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Wednesday 11 March 2009

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des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 11 mars 2009

**Standing Committee on
Public Accounts**

2008 Annual Report,
Auditor General:
Ministry of Community Safety
and Correctional Services

**Comité permanent des
comptes publics**

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communautaire et des
Services correctionnels

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES COMPTES PUBLICS

Wednesday 11 March 2009

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The committee met at 1231 in committee room 1, following a closed session.

2008 ANNUAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Consideration of section 3.02, Adult Institutional Services.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): I call this committee to order. I'm Jerry Ouellette, the committee Vice-Chair. I welcome the delegation and would ask you to introduce yourselves so that Hansard has information as to who you are when you're speaking. I appreciate your coming and look forward to the presentation.

Just so you understand the process here, we give you time to do your presentation, and then we open the floor to all the parties on a question-and-answer basis. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Jay Hope: Thanks very much. I'm Jay Hope, deputy minister of corrections.

Mr. Steven Small: Steven Small, assistant deputy minister, adult institutional services.

Dr. Ralph Agard: Ralph Agard, acting assistant deputy minister, organizational effectiveness.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Kevin Cowie, assistant deputy minister, adult community corrections.

Ms. Laura Murdock: Laura Murdock, strategic adviser to the assistant deputy minister, adult institutional services.

Ms. Loretta Eley: Loretta Eley, director, strategic and operational initiatives.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you. You may proceed.

Mr. Jay Hope: Good afternoon. On behalf of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, I wish to thank the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for this opportunity to address the 2008 annual report of the Auditor General in relation to the ministry's adult institutional services.

Joining me today are—I'll just repeat the names of my colleagues—Mr. Steven Small, ADM of adult institutional services; Dr. Ralph Agard, acting assistant deputy minister of the organizational effectiveness division; Mr. Kevin Cowie, assistant deputy minister of adult community corrections. These individuals comprise a great

team, and we will take a team approach to today's discussion; I'll often set the tone and context and then defer to my subject matter experts.

By way of background, I was appointed deputy minister in July 2008, and my ADMs, while members of the corrections team for years, are also new to their roles, having been appointed last September.

My remarks to you will be brief. In a recent Toronto Star column about public accounts, Jim Coyle wrote, "It usually takes a machete to hack through the thicket of acronyms and bafflelegab when bureaucrats come calling at Ontario Legislature committees." Hopefully, this will not be the case during our presentation today.

I'd like to begin by thanking the Auditor General for his thorough and constructive observations and recommendations, and for recognizing the progress the ministry has made in reducing the number and severity of security incidents and escapes, putting processes in place to better rehabilitate offenders, managing the needs of inmates with mental illnesses and establishing programs to divert these inmates from the criminal justice system, and instituting a new information and tracking system for staff training.

The Auditor General also recognized the importance and magnitude of the changes in Ontario's correctional system over the past decade that have had a significant impact on capacity and operating costs.

Ontario is not unique in its experience when it comes to changes in its inmate population. That's why provincial and territorial representatives, led by Ontario, as championed by our Minister Rick Bartolucci, retained an independent task force to study the issue and prepare a report looking at the changing face of corrections.

Ontario is leading the major work and analysis of the changing characteristics of the adult corrections population. The study is so important to ensure we can plan for the future and share best practices with other jurisdictions across the country. We are working together with all provinces and territories on this national study, and have urged the federal government to also participate. The results will provide us with a better understanding of the current correctional environment to ensure that services are aligned, structured and delivered as effectively as possible.

I also want to share with you our philosophy of systemic change that underlies the manner in which we are tackling our many challenges. We believe that trans-

parency, respect and consistency are key to progressive and sustained organizational change: transparency, by communicating what's going on and why; respect, by having correctional workers recognized as professionals and as equal partners with others in the justice sector; and consistency, so that all correctional services employees feel that they work for one, unified organization.

Our vision for organizational change in corrections is, in essence, a culture change. This positive change is needed, and I know we have the skills and the team to make it happen.

