How should such facilities be managed?
- f) How many staff are needed, and what kinds of proficiencies do the staff need to have
- g) What should be the training requirements for staff?
- h) Where should such facilities be located?
- i) Costs for development of corrections and the operation of new facilities
- j) What is the time frame for the development of the project, including planning, construction and training?

The report begins with a brief section on trends in crime and corrections in Nunavut that sets out the nature of the challenges. The report then presents recommendations on the philosophy that should guide Corrections; the personnel that are required; the processes and programs that should form the core of the correctional work; the facilities that will be required; the need for Corrections to work closely with many partners and the community resources that are essential.

## NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Mosha Akavak**, Baffin Correctional Centre, Iqaluit, Nunavut  
**Millard Beane**, Correctional Service of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario  
**Elijah Erkloo**, Nunavut Social Development Council, Pond Inlet, Nunavut  
**Dan Fudge**, RCMP, Iqaluit, Nunavut  
**Natsiq Kango**, Iqaluit, Nunavut  
**Becky Kudloo**, Baker Lake, Nunavut  
**Simeonie Natseck**, Repulse Bay, Nunavut  
**Mike Provan**, Correctional Service of Canada, Fenbrook Institution,  
Gravenhurst, Ontario; represented at some meetings by **Jim Marshall**  
**Elik Tologanak**, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut  
**Rebecca Williams**, Department of Justice, Iqaluit, Nunavut

Consultant to the Committee:

**John Evans**, Vancouver, British Columbia

# PLANNING FOR NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	I
NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE.....	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	III
<b>1. TRENDS IN CRIME AND CORRECTIONS IN NUNAVUT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 CRIME RATES .....	1
1.3 REMANDS.....	1
1.4 INCARCERATION RATES.....	2
1.5 SENTENCE LENGTHS.....	2
1.6 POPULATION GROWTH.....	3
1.7 NEEDS OF NUNAVUT INMATES .....	3
<b>2. NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS MISSION STATEMENT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 MISSION STATEMENT.....	4
2.2 COMMENTS ON THE MISSION STATEMENT .....	5
2.3 Healing.....	5
2.4 Programs.....	5
2.5 Culture and Language.....	5
2.6 Partnerships.....	6
<b>3. INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMMING .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ORAMS).....	7
3.2 CORE PROGRAMS .....	8
3.3 LAND PROGRAM AND HEALING PROGRAM.....	9
<b>4. PROGRAM MODULES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON VIOLENCE.....	11
4.2 PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON SEXUAL OFFENDING.....	12
4.3 ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM.....	13
4.4 EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS .....	14
<b>5. MENTALLY DISORDERED OFFENDERS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>6. STAFFING AND TRAINING.....</b>	<b>17</b>

<b>7. CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.....</b>	<b>18</b>
7.1 ADULT MALES (CURRENT).....	18
<b>8. ADULT MALES —SHORT TERM PLANS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
8.1 BAFFIN CORRECTIONAL CENTRE .....	19
8.2 LAND PROGRAM AND HALFWAY HOUSES.....	20
<b>9. LONGER TERM PLANS - FEDERAL SENTENCES AND JOINT FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>21</b>
9.1 FEDERAL INMATES .....	22
9.2 JOINT FACILITIES.....	22
<b>10. LONGER TERM PLANS - TERRITORIAL SENTENCES.....</b>	<b>23</b>
10.1 CORRECTIONAL CENTRE SPACES REQUIRED - TERRITORIAL INMATES	24
10.2 CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES DESIGN.....	25
10.3 LOCATION OF NEW FACILITIES .....	26
10.4 RELATIONSHIP OF A NEW FACILITY TO BCC .....	26
<b>11. CORRECTIONS IN THE COMMUNITIES.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>12. RELATED ISSUES.....</b>	<b>28</b>
12.1 FEMALE OFFENDERS .....	29
12.2 YOUNG OFFENDERS .....	29
12.2.1 Existing Facilities And Programs.....	29
12.2.2 Programs for Young offenders .....	30
12.2.3 Needed Facilities and Programs.....	31
12.3 VICTIM SERVICES.....	32
<b>13. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>34</b>

---

---

# 1. TRENDS IN CRIME AND CORRECTIONS IN NUNAVUT

---

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a very brief overview of some of the most significant trends affecting Nunavut corrections. Much of the data are from the 1998 report, *Crime and Corrections in the NWT*. That report provides much more detail on the important factors affecting corrections.

## 1.2 CRIME RATES

Nunavut and the NWT have the highest crime rates of all the provinces and territories in Canada. The *per capita* crime rates in Nunavut and the NWT are close to three times the rate for Canada as a whole, and the violent crime rate is over five times that for Canada. Although *per capita* crime rates in Nunavut and the NWT peaked in 1991 and have declined since then, the number of violent crimes reported in the Territories has remained roughly constant since 1991. Violent crimes accounted for almost a quarter of all offences reported to the police in 1997. This places a continuing workload burden on the justice system and a strain on the communities in which crime occurs.

The absolute number of charges laid has declined since the early 1990s. At the same time, violent offences have been representing an increasing proportion of the offences that result in a criminal charge. The same pattern can be seen in the numbers of male persons charged. This, together with field interviews, suggests that police are increasingly using the justice system as a “last resort” for persistent minor crimes and for the more serious cases. Many people, both in the justice system and in the communities, have suggested that victims are becoming more willing to report serious crimes and to seek protection from the justice system.

## 1.3 REMANDS

The Territories have seen an increase in the number of persons remanded into custody before trial over the past decade. This number, which increased by 75% from 1990/91 to 1996/97, means that remands are now contributing more to the current overcrowding situation in Nunavut

corrections facilities. Roughly a quarter of correctional centre admissions is now for remand. In 1997, 29% of Nunavut admissions were remands. Almost two-thirds (65%) of the persons admitted to correctional centres on remand in 1997 were charged with a violent offence.

The proportion of cases disposed of in the Territorial Courts in 1995/96 that involved a violent offence was 43% -- almost twice the similar proportion for Canada. Conviction rates in Nunavut and the NWT are also comparatively high (75% for violent and 79% for non-violent offences).

#### **1.4 INCARCERATION RATES**

As noted above, Nunavut and the NWT have the highest incarceration rates in Canada (seen as the number of prisoners compared to the total population). However, seen as the number of prisoners compared to the crime rate or the number of charges laid, Nunavut and the NWT's incarceration rates are less than Quebec's and relatively close to most other provinces.

Following conviction, about the same proportion of correctional centre sentences are imposed in the Territorial courts as in the rest of Canada. One in three convicted offenders is given a jail sentence. Imprisonment is more likely to be imposed in Nunavut and the NWT for convicted violent offences than in the rest of Canada (49% versus 39%) and slightly less likely for convicted non-violent offences (29% versus 31%). Violence accounted for over half (54%) of the sentenced admissions (that is, not including remands) in Nunavut and the NWT in 1997, a proportion which has been growing steadily during the 1990s. A recent statistical "snapshot" of Nunavut and the NWT suggests that, because violent offenders receive relatively longer sentences, violent offenders make up approximately 72% of the sentenced correctional centre population. This compares to 38% for provincial prison populations.