We need to employ new ways of doing business that will deliver an effective, efficient and seamless justice system to all our diverse communities and ensure we remain committed to this goal. In fact, I have added a specific position to my staff, called a compliance officer, to track and follow up on our progress moving forward.

We must create a healthy, inclusive and respectful organization that is proactive and innovative to rectify the full range of issues facing correctional services. This vision has been a priority for the ministry for some time. In 2007, the government committed \$8 million in funding to create a division in the ministry, led by its own ADM, to enable significant organizational change.

Auditor General, the ministry values the recommendations you have provided. They will help us balance public safety and transformation priorities while managing our fiscal reality. We are committed to studying and implementing the report's recommendations where feasible and practical. We recognize that change means flexibility, dynamism and renewal. Change is an operational ethic for us all in corrections.

I will now provide you with a brief overview of correctional services in Ontario, in particular our adult institutional services and the vital role it plays in helping to ensure community safety in our province.

The correctional services division, with over 7,400 staff, accounts for almost half of the ministry's employees. Of that number, 80%, or about 6,000, work in adult institutional services. We have a responsibility to uphold the orders of the court, and we have no control over the number of admissions to our facilities or how long they stay.

Adult institutional services is responsible for supervising adult offenders aged 18 years and older in custody awaiting trial, sentencing or other judicial proceedings, and those serving sentences of up to two years less a day.

On any given day, the ministry is responsible for approximately 8,800 inmates and over 57,600 offenders under community supervision. We operate 31 institutions across the province. Of those 31, there are: 14 jails, which are smaller, older facilities, housing remanded offenders and those sentenced to short terms of 60 days or less; seven detention centres, which are larger, more modern facilities, serving the needs of several regions, and housing remanded and short-term-sentenced offenders; and 10 correctional centres, complexes or treatment facilities for offenders serving longer-term sen-

tences of 60 days to two years less a day, and offering education, work and treatment programs.

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It's important to give you an overview of what we're facing in those facilities. There are many issues. It's a fast-paced environment, and we operate on a 24/7, 365-days-a-year basis.

It is true that some of our institutions are older and face some capacity issues. We are committed to improving the conditions in our institutions by making significant investments in new jails and retrofitting older ones.

The numbers and types of offenders we serve, and their needs, have changed. I understand the Auditor General was to give you a sense of the remand issues. Remand creates serious and costly impacts. In the last 10 years, the number of remand offenders in our institutions on any given day has doubled. They now comprise approximately two thirds of the average daily inmate population, up from one third 10 years ago.

In terms of institutional food services, costs have long been a contentious issue. We have more inmates than ever before on special diets, either for medical or cultural reasons. We now provide 14 different types of meals to 33% of the inmates. These meals cost more than a standard meal and are more labour-intensive to prepare and serve.

We have people placed into our care with a variety of health issues. Many come to us injured, sick, pregnant, with compromised immune systems, malnourished, and at times addicted to various substances. Indications are that one third of the population report substance abuse. Some have serious health issues that require constant monitoring and a heightened degree of care. The unique health care needs of our inmates are carefully assessed and treated accordingly. In addition, estimates suggest that approximately 36% of inmates have a mental health issue or disability. While we are making great strides in addressing the needs of these individuals, these issues do need to be thoughtfully managed.

The overrepresentation of aboriginal and racialized people within the criminal justice system is well documented. At the same time, I am acutely aware that our correctional officers do not reflect this demographic. Understanding those with whom you are in close proximity is key. We must begin to reflect our demographic.

Fifty per cent of our inmates have not finished high school and a high percentage is illiterate. The ministry has a number of literacy and educational initiatives across the province to meet the varied educational needs of offenders.

On any given day, up to 18% of inmates belong to security threat groups—gangs, and not just street gangs. We have members of traditional organized crime, terrorists, extremists and hate groups, to name only a few within our walls. They are organized, dangerous and violent. They're always looking for new ways to introduce contraband and weapons into our institutions, and this is why we're further improving our contraband detection tools and training for our correctional officers.

We're committed to ensuring our staff have the knowledge and equipment they need to keep themselves, the public and inmates safe. The ministry recently established the security threat group of the criminal intelligence unit to enhance the identification, management, monitoring and supervision of security threat group members in correctional institutions.

Daily operations are extremely dynamic and bustling, with movement of inmates in and out of institutions. Each year, we have approximately 80,000 admissions, and that number doesn't include the constant movement of inmates to and from court appearances. In Toronto and the GTA, each inmate has an average of 13 court appearances, from arrest through to the final disposition of their case. As you can see, the movement through our institutions is considerable and constant. Our professional and dedicated staff keep order and ensure public safety throughout Ontario.

As well, we work in a very strong and oftentimes challenging labour relations environment, and this brings me to my next topic. We have been in negotiations since late last year, with both parties negotiating in good faith with the goal of an agreement that is acceptable to our hard-working staff, and fair and responsible for both sides. I'm pleased to say that just last weekend, correctional bargaining unit employees voted to ratify the agreement. As you know, I cannot get into details until the tentative agreement is ratified by both parties.

I need to focus now on a key issue for correctional services, that of correctional officer absenteeism. First off, I acknowledge that this is not a new issue. It's one that I understand the ministry has wrestled with since 1993. In 2001, then-Deputy Minister of Correctional Services, Morris Zbar, called the cost associated with staff absenteeism and overtime "one of the ministry's most problematic issues." Despite efforts on behalf of the ministry to address absenteeism, it's an issue that has worsened over time.

In 2002, the Auditor General acknowledged the ministry had put guidelines, policies and procedures in place to address attendance problems and had minimal decreases in the average number of sick days per correctional officer. Unfortunately, we face a situation where correctional officers take an average of 32.5 sick days each year. As Premier McGuinty stated in the Legislature, "This is an unacceptable rate of absenteeism and sick leave. We're not prepared to accept it." Make no mistake; I'm not prepared to accept it, and my minister, Rick Bartolucci, has made it abundantly clear that he is not prepared to accept it either.

We take the well-being of our correctional staff very seriously. Our staff play a vital role in keeping Ontario safe, and their jobs are very difficult ones. No one takes issue with legitimate absenteeism. Culpable absenteeism, however, must be addressed. The OPS, as the employer, acknowledges that the rate of absenteeism is unacceptable and made this issue the main focus of recent collective bargaining for the corrections bargaining unit. While I cannot comment on specifics, we feel confident

that the steps taken via this forum will positively influence outcomes in this area.

I want to move on to address a couple of other recommendations made by the auditor. He recommended that the ministry should establish plans for forecasting short- and long-term demands for correctional institutions. I want you to know that we have already done much work through a capacity study, the goal of which was to develop a method of forecasting both long- and short-term demands for institutional bed space. Specifically, we looked at where we are currently overcrowded and determined the shortfall between what's available today and what's required for the next five, 10 and 15 years.

Using the expertise of the ministry's statistical branch, the ministry was able to develop a model that will project out the institution count to 2022. This model will tell us how many inmates we can anticipate in the coming years, whether they will be male or female, sentenced or remanded, and where in the province they will likely be.

We have started work with the Ontario Realty Corp. to determine how long our existing institutions likely will last and whether we should replace them or continue to maintain them. This assessment will also tell us if we should expand those facilities.

In the more immediate term, we will be adding another 1,244 beds to our system through two major capital projects: the South West Detention Centre and the Toronto South Detention Centre. These two modern and efficient correctional institutions will help meet the demand for more beds. Also, in 2004, the ministry reversed an earlier decision to close several institutions, which would only have served to worsen capacity pressures.

Another area I will speak to briefly is the recommendation to ensure that Ontario's correctional facilities are managed safely and cost-effectively. Our actions to date include directing AIS senior managers to track and report all inmate-on-inmate assaults at their respective institutions; instituting the security threat group of the criminal intelligence unit that I spoke of earlier; and completing a formal analysis of inmate supervision models, including costs and benefits related to successful rehabilitation programming.