#### **1.5 SENTENCE LENGTHS**

On average, inmates in Nunavut and the NWT are serving longer correctional centre sentences than those imposed in the other provinces and the Yukon. This is to be expected given the larger proportion of violent offenders. By contrast, probation sentences imposed in Nunavut and the NWT are relatively short, compared to elsewhere. In addition, sentences in the Territory seem to be on the rise, by about two months over the past few years. The median sentence for violent offences is currently about five

months, and the average nine and a half months; for non-violent offences, the median sentence is currently about three months, and the average about six months.

## **1.6 POPULATION GROWTH**

It is also important to look at growth in the general population when analyzing involvement in criminal activity and growth in correctional centre populations. This is especially so concerning youth and young adults. A majority of the correctional centre admissions are of people in their 20s and 30s.

The general population of Nunavut is growing rapidly. More importantly, Territorial forecasts suggest that there will be a decrease in the number of older adults (ages 25 to 34) over the next ten years. For youth (ages 12 to 17) and younger adults (ages 18 to 24), however, 35% growth is expected by the year 2006. This suggests that Nunavut can expect substantial increases in the numbers of young offenders admitted in the next ten years, and modest to moderate increases in adult correctional centre admissions. A by-product of this development would be that the average age of the correctional centre population would fall significantly, a reversal of the trend of the last few years.

## **1.7 NEEDS OF NUNAVUT INMATES**

Nunavut (and NWT) offenders present very significant risks and needs. Compared to elsewhere in Canada, there is a high prevalence of those factors associated with returning to correctional centres. These factors include substance abuse, previous convictions and imprisonment, criminal associates, unemployment, and low educational attainment. Many youthful offenders, who so often end up in adult correctional centres later in life, have many of these characteristics. Many also have experienced dysfunctional family life, early exposure to violence and other forms of abuse, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) or Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE), learning disabilities, inability to adapt to school environments, lack of social skills, poverty and despair.

Because Nunavut inmates are predominantly serving time for violent offences, they tend to serve longer sentences. The profiles of Nunavut inmates look very much like the profile of federal inmates and very different from the profiles of provincial inmates. Nunavut offenders have, as well, a greater need for programs and the territory has a greater burden to



provide such programs than do the provinces, again because of convictions for more serious crimes and the longer time served.

The Committee has taken this seriously and first considered the basic philosophy that should guide Nunavut Corrections. This philosophy is presented in the Mission statement presented below. The mission statement was developed in the light of the Vision for Nunavut and the Department of Justice Mission.

---

## **2. NUNAVUT CORRECTIONS MISSION STATEMENT**

---

### **2.1 MISSION STATEMENT**

Nunavut Corrections is responsible for those persons sentenced by the courts to its care and management.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**That Nunavut Corrections adopt the following mission statement.**

**The mission of Nunavut Corrections, in carrying out the sentence of the court, is to provide a correctional system that promotes healing, and provides appropriate security and management through:**

- **helping those persons sentenced to its care to respect themselves, others, and the law;**
- **providing assistance and management in ways that respect the culture and language of Nunavut and all of its residents;**
- **working with offenders, the communities and victims to facilitate safe community and family reintegration;**
- **respecting staff, providing them with training, support, and a safe work environment.**

## 2.2 COMMENTS ON THE MISSION STATEMENT

### 2.3 HEALING

Many of the people sentenced to corrections in Nunavut have committed serious crimes. The majority of those receiving sentences to prison have committed violent offences. Sexual offences and family violence are common and many offenders have long records of violent and property offences. Many of those in correctional centres must first begin a process of healing before they can begin to deal with specific programs that will help them to live law-abiding lives. Corrections must assist offenders to work on their spiritual, mental, physical and emotional growth. Many offenders need to recover from the effects of cultural loss and problems in living. Many must also deal with grief from unresolved losses and traumatic events such as family violence, alcohol and drug abuse, suicides and other untimely deaths. Whenever possible, Nunavut Corrections must work with the communities to promote healing and to prevent crime.

### 2.4 PROGRAMS

The Mission Statement speaks of Corrections helping those persons sentenced to its care to respect themselves, others and the law. This can be done through appropriate programs, both in correctional centres and in the community. When healing has begun and individual needs are identified, programs will be offered to help people to learn more appropriate ways of dealing with others, with themselves and with society. The successful reintegration of people to the community requires both institutional and community programs. There are advantages to having programs within institutions. Nonetheless, Nunavut Corrections must work with communities to allow the safe reintegration of people back into the community as quickly as possible. Within the limits of the law, Nunavut Corrections believes in the least use of incarceration consistent with public safety.

### 2.5 CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

The great majority (85%) of those living in Nunavut are Inuit and speak Inuktitut. This central fact will be recognized by Nunavut Corrections and whenever possible and appropriate, programs will be offered in Inuktitut and staff will be hired that reflect the culture of the territory. This is essential to the effective operation of corrections and Inuit culture must form the context for all programs. A corrections system that reflects the language and culture of

its clients and the communities they come from will have far greater success in teaching new approaches if they are anchored in the Inuit belief that learning is central to the journey of life. An enormous part of traditional life was based on the passing down of survival and other skills from one generation to the next. Skilled hunters and trappers, as well as those whose life experience has brought them wisdom, are treated with deference. Wisdom is often associated with patient teaching and tolerance for mistakes. Supporting and showing a caring attitude to others, including those who make mistakes, is a traditional value. Corrections must seek to learn from and respect these traditional values as it helps those in its care.

## 2.6 PARTNERSHIPS

Corrections is part of the criminal justice system and part of the larger government structure. It contributes to the protection of society as one partner among many. This partnership with others is essential to good corrections. The problems that result in people being sentenced to Corrections are not problems that Corrections alone can solve. Corrections must work effectively with others if progress is to be made. Accordingly, Nunavut Corrections should work with the communities, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to assist in meeting the needs of victims, and to assist communities to promote healing, prevent crime and deal with related social problems.

---

## 3. INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMMING

---

A central principle of the mission statement is that Corrections should provide a healing environment and help offenders to change their ways. The Planning Committee thinks that this is best done through carefully assessing inmate needs and delivering a core set of programs that respond to these needs.

**Recommendation 2**

**2(a) That an offender risk assessment and management system be used in all cases.**

**2(b) That the use and effectiveness of the offender risk assessment and management system be assessed through research over the next three years.**

**2(c) That modifications be made to the system as required to ensure it is relevant to Inuit offenders and to match the programs to be developed and delivered by Nunavut Corrections.**

**3.1 OFFENDER RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ORAMS)**

With respect to assessment, Nunavut Corrections has recently agreed to participate with NWT Corrections in acquiring an Offender Risk Assessment and Management System (ORAMS). This system will allow Nunavut Corrections to assess offender needs and the security risks they present. It will record the programs that inmates receive, the progress they make and their continuing needs. These records can then be passed on to those in the community, such as Community Corrections Officers, who must work with offenders who are serving all or part of their sentences in the community. The system will also produce statistical reports that Nunavut Corrections will need for management, planning and evaluation. It will produce, as well, reports that must be provided to Statistics Canada. Acquiring ORAMS was a wise strategic choice for Nunavut Corrections. It will provide an essential information base for the appropriate management of each person sentenced to corrections. This information will assist staff, and the inmate involved, to make decisions about which programs are necessary to reduce the risk of the offender returning to criminal activity. The system should be used in all cases, that is, for men, women, and youth and whether the sentence is to probation, open custody, a correctional centre, or some other sanction.

The Offender Risk Assessment and Management System is the best available. It has been validated with northern aboriginal offenders in Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada and it works as well for aboriginal offenders as it does for non-aboriginal offenders. Nonetheless, it needs to be validated for Inuit offenders and adapted as required. The Committee therefore has

recommended an assessment and modifications as needed.

### 3.2 CORE PROGRAMS

#### **Recommendation 3**

**That the Government of Nunavut provide adequate financial resources to develop and deliver relevant core programs that are designed for Inuit offenders and delivered in culturally appropriate ways by trained Inuit, and that Nunavut Corrections make every effort to hire and train Inuit to work in corrections. Hiring policies and practices need to be reviewed with this goal in mind. This should happen over a period of three to five years.**

The Committee agrees with the view that holds that criminal behaviour is learned, and that new ways of behaving can be learned as well. Inmates can learn to recognize and replace attitudes they have that can lead to criminal behaviour. They can be taught skills in relating to other people and learn to choose alternative ways of reacting to situations. Core program modules can be offered to help inmates in such areas as substance abuse, anger management, and living without violence. Institutional staff can be trained to deliver these programs, and the ultimate goal should be to train all staff who have regular contact with inmates in the principles involved and how to apply them.

Effective programs cannot be delivered unless they are culturally appropriate and delivered in languages that are clearly understood by those who are to receive them.

Nearly all of the inmates in Nunavut are Inuit and experience has shown that they, and indeed most Aboriginal inmates, often do not participate in programs or benefit from them as much as they could. Many do not see the relevance of programs and drop out of them. For these reasons, it is important to deliver all programs in a culturally appropriate manner. The mission statement stresses this point by urging that Nunavut Corrections “provide assistance and control in ways that respect the culture and language of Nunavut and all of its residents.” Hiring policies and practices need to be reviewed with this goal in mind and appropriate training must be developed to make it possible for Inuit to work effectively in corrections. It is the Committee’s view that this is the most important of its recommendations.

### 3.3 LAND PROGRAM AND HEALING PROGRAM

#### Recommendation 4

**That the on-the-land program be expanded in the following ways:**

- **to include counselling and programming aimed at healing and improving self-worth;**
- **to include elders in the counselling and programming;**
- **to ensure that the participants learn the skills necessary to living on the land.**

The on-the land program that the Committee recommends is strongly supported by communities and many corrections professionals, but the camps are now used only for a limited range of purposes. Resources for the program need to be provided so that the program can be offered to more offenders. Equally important, the addition of a healing element to the on-the-land program is essential. A healing program can be started in a camp to give offenders an opportunity to begin to focus on what they need to do to change. The healing program can then continue in the correctional facility. The addition of healing and rehabilitative elements to the on-the-land program would greatly increase its value. The on-the-land program is not a substitute for addressing other offender needs. Rather, the program should be seen as a way of connecting inmates to their cultural roots and enhancing their motivation to take other programs and to change their attitudes and behaviours.

Nunavut Corrections should work with Elders and others in the development and in the delivery of the program. Nunavut Corrections will need to recruit and train elders, correctional staff and others to offer the healing program. Adequate resources are needed to contract with Elders and Healers to participate in the land program. Finding enough Healers to do this kind of work is often extremely challenging, but it will become easier as more Inuit people begin to work in corrections and as the communities become more involved with corrections

**Recommendation 5**

**That people running the on-the-land program and healing camps receive training, as required, as well as continuing support. This will include regular opportunities for these people to meet and discuss issues.**

It is important that those running the on-the-land program and healing camps, including correctional staff, share ideas, techniques and other experiences. In addition, it is important that the progress made by offenders in the on-the-land program be included in case management plans. Healing programs can have powerful psychological and emotional consequences and it is important that the motivation to change is quickly met with additional targeted programs either in the correctional facility or in the community. Aboriginal offenders do as well as other offenders on a wide range of treatment options, provided that they are motivated to participate and that they complete the programs.

---

**4. PROGRAM MODULES**

---

**Recommendation 6**

**That core programs be developed within Nunavut or, if taken from elsewhere, adapted to ensure they are culturally appropriate in design and delivery. Nonetheless, Corrections should establish closer ties with treatment programs in other jurisdictions, particularly those in the Correctional Service of Canada.**

The Committee has noted that research in the south has shown that many programs work for Aboriginal people as well as they do for others, if Aboriginal offenders are motivated to participate and the programs are made culturally relevant. The Committee's recommendations are designed to ensure that these conditions for successful programming are met.

The Committee emphasizes the fact that nearly 75% of Nunavut inmates are serving sentences for violent offences. Sexual offences and violence in the family account for the majority of these violent crimes. Other inmates, who

are serving time for non-violent offences, nonetheless frequently have violence in their criminal histories. The Planning Committee stresses that violence can have devastating effects on victims and child witnesses to violence, and that a great deal of violence is multi-generational — if it is not treated, it will be passed on to future generations. Programs must focus on these problems.

#### 4.1 PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON VIOLENCE

##### **Recommendation 7**

**That the core program include one or more components focussed on violent behaviour. This should include a program component on family dynamics and parenting skills.**

The delivery of one or more program modules focussed on violence is a priority. These program modules should focus on those characteristics and needs of inmates that relate to violent behaviour.

A significant part of the violence programming will need to focus on violence within families. Many offenders are themselves victims of dysfunctional families and unhealthy communities. A significant number are children of parents who were sent to residential schools and consequently did not learn appropriate parenting skills. In such households, parenting often alternates between benign neglect and violence. People learn how to interact at home from their own experience, and they can learn new styles of interacting. This would be an important focus of the program module.

In addition, women in many of the communities visited (in the West and in Nunavut) during the research for the report *Crime and Corrections in the Northwest Territories*, reported that many men simply did not know how to relate to women and children. In many communities the traditional male role of provider and hunter is absent or severely threatened, and employment in the wage economy is frequently unavailable. Often women can more easily find employment than can men. The resulting feelings of loss and inadequacy too frequently result in violence, particularly when alcohol or other mood-altering drugs are involved. These issues need to be addressed in the program.

The Healing Program, recommended earlier, will prepare inmates to participate in family violence programs and to learn how to build healthy relationships. Much of the work now done by elders and other counsellors relates to family violence. For example, at BCC (in the past) a Traditional



Skills Development program, sometimes called the Healing Circle, was well received by inmates, when it was offered. The program addressed issues such as violence in men, sexual abuse and developing healthy family relationships. Unfortunately, the program was rarely offered.

## 4.2 PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON SEXUAL OFFENDING

### **Recommendation 8**

**That the core program include one or more components focussed on sexual offending, and that these components be designed and delivered so that they are culturally relevant. This should include relapse prevention measures that can be developed and supported (on an ongoing basis) in the communities.**

Given the high sexual assault rate and the number of offenders with a history of sexual assault, programs to counter sexual offending are essential. Sex offender programs are now provided in a limited way at BCC, but staff, budgets and space are all problems.

This is insufficient. The Planning Committee recommends that resources be provided to allow sex offender programs to be provided as determined by the professional judgement of staff based on information provided by ORAMS and other sources of data. Moreover, the Committee recommends that Nunavut Corrections work with Inuit organizations, elders and others, as appropriate, to make existing sexual offender programs more culturally sensitive and to improve offender responsiveness to the program. Beyond this, the involvement of Inuit healers and elders in sex offender treatment is desirable. This applies to programs offered in the correctional centres but also to community programs.