In closing, I want to say that I am very proud of the important contribution we in correctional services make to Ontario. Our staff work hard and are extremely dedicated to keeping our operations secure and our communities safe. In addition to the priority of community safety, my assistant deputy ministers and I are committed to diversity, the protection of human rights and the removal of attitudinal and systemic barriers in our workplace for everyone's benefit. The public, our employees and inmates deserve no less. Our goal is to advance organizational change in correctional services with the ultimate outcome of excellent service delivery and a well-trained, engaged and productive workforce.

As I noted at the start of my remarks, we have welcomed the Auditor General's recommendations. I hope

the information I've provided on the ministry's adult institutional services and the work we are doing to address the recommendations has been helpful to the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. We look forward to your questions.

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The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you for your presentation. We'll move to the official opposition. Mr. Hardeman.

Mr. Peter Kormos: How are we doing the rotation?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): You'll be next, if you have questions.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But blocks of how long?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): It's about 20 minutes; that's the standard way it's handled.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Twenty-minute blocks.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Deputy, for the remarks. Just a couple of questions up front. The first one is the issue of absenteeism. Obviously, that's been something that's been bantered about for some time. You mentioned that it's been a problem since 1993. Usually, on an issue like this, the question always becomes, "It's been a problem for some time," but we never seem to know when it started. If we know it started in 1993, what was it that changed in 1993 that would have caused that type of change in corrections, getting more absenteeism than one would expect in the normal course of events?

Mr. Jay Hope: Thank you for that question. I'll turn to my ADM for a response.

Mr. Steven Small: I'd like to thank the member for the question. We've gone through a lot of changes in correctional services over the last 15 years. A number of new staff have joined our ministry. Certainly, there's no one reason why our sick leave has increased over that time period. But what we want to do is review with the bargaining agent representatives the root causes of this absenteeism and address them in co-operation with the bargaining agent.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I just want to go a little more into that. If we're discussing the problem, have we identified the problem? I guess the question is, because of the line of work it is and the things that the corrections officers do, do we know that the absenteeism is not acceptable?

Mr. Steven Small: We know that the amount, or the level, of absenteeism is unacceptable, yes.

Mr. Jay Hope: I guess to add from our point, as we mentioned in the notes upfront, our issue isn't with those individuals who have legitimate illnesses; it's around those individuals who we believe are abusing the system. Some of the indicators that we are able to read suggest to us that things look a little suspect sometimes as to when they're taking those days. We won't say exactly that those are the abusers, but things don't look right. So if

it's not meeting the smell test for us, those are the times when we wish to make changes to the system.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much. Obviously in the auditor's report there are some charts and information in there that would support that comment that there are certain times and occasions when there's more absenteeism than at other times. But how do you go about negotiating that not to happen?

Mr. Steven Small: I'm not at liberty to discuss the details of the contract at this time, but I will say that we believe that the negotiated contract is best for both parties and will lead to improvement in our sick leave.

Mr. Jay Hope: When you used the word "negotiating," I didn't know if you meant in the sense of collective bargaining negotiating or just the discussion that you have with employees about the importance to come to work and the value of being sick only when you are sick. Those are the kinds of conversations—it's important for us to really change the dynamic overall and to change the relationship, if you will, between management and our front line. That's a lot of the work that Dr. Agard is bringing forward. Individuals often think of his area as being the area of diversity, but we're talking about an entire sea change, an organizational behavioural change and construct. That's what we would like to bring forward during our time as stewards of corrections.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: The reason I bring this up is that I have a problem with the word "negotiating" to solve an abuse problem. That means that at some point negotiation is always about coming to a consensus somewhere between the two opinions. If you have abuse, to "negotiate" the abuse between the two parties, you're going to end up in the middle and you're going to have half as much abuse but abuse nonetheless. I have some concern that if that's the total answer, that we're willing to accept a compromise position, that instead of 30 days, maybe 26 is okay. That's the reason I bring that up. Maybe you could comment on that.