It is important that sex-offender programs are offered in the correctional centre but it is equally important that relapse prevention programs be available in the communities. Research has shown that such community support is essential if re-offending is to be avoided.

Most federal offenders from Nunavut will be serving their time in Fenbrook institution and Fenbrook and BCC should collaborate on jointly improving the sex offender program and indeed other programs for Inuit

people. It should be stressed that, even with current sex-offender programs, when treatment is completed, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have similar rates of re-offending.

### **4.3 ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM**

#### **Recommendation 9**

**That the core program include one or more components focussed on alcohol, drug and substance abuse, and that these components be designed and delivered so that they are culturally relevant.**

Police, judges, corrections personnel, inmates and people in the communities of Nunavut all say that over 85% of violent crimes are committed while the offender is under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances. There is no doubt that alcohol and drugs play a significant role in crime. Several studies in southern Canada have shown that among incarcerated offenders, approximately 70% were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they committed the offence for which they were sentenced. An unknown number of these crimes would have been committed without alcohol; that is, offenders may, for example, plan to commit a break-in and then drink to give themselves “false courage”. In other cases, including the vast majority of sexual assault and spousal assault cases, alcohol plays a central role. Offenders need to recognize and understand the risks they take—consciously or unconsciously—with their victims when they drink, as well as the behavioural options they have when they feel like drinking or have been drinking.

The use of alcohol does not diminish the responsibility of the offender for the offence. Moreover, alcohol and drugs do not make offenders randomly violent; their victims tend overwhelmingly to be family or acquaintances. This, in part, is because friends and family frequently are nearby when alcohol is used. The large number of victims who are close to the offender seems also to be related to a profound loss of cultural connections and respect for traditional cultural values, and the need for social skills related to developing and maintaining healthy relationships.

It is recommended that alcohol, drug and substance abuse treatment modules be integrated into case management plans and be offered, when appropriate, in conjunction with programs focussed on sexual offending and other forms of violence. The substance abuse module must include an

understanding of the likely scenarios upon return to the community, and the avoidance strategies which must be firmly fixed before they are back in circumstances where alcohol or drugs are readily available. Offenders' needs will vary and decisions about when to provide alcohol and drug programs will need to be tailored to the individual case and sentence length. The key resource here is the experience and knowledge of classification officers and treatment personnel, aided by the Offender Risk Assessment and Management System.

#### 4.4 EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

##### **Recommendation 10**

**That offenders are assisted in the development of skills to increase their employability once they leave the facility. Nunavut Corrections should develop partnerships with business, industry, education and the communities to provide useful work skills and improve the prospects for the successful transition of inmates back into the community.**

Employment is an important element in law-abiding behaviour. Most offenders have spotty employment records. They have frequently been unemployed or under-employed. They tend not to stay in jobs long and many have few of the basic skills that employers demand. On October 5, 1996, two-thirds of the inmates in NWT jails reported they had been unemployed at the time of the offence. The prospects of returning to criminal pursuits are enhanced if a long stretch of unemployment follows release from jail. That said, the unique circumstances of Nunavut are not reflected in these studies. Wage employment is difficult to find in most communities, even for those who have not had problems with the law. Moreover, someone who is gainfully engaged in hunting and providing for himself and his family is employed.

Nonetheless, improving offenders' skills and general employability is an important correctional objective. The Committee recommends, however, that assisting offenders with employability not be at the expense of other treatment programs. The programs for violence, sexual offending and alcohol and drug abuse are the top priorities.

Indeed, by itself, improving employment prospects will do little and may even make things worse. To take the simplest example: employment provides money to buy alcohol and drugs. Correctional programming is difficult precisely because offenders tend to have a number of needs and making

improvements in just one area is unlikely to be enough. This is one reason for urging at every point that case management plans need to be based on sound assessments of risks and needs and that case plans need to be integrated.

BCC and the young offenders' facility have programs that have inmates working in the community at a variety of jobs. Some provide needed services to the communities, ranging from helping Elders and the handicapped with a number of chores, to maintaining cemeteries and cleaning the community. This is useful work for the community, provides some job experience and improves community relations, but these activities provide only minimal training for employment.

A carving program and learning such skills as net building and maintenance can be useful but it must be stressed again that programs that tackle problems with violence, sexual offending and alcohol and drug treatment are primary. Teaching someone how to carve and support himself is not a success if he continues to abuse his wife or assault others.

---

## 5. MENTALLY DISORDERED OFFENDERS

---

### **Recommendation 11**

**That funds be provided to hire adequate numbers of staff and to train staff in order to treat mentally disordered offenders in the institutions.**

Inmates with severe mental disorders have not been common in Nunavut. Nonetheless, there have been some men, women and youth who could not be cared for in the correctional centres and there is no suitable facility in the community to safely house and treat dangerous mentally disordered inmates. There are no good data on the extent of the problem but it does seem to be growing. In June 1999, BCC had six inmates with some degree of mental disorder who could be a danger to themselves and to others. Inmates with these kinds of problems take a good deal of staff time and need more help than can currently be provided.

**Recommendation 12**

**That funds be set aside by the Government of Nunavut for placements in southern psychiatric facilities when necessary.**

Providing treatment in correctional facilities for serious mentally disordered offenders is difficult even in larger communities that can call upon treatment resources in the community. It is a particularly difficult problem for small northern communities with few specialized treatment resources. For the most serious cases, the Planning Committee sees no realistic option, in the medium term, to southern placements for treatment for the mentally disordered. Nunavut is currently paying approximately \$300 per day for any such southern placement.

**Recommendation 13**

**That the Department of Justice work with the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education and the medical community to develop a strategy for dealing with mental illness, the intellectually challenged, and FAS/FAE.**

The large and serious fetal alcohol syndrome/effect (FAS/FAE) problem is already affecting corrections and there are likely to be many more cases. For example, there have been cases of inmates in BCC who appear to be suffering from permanent brain damage due to FAS. Such inmates are violent, and everyone agrees that the correctional centre is not an appropriate place for them. Nonetheless, there is currently no alternative. It seems likely that the number of such cases will increase.

---

## 6. STAFFING AND TRAINING

---

### Recommendation 14

**That the Government of Nunavut provide adequate funding to develop and deliver training packages to train and support Inuit staff and others who work in corrections (both in institutions and the community, including those who contract with Nunavut Corrections); and that there be cross-cultural training for non-Inuit corrections staff.**

The Planning Committee has recommended as its highest priority the hiring of more Inuit to work in corrections. Personal suitability and experience should be given more importance in staffing. In addition, Corrections will need to bolster its training program. In addition, it would be useful if Arctic College had programs that could lead to employment in corrections.

The basic training package for new recruits needs to be made specifically relevant to new Inuit staff. For non-Inuit staff, cross-cultural training should be provided. For all staff, additional training is essential for other more specific programs.

The programs that the Planning Committee has recommended for violence, sexual offending, and alcohol and substance abuse require specific training. These programs are part of a larger Living Skills Training Program. Staff require a two-week training period before they can begin to deliver these programs. Additional training leading to certification follows. After that, trained coaches can train other staff in the institutions and communities. Training costs can thereby be reduced following the initial investment.

Training needs to be provided as well on ORAMS and case management strategies, the healing program, and, generally, on how to work effectively with those sentenced to correctional control.

Training for Community Corrections Officers is essential as well

Training for those who contract with Nunavut Corrections is equally important. The people that operate on-the-land programs, run open custody facilities, halfway houses, and families who take young offenders all require training and support.

The training challenges are significant. Most offenders have multiple needs and they can be difficult to work with. Appropriate training can make it possible for staff and contractors to work effectively in corrections and to enjoy the work they do.

---

## **7. CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

---

The Committee has addressed the challenge of Baffin Correctional Centre and correctional facilities generally by considering what can be done in the short term (0 - 2 years) and the longer term (over 2 years). Appropriate facilities for Nunavut offenders will take several years to plan, build and put into operation. In the meantime, progress must be made. The Committee thinks that the current situation, particularly at BCC, can not be allowed to continue.

The Planning Committee stresses that progress on the recommendations already made can begin immediately. Some of the recommendations require new resources but a start can nonetheless be made. Action on considering the mission statement, revamping hiring policies and practices, and thinking through program and training plans can begin.

### **7.1 ADULT MALES (CURRENT)**

Baffin Correctional Centre is the only adult male facility in Nunavut. It was built as a minimum-security institution to hold 42 inmates. It frequently houses between 60 and 70 inmates in overcrowded conditions. While some programs are offered, given the overcrowding and a lack of resources, it is difficult to provide adequate programming or even provide something for the inmates to do. The facility has very little space and can not be expanded, although small buildings are now being put on the grounds for limited purposes. Inmates spend much of the time sitting and waiting. In addition, even with 60 to 70 inmates in BCC, there are still large numbers of inmates who have to be sent to the Yellowknife Correctional Centre.

Moreover, since the BCC facility is forced to handle inmates at all security levels, it effectively runs as a medium security correctional centre. This means that many inmates who require minimum security are held in conditions more suitable for medium and maximum security. The remand unit in particular frequently houses individuals charged with very serious crimes. Some of them are escape risks and pose dangers to others and to

themselves. Nonetheless, even the remand area is crowded and the men live in dormitories with very little to do.

---

## 8. ADULT MALES —SHORT TERM PLANS

---

### 8.1 BAFFIN CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

The problems at BCC include overcrowding; a lack of Inuit staff; the lack of space and facilities for programs and recreation; an inappropriate mixing of inmates with security needs ranging from low to high, and, in some cases, a need for psychiatric care; and a lack of programs.

In fairness to the staff at BCC, it must be noted that they have not had the resources to do much beyond cope with the overcrowding. When they have tried to offer programs, a lack of training, resources, space, staff shortages, and so on has meant that much that they wanted to do could not be done. The creation of Nunavut provides an opportunity for rethinking what should be done and moving forward to improvements.

The problems are difficult. One suggestion made to the Committee was that BCC should focus on low-security inmates and send high security inmates to the Yellowknife Correctional Centre (YCC) until Nunavut develops new space for all Nunavut prisoners. This seems to be a reasonable suggestion. However; assessments done on Nunavut admissions using the ORAMS from November of 1998 to March of 1999, show that although about half of the sentenced inmates had low security needs, nearly all had medium or high risk of re-offending and required focussed programs to reduce their likelihood of returning to correctional facilities.

Unfortunately, effective programming cannot begin until overcrowding is reduced and more resources are available to hire and train treatment staff. In the meantime, BCC cannot handle all the inmates it has, except under the current unacceptable conditions.

The option of transferring inmates to YCC is not particularly attractive on two principal grounds. First, although NWT Corrections is implementing the recommendations of the report *Crime and Corrections in the Northwest Territories*, they have not yet dramatically improved their programs. Thus, transferring more inmates to YCC would not substantially improve their access



to programs. Second, transfers to the NWT are expensive. This money could be better spent in Nunavut.

Indeed, Nunavut Corrections is now making a good start in this direction. It has acquired three houses in Iqaluit that have been moved to the BCC site. The plan is that after renovation, two of them will be used to house minimum-security inmates that go out on work release. The additional space will house up to 10 inmates in a setting that would make them more responsible for their day to day living — cooking, cleaning, etc. During the day, they would maintain jobs in town. The third house will be used for program space. This plan may allow up to 10 inmates to be transferred back from Yellowknife, which would free up approximately \$150.00 per inmate, per day to support corrections programs in Nunavut.

## 8.2 LAND PROGRAM AND HALFWAY HOUSES

### **Recommendation 15**

**That halfway houses be established in each region with the appropriate staffing, training and support that such facilities require. Healers from the communities should be involved and supported in working in halfway houses as they are established.**

The option that seems most favourable is to move as quickly as possible to expanding the on-the-land program (recommended above) and opening halfway houses in the regions as soon as possible. The Minister of Justice for Nunavut, under the Prisons and Reformatory Act, can declare a facility (a halfway house or a camp) to be a correctional facility. This would allow Nunavut Corrections to move inmates to these new facilities in Nunavut as appropriate.

It would then be up to Corrections to do professional assessments and decide where inmates are to be placed. Security and program considerations will be the most important factors, but particularly for short sentences, transportation costs and other considerations can be taken into account as well. Placement decisions obviously have to be made with care and must be defensible. It must be clear what kinds of inmates halfway houses can handle, both in terms of security and programming.

These facilities would allow those inmates serving shorter sentences and requiring less programming to be housed outside of BCC. They would

also serve as a transition to the community and, following a breach of the conditions of probation or release, an alternative to being returned to a correctional centre or penitentiary. Nunavut Corrections is beginning to move in this direction. It is working with people in Arviat on opening a camp there. The community has cabins outside of town and they will operate an on-the-land program for up to 10 inmates. Inmates to be sent there would be in the final stages of their sentence or they would be minimum-security inmates that are sentenced to rather short periods of incarceration. If an individual gets 30 to 60 days, the assessment can be done in the community and they can go directly to the camp. This would save the costs of transportation to and from Iqaluit. This will help with inmates in Keewatin, but similar arrangements need to be made for adult males in the other regions. Such facilities will pay a good deal of their cost just in transportation savings.

Halfway houses can be established in a number of ways. The camp in Arviat is being established through a contract with the Hamlet. Another facility, Uttaqivik, in Iqaluit, is a halfway house for eight young offenders. It was established through a contract with a private individual, but is operated out of a government-owned building.

Halfway houses will reduce overcrowding at BCC and the young offenders facility and allow these correctional centres to devote their resources to those inmates requiring more programs and more security. Halfway houses will also provide another alternative for housing those receiving intermittent sentences, usually short sentences to be served on weekends.

Halfway houses have to be appropriately staffed and personnel have to be appropriately trained. Healers from the communities can play an important role in the successful operation of halfway houses.

---

## **9. LONGER TERM PLANS - FEDERAL SENTENCES AND JOINT FACILITIES**

---

### **Recommendation 16**

**That the Government of Nunavut begin negotiations with the federal government to create a joint facility in Nunavut for all Nunavut offenders, whether they have received a territorial sentence or a federal sentence.**

The Planning Committee believes that Nunavut offenders sentenced to a term of imprisonment should be housed in Nunavut, that is, offenders who receive sentences of two years or less who are the responsibility of the Territorial Government and also offenders who receive sentences of over two years who are now sent to southern penitentiaries.