Mr. Jay Hope: The only comment that I'd like to make is that we're doing many things. We've never rested our hat on one aspect of a process, whether it be the bargaining process—we have a number of things we've been doing over time to try and address this situation and that we will continue to do during our time to make changes here.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much. On page 5, in the bottom paragraph, to deal with the Auditor General's report, "The ministry values the recommendations...." I appreciate that. "We are committed to studying and implementing the report's recommendations where feasible and practical." Could you give me some examples of where our Auditor General would make recommendations that weren't feasible and practical? He's the most practical person I know. So I'd like to know—

Mr. Jim McCarter: Thank you.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: It's important to me to get a feel for what we can do to help both the ministry and the Auditor General come to the best possible service for the people of the province.

Mr. Jay Hope: Thanks for your question. I, too, would agree with your sentiment around the Auditor General. He and I have had a number of conversations that have been reasonable. Let me just say that where issues are beyond our control—for example, overall in the system we don't have any control over the number of inmates we get or how long they stay with us. So that is a mantra that you will hear today, probably a few times, and it's in that spirit that we talk about how the kinds of things that we will do are really based upon that notion.

I can't give you some specific examples. Perhaps throughout the course of the day things will pop up and we'll be able to come back to it, but it's that sense that we are trying to manage a system when others in the justice cluster, if you will, affect our system and then we are responsible to deal with those issues.

I could give you one example as it pops to mind: the increase of inmates over a number of years. We've responded very proactively to that by way of adding over a thousand new beds to the system. Some would say, "Well, why not more, 2,000 or 3,000?" Those things all have to be balanced with the amount of money that you have at your disposal. So where reasonable, where feasible and practical, we will move in new directions and examine a number of options, those that require a fix monetarily or others.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much. We had some discussion this morning about the changing face of the people involved, but the question was about the people waiting for bail hearings. What percentage of the people waiting for their bail hearing are people who are in the facilities?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll turn to support from either one of my ADMs.

Mr. Steven Small: Approximately 78% of the inmate population in our correctional facilities are on remand status. A number of them are at the bail hearing stage or somewhere in the court process. I don't have that figure in front of me, but certainly we will endeavour to find that and provide it to you.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I was more interested just in the bail hearings. Do you have any numbers on how many are awaiting a bail hearing and, I guess going one further, how many receive bail after they get to that hearing?

Mr. Jay Hope: We'll provide those numbers for you. I'm not sure that we have that. We don't have that statistic.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: In our health care system we call those the "bed blockers," the people who are there who for the lack of a process to get them out of there—they're going to be out of there when we get to it with the process. I think for our committee's work, it will be helpful to be able to find, if there are significant numbers of those, to put resources in to move that process faster to free up more beds within the facilities.

1300

Mr. Jay Hope: We can tell you, of the almost 70% that Mr. Small spoke about who are on remand, this is

not a short-term problem. This is going to be the way of the future. The task force that Ontario is chairing and with the support of our minister on this front—we have been tracking this for some time. As you speak about an issue in the health care system and what can be done, 10 years ago almost 70% of the offenders were sentenced offenders. Today we're finding the majority are now remanded. So I'm not sure this is something that, with the introduction of one or two pieces, will go away. This seems to be the current state of our institutions and one that we are not only tracking, but we are trying to come up with innovative solutions to deal with the issue.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I just want to go quickly to the committee that's been set up to look at best practices in all the provincial institutions and the federal government not being part of that discussion. It's a two-part question. I suppose the first part is, can we not—without having a large discussion and from the work that the Auditor General's done and the Auditors General in other provinces—see who is already doing the best as opposed to seeing again whether we can find a compromise somewhat better than we were, but not quite; just take the best practices in one of the provinces and say, "This is what we're going to do"?

Secondly, why is it that there is a reluctance of the federal government, in your opinion, to be part of this discussion?

Mr. Jay Hope: The first part of your question, to the reluctance: The change that we're seeing in the provinces and the territories is not a change that exists in the federal system. The federal system deals with sentenced offenders, so there hasn't been any change for them. I can't speak for them, but I would surmise that the reason they don't have a desire to examine alternatives is because they aren't seeing what we are seeing in the provinces and territories on that front.

Also, I am encouraged by recent discussions with the federal government. They haven't said that they're no longer interested in discussing this issue with us. They've asked for a copy of the report, which we've sent to them, as a member chairing the task force. We sent them a copy of the report and they're now reviewing the report and we're hopeful they will come to the table. So it is true, initially that was their position, but I'm seeing some softening on that front.

In terms of the best practices, I sit as a member of the heads of corrections, where a number of best practices are talked about all the time. What one has to remember is that a fix in one problem isn't necessarily a fix in another problem, in another province. So best practices are good for us to identify. We examine what those best practices are, I come back, I talk to my colleagues, and we determine whether or not that is a fix that could work in Ontario. The best practices part of the changing face of the corrections task force report is one that speaks about national standards, common methods of training, and there are a lot of good things in there. We're hopeful that we will see some change on that front here in Ontario too.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: So it's fair to say that the main body of the work of this committee is dealing with topics—that the federal corrections and provincial corrections are not the same or the change of the sentenced people as opposed to the remanded people—

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: That's the biggest difference.

Mr. Jay Hope: The foundation of the report is on the remand, which they're not experiencing. The best practices—there may be an appetite for them to discuss those issues. Another theme in the report is around the jurisdictional split, which at this point in time they have indicated they don't have an appetite to talk about. But again, I remain hopeful.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Very good. Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mr. Kormos?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you, Chair, thank you, folks. I'm not going to open with the absenteeism issue, but I'm sure we'll get around to it.

I appreciate the 70-30 split, remand/sentence serving. Some of those sentence serving are people who are sentenced to longer than 60 days, who are awaiting their time to be sent out to whatever penitentiary or correctional institute. Help us with that. Of the 30%, how many are serving their sentences in, what is it, 60 days or less, or less than?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll turn it over to the assistant deputy minister.

Mr. Steven Small: On any given day in our correctional facilities we have approximately 200 individuals awaiting transfer to federal penitentiaries. So the great majority of those sentenced and in our facilities are sentenced to provincial terms of incarceration.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Total population in all the institutions?

Mr. Steven Small: We're talking just over 8,000.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So 30% of 8,000 is 2,400—2,600, because it's 8,800, right?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So 260 of them are people who have been sentenced to penitentiary or penitentiary and reformatory?

Mr. Steven Small: Two hundred of the entire population are sentenced to federal—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay. That's a very negligible number. So we're still down to around 2,400 now.

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Can you tell us about those? How many of those are awaiting placement in a provincial reformatory—forgive my language; I go back a ways—versus serving their 14-day sentences, their 30-day sentences, their 45-day sentences?

Mr. Steven Small: We'll provide you with that information as we proceed. I can tell you that a great majority of our sentenced offenders are serving short-term sentences.

Mr. Peter Kormos: And you see, the reason why is that you have no control over the federal inmates or over the potential reformatory inmates. You said, sir, when you opened, "We have no control over the number of admissions to our facility"—bang on—"or how long they stay." I understand that the facility has a great deal—the old adage used to be the judge decides how long your sentence is and the Ministry of Correctional Services decides how it's going to be served. So, obviously I'm talking about any number of release programs, those sorts of things. Tell us about what's available to a facility in terms of those sentences that are 60 days or less, those sentences that are being served in that facility, those inmates over whom you have control.

Mr. Steven Small: Sorry, Member, are you asking what programs are available to those individuals or—

Mr. Peter Kormos: No, we're going to talk about that later. I'm talking about what you have at your disposal. You've got day releases for 72 hours, right? Do you have early releases? Do you have discretionary early releases?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay, those are the sorts of things. You aren't required to keep an inmate until they've reached their statutory remission state, are you?