## **9.1 FEDERAL INMATES**

There are now approximately 80 Nunavut offenders serving time in federal penitentiaries. Most are being transferred to a new federal penitentiary, Fenbrook, located at Gravenhurst, Ontario. The Correctional Service of Canada is making progress in designing a program specifically for Inuit offenders and they will be receiving improved care and programming.

Nonetheless, the housing of Nunavut offenders who are given federal-length sentences (two years or more) in southern facilities is problematic on a number of fronts. While the distances between most communities and BCC are large, the distances to southern facilities are even greater, and the opportunities for contact with families and community reintegration are correspondingly affected. The cost of transporting offenders to southern penitentiaries and back is significant. Many Nunavut offenders have difficulty coping with life among the relatively criminally sophisticated and predatory inmates of southern penitentiaries, and they may return more criminalized or more damaged than when they left. Language is a barrier for many.

While acknowledging the work now being done by the Correctional Service of Canada to create and run programs for Inuit offenders in the south, it would be preferable to have a federal institution in Nunavut.

## **9.2 JOINT FACILITIES**

The most desirable option would be to have a jointly owned and operated facility, that is, a Territorial/Federal institution.

Joint facilities would have a number of advantages for the federal and territorial governments. CSC acknowledges that it has difficulty providing appropriate and adequate programs for many Nunavut inmates and everyone agrees that, if possible, they should be placed nearer their families and communities. In addition, the transportation costs of transferring prisoners

south and returning them North are significant and could be substantially reduced if there was a Nunavut facility that could handle federal inmates.

Joint facilities also would make possible some savings in staffing and in program delivery. The criminal histories and risks profiles of Nunavut inmates more closely resemble those of federal inmates than they do provincial inmates. They need similar programs and supports and it would be more efficient and effective to run the programs in partnership. A territorial or a federal institution by itself may not have sufficient staff or inmate numbers to offer the full range of needed programs. Operated jointly, however, more programs could be offered at less cost.

For Nunavut, joint facilities would have a series of additional advantages. The number of inmates serving territorial sentences is not large enough to allow the full range of programs and functions that a correctional system requires. Joint facilities would allow Nunavut to benefit from CSC's infrastructure, at very little cost to CSC. Program development, planning, training, research, evaluation, and computer systems could, for example, be shared with the Nunavut and would facilitate continuing improvement of corrections in Nunavut — for both federal and Territorial offenders. Sharing of these core functions should be part of the negotiation process.

The recommendation on correctional centre design above would also make it easier to have a jointly owned and operated correctional system. The design suggested (below) is a federal design and therefore meets federal standards.

The Planning Committee thinks that working toward a joint system is the best option for the inmates, the victims and the communities. It is also the best solution economically. Better corrections could be delivered for less money.

---

## **10. LONGER TERM PLANS - TERRITORIAL SENTENCES**

---

The recommendations above concerning the on-the-land program and halfway houses can be carried out in the short term, that is, within two years. In the longer term, the Committee has recommended a new joint territorial/federal facility.

More spaces must be created just for territorial inmates to allow the transfer back to Nunavut of inmates now housed in the NWT under an exchange of services agreement. The numbers fluctuate. As of June 18, 1999, there were 52 in the NWT, but the usual number has been between 70 and 80 Nunavut inmates in the NWT. For some of these people, the transition back to Nunavut communities will be facilitated by new halfway houses. That is, some can be transferred back to a halfway house before their full release to the community.

## **10.1 CORRECTIONAL CENTRE SPACES REQUIRED - TERRITORIAL INMATES**

### **Recommendation 17**

**That Nunavut and the Federal Government design and build a new institution with spaces for 230 adult males by 2006.**

This would provide space for 150 inmates receiving sentences of less than two years and the 80 federal inmates from Nunavut.

Given the overcrowding at BCC and the transfer back of Nunavut inmates from the NWT and the south, there is no option but to build additional facilities. Just to accommodate present numbers of territorial inmates, space for approximately 100 needs to be added, that is, the 50 or so currently in the NWT, and the overcrowding from BCC.

Providing a confident estimate of correctional centre population beyond this is difficult. The data are not available to estimate accurately. The report *Crime and Corrections in the NWT* provided a range of estimates based on a variety of data sources. For the NWT and Nunavut, the possible correctional centre population figure for 2006 was between 348 and 510 inmates. For Nunavut, on a percentage of the population basis, this would be between 134 and 196. Nunavut figures could be slightly higher than this since Nunavut will have a higher percentage of its population in the younger crime-prone years.

There also seems to be greater victim willingness to seek criminal justice protection, which may translate into more correctional centre admissions. In addition, sentence lengths seem to be going up and remands remain high.

There are, however other factors that could result in lower rates of correctional facilities admissions. Among these factors are a decline in the

crime rate. This decline is slow but it is occurring throughout Canada. Moreover, the Supreme Court in Regina vs. Gladue gave explicit instructions to lower courts to seek alternatives to incarceration for Aboriginal offenders. This could be particularly significant for Nunavut and several other jurisdictions in Canada.

As well, the creation of Nunavut and the pride the people have in their territory may help communities to do more to reduce crime and promote healing. Related to this, and as the Committee recommends below, more criminal justice resources in the communities may make it easier for Judges to use conditional sentences and other alternatives to incarceration.

## 10.2 CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES DESIGN

### **Recommendation 18**

**That the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada undertake to design a new facility that is consistent with the philosophy of healing and reintegration.**

Although correctional centre design is beyond the terms of reference for the committee, it is nonetheless recommended that a modular design be considered. The new Fenbrook institution and the healing lodge that has been built for women in the federal system are useful models. These centres provide group housing where inmates are responsible for their own cooking, cleaning and other features of daily life. The housing modules are designed to hold eight inmates. This design is consistent with the Mission Statement recommended earlier and it has the advantage that new modules can be constructed as required. The design is less expensive than traditional correctional centres and it would allow the governments to spread the cost over several fiscal years, while having new capacity available more quickly. The design for the Fenbrook institution is owned by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and design costs can be reduced by adapting the existing plans. Since there is no way of accurately forecasting correctional centre populations, this design provides flexibility and would allow Nunavut Corrections and CSC to respond reasonably quickly to changes in population.

The Committee has recommended an expansion of the on-the-land program and the creation of halfway houses. This will help but it does not do away with the need for new correctional centre spaces. Only limited

programming can be delivered in halfway houses or on the land, although these facilities can complement and support the core programs. Nor are halfway houses suitable for all inmates. More than half of the inmates require more security than can be provided by halfway houses and nearly all are medium or high risks to re-offend, unless they are motivated to change, are offered the appropriate programs, and complete them. The inmates that are sentenced to corrections in Nunavut are high-need people. They need concentrated programs to help them with their problems with violence, sexual offending, alcohol and drug addiction, and other difficulties. Space must be provided for these programs to operate and there must as well be opportunities for recreation and exercise to promote both physical and mental health.

### 10.3 LOCATION OF NEW FACILITIES

#### **Recommendation 19**

**That the new facility be built in a location to be determined by the availability of essential services (especially police and hospitals), the availability of human resources, the availability of other infrastructure (e.g., housing), and in consultation with Nunavut communities.**

One goal of the Government of Nunavut is to spread jobs and institutions among the communities. However, there are many arguments in favour of having a central facility for corrections. Correctional facilities require significant staff, many with specialized training. They must be located in communities that can attract and hold staff. They must be able as well to call upon other community resources from educational institutions to hospitals to policing. Although serious incidents in northern correctional centres have been few, they do occur and the presence of a large RCMP detachment is desirable.