Mr. Steven Small: No, but certainly there are criteria, strict criteria, in terms of what individuals we release while they're serving their sentence.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: In addition, an inmate serving less than six months can apply for consideration by the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board for consideration. As you mentioned, superintendents have some authority to release some temporary absences of up to 72 hours. However, those are typically for compassionate or humanitarian reasons and a lot of considerations go into those decisions.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What about early releases, though? Is there any discretionary early release?

Mr. Steven Small: No, we don't have any discretion on early releases, if that's the question.

Mr. Peter Kormos: There's a public clamour there for people to serve their full sentences. There's somehow this magic in people serving 60 days instead of 55—just incomprehensible. I'm wondering if that's putting pressure on—I'm also interested in where Mr. Hardeman was going, because we've talked about that earlier, this phenomenon of bed blockers, if you will, and I'm talking about pre-trial people. Again, you've got no control over pre-trial custody if they have detention orders, right?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Or even if they don't, but you have no control over that. If they've got detention orders, God bless. If their lawyers decide to keep them there for six months, nine months—oh, by the way, there's a phenomenon, I'm told, about the Toronto Jail, the Don jail, of inmates refusing or declining to be transferred out to Metro East or Metro West because they're more likely to get their two for one or three for one at the Don. There's even a little name for it in the institution. I can't

recall what it is off the top of my head. Tell us about that. Are people actually opting to stay in the Don jail?

Mr. Steven Small: There are a number of inmates who desire to stay in the Toronto Jail for a number of reasons. One certainly has been the trend: what we've seen in judges' sentencing in terms of consideration given to the time they spent on remand prior to sentencing. Other reasons are the proximity to their family and friends for visiting purposes, and certainly a number of inmates get used to the routine and prefer to stay at the Toronto Jail.

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Mr. Kevin Cowie: We've also had a number of situations where we have been written to by lawyers asking to keep their clients at that institution to facilitate case preparation and other related issues.

Mr. Peter Kormos: When you receive an unconvicted inmate, in other words a person who's either awaiting bail or has been denied bail, do the institutions have classification systems?

Mr. Jay Hope: If I just speak in overview on that: What we try to do is to keep a separation between those individuals who are still awaiting their time before the courts.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Fair enough.

Mr. Jay Hope: We have individuals who have been sentenced and we try and keep them away from the remanded ones. The population today tends to be becoming increasingly more violent, and so when we have those individuals who are in, let's say, for a drinking and driving offence or something along those lines, we're trying to ensure that there's a separation between those two kinds of persons, as an example.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's a convicted person, serving a sentence. I'm talking about people who are in there prior to trial, either awaiting their bail hearing or having been denied release.

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly all inmates that come into our custody are assessed upon admission, and a determination is made as to the appropriate living unit designation. A number of factors go into that assessment, including the charges they're facing, information received from the police, information received from the lawyer, personal interviews with the inmate, and any other information we receive we will use in that assessment to determine the living unit for that person.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What does that mean, "living unit"? The remand people are kept in remand units to try to avoid intermingling them with convicted persons. What are you saying? Be specific, please.

Mr. Steven Small: In addition to what Deputy Hope said in terms of looking at remand vs. sentence inmates, we also look at each individual remanded inmate to determine a specific living unit for that person. So there are criteria we would use in terms of placing an individual in a specific living unit.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's interesting, because I may have misunderstood. But when I visited the Toronto Don jail a couple of weeks ago, I was told that there was no

classification system as there is when you decide what penitentiary or what reformatory some of those go to. Of course, I'm contrasting some stupid kid who's trafficking marijuana, and the police officer doesn't release him, versus somebody awaiting trial for a bank robbery who's got a whole rack of violent convictions.

Mr. Jay Hope: What you heard isn't correct, because we assess every individual when they come into our institution.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I was told they were assessed, oh, yes.

Mr. Jay Hope: For example, some individuals have mental health issues, so an assessment is done at the front end. Some individuals come in with injuries, so they are looked at by our medical staff. There are a number of different assessments and classifications, and so a classification and assessment system does take place in our institutions upon their entry.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay. The superintendent was present when that was told to me, and I must have misunderstood.