### 10.4 RELATIONSHIP OF A NEW FACILITY TO BCC

The future use of BCC will depend on the location of the new facility. This report focuses on male adults. There are, however, additional needs. The young offender facility is overcrowded and an increase in young offenders is expected. There has also been a recent and significant increase in the number of female young offenders. There is now no separate facility for female young offenders. In addition, there is no facility in Nunavut for adult female offenders. Therefore, even with a new facility for adult males, there will be a variety of options for the use of BCC.

Finally, if the new male offender facility were to be located in a community other than Iqaluit, BCC would likely have to be used as a remand centre.

---

## 11. CORRECTIONS IN THE COMMUNITIES

---

### **Recommendation 20**

**That responsibility for community corrections be transferred to the Department of Justice and that 18 to 23 positions be created and funded to provide this service.**

The current arrangement for the delivery of correctional services in the communities was inherited from the NWT. The arrangement is that social workers from Health and Social Services (Regional Health Boards) are responsible for probation. This system is not working well.

Social workers are currently assigned probation, parole, and related community corrections tasks. However, because of their heavy workloads, they rarely have time to do more than the paperwork functions related to this role. In addition, many social workers see a conflict between correctional duties and their other work, most particularly child welfare. They may also lack any specific training in dealing with offenders, particularly the management and enforcement aspects. This means it is difficult to offer assistance to offenders, or to monitor or fulfil the special conditions of probation and parole orders or other forms of conditional release

The Planning Committee feels strongly that more correctional resources are required in the communities. In particular Community Corrections Officers are required to handle offenders who receive community sentences such as probation and to work with offenders who return to the communities to serve the remainder of their sentence.



**Recommendation 21**

**That the Government of Nunavut negotiate an arrangement with the federal government so that Nunavut offenders who are released on conditions from federal institutions can be supervised by Nunavut Corrections Community Corrections Officers.**

Consistent with the Committee's recommendation for a joint territorial/federal correctional centre, the Committee thinks that community corrections should be integrated as well. Supervision of persons on parole to Nunavut communities from the federal system should be supervised and assisted by the Community Corrections Officers. The federal government can pay its share of the costs of these officers in proportion to the services they use.

The Committee thinks that the job descriptions for Community Corrections Officers positions should be comprehensive, encompassing activities from prevention and education, to probation and supervision of conditional sentences, and arranging for after care services as required.

The Committee sees these positions as resources for the corrections system and the communities. They should assist in co-ordinating activities among all participants - police, corrections, education, health, alcohol and drug programs and any other community resource that can appropriately be involved in justice and corrections issues. Community Corrections Officers should be empowered to recruit elders and others to help offenders abide by the law. The Planning Committee sees these community officers as vitally important.

---

**12. RELATED ISSUES**

---

Although not explicitly in the terms of reference, there are several issues that the Planning Committee felt obliged to consider. Planning for institutional corrections alone does not address all of the needs of corrections in Nunavut. These related issues include programs and facilities for women, young offenders, and victims.

## 12.1 FEMALE OFFENDERS

There is no facility for women inmates in Nunavut. Nunavut females sentenced to correctional facilities are sent to the Fort Smith, NWT facility or south if they are sentenced to federal time.

### **Recommendation 22**

**That a facility for women be constructed in Nunavut for 6 to 8 women and that it be modelled after the Fort Smith Centre and the federal healing lodge for women**

The recommendations that the Committee has made about corrections generally apply to women equally. The mission statement, the use of ORAMS, healing, programming, community corrections, and so on, all apply to women and to men.

The Fort Smith Centre functions very well and successfully handles women with many problems and is able to cope with all but the most severe cases. Some women are so badly off that there is no alternative but to send them south to a psychiatric facility. This does not happen often. The Fort Smith facility is located in a house and the security level is minimum. Inmates who wish to escape have only to push open the door and leave. Escapes are rare.

## 12.2 YOUNG OFFENDERS

### 12.2.1 EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Isumaqsunngitukkuvik, a young offenders facility, was designed to hold 12 youth. Additional beds were added so that it now can hold 15, although it routinely has to accommodate 16 or 17 by putting bedding on the floor. During the school day, the population can be around 25 as youth from open custody come to the Centre.

It has infrequently held females and then only one at a time. One cell has a lock so that females are protected from others. Nonetheless, there was recently an assault on a 13-year-old girl at the Centre. Youth who are dangerous and need secure custody have, in the past, been transferred to a

more secure facility in the NWT. This transfer arrangement is used only as a last resort but is sometimes necessary to ensure the safety of the other children.

An open custody facility, which used to hold adults, has been opened recently in Iqaluit. It can hold up to 8 young offenders. Other arrangements allow young offenders sentenced to open custody to stay with families. So far this arrangement operates only in Iqaluit.

#### 12.2.2 PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

The Committee notes, as it did for women, that the recommendations that the committee has made about corrections generally apply to youth equally. The mission statement, the use of ORAMS, healing, programming and community corrections, and so on, all apply to women, to men and to youth.

The focus at Isumaqsunngitukkuvik is, appropriately, on education, but nearly all of the youth have multiple needs and requirements for programs to help them with their problems. The facility is trying to develop programs in Inuktitut but it has no specific budget for this and must try to save money elsewhere to pay a Inuktitut teacher. The Centre is running a variety of programs that are consistent with the recommendations the Planning Committee has made. More resources are required for programs. Many of the high-need youth require one-on-one counselling and support. The Centre does not now have the resources to provide this level of service.

The young offenders program, as with the correctional programs for men and women, has a strong need for community correctional officers. When young offenders who are not from Iqaluit receive short sentences, there is currently no one in the communities who is trained to do assessments. This results in very expensive transportation expenses. When Community Corrections Officers are hired and trained in the use of ORAMS, assessments can be done in the communities. When an open custody arrangement in the region would be in the best interests of the youth, he or she could be transferred directly, avoiding expensive transport to and from Iqaluit.

In most cases, programs in Isumaqsunngitukkuvik can begin a process of healing and growth, but youth need continuing support when they return to the community. Moreover, in the absence of community correctional workers, courts are reluctant to use alternatives to incarceration because they, correctly,

think that there is inadequate correctional support for the youth in the community.

### 12.2.3 NEEDED FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

#### **Recommendation 23**

**That Nunavut youth sentenced to custody be housed in Nunavut.**

This recommendation is made even though there are facilities in the NWT; it is essential that Nunavut create appropriate facilities for its youth.

#### **Recommendation 24**

**That a house for female young offenders be developed.**

A separate facility for young females is required. This can be a house with appropriately trained and supported staff. Some treatment personnel from the young offenders program will be able to work with both males and females, but adequate on-site staff are required.

#### **Recommendation 25**

**That separate open custody facilities for female youth and for male youth be developed in the regions, and that families who are able and willing to look after female and male young offenders be recruited, trained and supported in all regions.**

Families who are able and willing to look after young offenders need to be recruited, trained and supported. The objective should be to keep young offenders in custody only as long as required by law and by their program needs and then to have them cared for and supported in a stable and caring home.

**Recommendation 26**

**That youth in custody be segregated as much as possible on the basis of age.**

This may require another facility for youth and the Department of Justice is discussing with Health and Social Services the use of a treatment centre in Iqaluit. Youth who are dangers to themselves and others and who require intensive programs and support need to have a facility appropriate to their needs. Trying to house young offenders of all ages and varying needs in one facility cannot work well. For example, older youth with violence and drug trafficking on their records should not be housed with 12 year olds.

**Recommendation 27**

**That Inuit staff be hired and trained to work in young offender facilities.**

The Committee supports the direction of programming at Isumaqsunngitukkuvik. The manager and staff are trying to develop programs for youth that are consistent with the recommendations made in this report. They need more Inuit staff and more resources to intensify this effort. The manager has, for example, found funds within the existing budget to hire a part-time Inuktitut teacher. There should be funds for this and for the treatment personnel required.

**12.3 VICTIM SERVICES**

**Recommendation 28**

**That social workers and community corrections officers work together and with community justice committees to facilitate reconciliation and healing with both the victim and the offender, if the victim agrees to such a process, and that the successful victim program at Baker Lake be considered as a recommended model.**

The Planning Committee is strongly in favour of more victim services being provided, with Health and Social Services taking the lead. The same person should not deliver services to offenders and victims. Community

Corrections Officers should be free to make referrals and to assist in ensuring that victims are looked after.

The Baker Lake victim service program, Mianiqsijit, provides community-based treatment services to victims, families and offenders. The program started in response to cases of sexual abuse of children, but it has expanded to include family violence and family support in response to community demand. The program has Inuit staff to ensure culturally sensitive treatment and when southern concepts and methods are used, they are adapted to be appropriate for Inuit clients. Treatment is offered in small group sessions for children, men, survivors of abuse, and mothers. Individual counselling is also offered. Both the Board and the staff are also involved in community awareness and community education. The program has had difficulty securing stable funding, but it has managed to provide a needed service. It is a model that should be considered for other communities.

---

## 13. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

---

### Recommendation 1

That Nunavut Corrections adopt the following mission statement.

The mission of Nunavut Corrections, in carrying out the sentence of the court, is to provide a correctional system that promotes healing, and provides appropriate security and management through:

- helping those persons sentenced to its care to respect themselves, others, and the law;
- providing assistance and management in ways that respect the culture and language of Nunavut and all of its residents;
- working with offenders, the communities and victims to facilitate safe community and family reintegration;
- respecting staff, providing them with training, support, and a safe work environment.

### Recommendation 2

2(a) That an offender risk assessment and management system be used in all cases.

2(b) That the use and effectiveness of the offender risk assessment and management system be assessed through research over the next three years.

2(c) That modifications be made to the system as required to ensure it is relevant to Inuit offenders and to match the programs to be developed and delivered by Nunavut Corrections.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That the Government of Nunavut provide adequate financial resources to develop and deliver relevant core programs that are designed for Inuit offenders and delivered in culturally appropriate ways by trained Inuit, and that Nunavut Corrections make every effort to hire and train Inuit to work in corrections. Hiring policies and practices need to be reviewed with this goal in mind. This should happen over a period of three to five years.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**That the on-the-land program be expanded in the following ways:**

- **to include counselling and programming aimed at healing and improving self-worth;**
- **to include elders in the counselling and programming;**
- **to ensure that the participants learn the skills necessary to living on the land.**

### **Recommendation 5**

**That people running the on-the-land program and healing camps receive training, as required, as well as continuing support. This will include regular opportunities for these people to meet and discuss issues.**

### **Recommendation 6**

**That core programs be developed within Nunavut or, if taken from elsewhere, adapted to ensure they are culturally appropriate in design and delivery. Nonetheless, Corrections should establish closer ties with treatment programs in other jurisdictions, particularly those in the Correctional Service of Canada.**



**Recommendation 7**

That the core program include one or more components focussed on violent behaviour. This should include a program component on family dynamics and parenting skills.

**Recommendation 8**

That the core program include one or more components focussed on sexual offending, and that these components be designed and delivered so that they are culturally relevant. This should include relapse prevention measures that can be developed and supported (on an ongoing basis) in the communities.

**Recommendation 9**

That the core program include one or more components focussed on alcohol, drug and substance abuse, and that these components be designed and delivered so that they are culturally relevant.

**Recommendation 10**

That offenders are assisted in the development of skills to increase their employability once they leave the facility. Nunavut Corrections should develop partnerships with business, industry, education and the communities to provide useful work skills and improve the prospects for the successful transition of inmates back into the community.

**Recommendation 11**

That funds be provided to hire adequate numbers of staff and to train staff in order to treat mentally disordered offenders in the institutions.

**Recommendation 12**

**That funds be set aside by the Government of Nunavut for placements in southern psychiatric facilities when necessary.**

**Recommendation 13**

**That the Department of Justice work with the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education and the medical community to develop a strategy for dealing with mental illness, the intellectually challenged, and FAS/FAE.**

**Recommendation 14**

**That the Government of Nunavut provide adequate funding to develop and deliver training packages to train and support Inuit staff and others who work in corrections (both in institutions and the community, including those who contract with Nunavut Corrections); and that there be cross-cultural training for non-Inuit corrections staff.**

**Recommendation 15**

**That halfway houses be established in each region with the appropriate staffing, training and support that such facilities require. Healers from the communities should be involved and supported in working in halfway houses as they are established.**

**Recommendation 16**

**That the Government of Nunavut begin negotiations with the federal government to create a joint facility in Nunavut for all Nunavut offenders, whether they have received a territorial sentence or a federal sentence.**

**Recommendation 17**

**That Nunavut and the Federal Government design and build a new institution with spaces for 230 adult males by 2006.**

**Recommendation 18**

**That the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada undertake to design a new facility that is consistent with the philosophy of healing and reintegration.**

**Recommendation 19**

**That the new facility be built in a location to be determined by the availability of essential services (especially police and hospitals), the availability of human resources, the availability of other infrastructure (e.g., housing), and in consultation with Nunavut communities.**

**Recommendation 20**

**That responsibility for community corrections be transferred to the Department of Justice and that 18 to 23 positions be created and funded to provide this service.**

**Recommendation 21**

**That the Government of Nunavut negotiate an arrangement with the federal government so that Nunavut offenders who are released on conditions from federal institutions can be supervised by Nunavut Corrections Community Corrections Officers.**

**Recommendation 22**

**That a facility for women be constructed in Nunavut for 6 to 8 women and that it be modelled after the Fort Smith Centre and the federal healing lodge for women**

**Recommendation 23**

**That Nunavut youth sentenced to custody be housed in Nunavut.**

**Recommendation 24**

**That a house for female young offenders be developed.**

**Recommendation 25**

**That separate open custody facilities for female youth and for male youth be developed in the regions, and that families who are able and willing to look after female and male young offenders be recruited, trained and supported in all regions.**

**Recommendation 26**

**That youth in custody be segregated as much as possible on the basis of age.**

**Recommendation 27**

**That Inuit staff be hired and trained to work in young offender facilities.**

**Recommendation 28**

**That social workers and community corrections officers work together and with community justice committees to facilitate reconciliation and healing with both the victim and the offender, if the victim agrees to such a process, and that the successful victim program at Baker Lake be considered as a recommended model.**