Mr. Steven Small: Member, if I can just clarify one thing: For sentence individuals, there's a formalized classification process.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I was told that, and that I understand.

Mr. Steven Small: To call it classification—I prefer to call it assessment, because it's not a formalized classification system, but certainly every single inmate is assessed to see which living unit is appropriate for that individual.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm also interested in whether or not correctional officers—I should say correctional workers, because it's not just correctional officers who work in jails—are advised when an inmate has a communicable disease. I don't want to focus on AIDS, because that's unfair, because you don't get AIDS by touching somebody. But I'm talking about everything from AIDS, hepatitis, influenza and any number of things that can infect a community rapidly. Are correctional workers advised when an inmate is received who has a communicable disease?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll speak in overview and allow the assistant deputy minister to respond more specifically. We have a very strong program around occupational health and safety and ensuring that our staff are protected during their time of work. For more specifics, Mr. Small will outline.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: I'll jump in, if I may. There are a number of things we look at. As the deputy minister mentioned, the health and safety of staff is one piece of it. As well, each of the institutions has health care professionals assigned to it, whether it's a doctor on duty, whether it's nursing staff or combinations of. When they assess the inmates and diagnose a particular clinical condition, that information is, by law, confidential. However, as the doctor warrants or as we're advised by health care professionals or by public health, depending on the nature of the illness, we may well tell staff that an inmate

in a particular area is on respiratory precautions or on enteric precautions, depending on the nature of—

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm sorry; the last one?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Enteric—fecal-oral contamination. We're simply telling staff—first of all, we train them to practise universal precautions. We issue correctional staff with rubber gloves, we issue them with rubber masks for ventilating inmates as required, and we train them to do CPR and artificial respiration in a safe manner. So although we're not allowed to give a specific diagnosis without the consent of the prisoner, we do certainly say "an enteric outbreak," or, "There are enteric precautions required." We will post notices beside a cell that reference that.

We've had experiences in an institution where there was a Norwalk virus outbreak. The staff health and safety committee was well advised of what the issue was, how it was brought into the institution, how we were working with public health to manage the outbreak and what precautions needed to be taken.

There were also screening mechanisms put in place for staff, so, for example, if a pregnant employee was reporting to work and a condition existed that she needed to be concerned about, she was advised not to work on that day, or if we knew of an employee with a compromised immune system, they could be assigned to another part of the institution. So the answer to your question is yes, we do advise them of precautions that need to be taken. We don't give the diagnosis.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You're prohibited from doing that by virtue of—

Mr. Kevin Cowie: I believe it's the Health Protection and Promotion Act, where your medical condition is—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay. Interesting. Again, the non-custodial sentences that are being served: There is a report that the ESP—ankle bracelets, that's what we call them out here, isn't it?—was no longer going to need a supervision resource officer to do an on-site investigation or inspection of the place where that inmate is required to stay at with their ankle bracelet. If that decision was made, why was it made?

Mr. Jay Hope: We took a number of steps to improve that program overall. We had a number of these ESROs, we call them—electronic supervision resource officers—involved in that particular function at one time. But we wanted to provide greater value added. So that particular aspect of it—the installation, the maintenance and the retrieval of the ankle bracelets—was outsourced to someone else and our officers had a different responsibility. Their responsibility was really making sure that the equipment worked in the home—making sure that the home could take the equipment, the ankle bracelets, that we were bringing into place. They were responsible for the technological reports and making sure that they were completed properly. Today, we believe that this particular electronic supervision program is operating better than it was before.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You say "outsourced." To whom?

Mr. Jay Hope: That's currently being done by—

Mr. Kevin Cowie: The Salvation Army.

Mr. Jay Hope: That's a contract we have with the Salvation Army, to go into homes all throughout the province of Ontario and to put the ankle bracelets on, make sure they're working appropriately and, when the sentence is done, retrieve the ankle bracelets.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Shouldn't that be the function or role of a corrections worker?

Mr. Jay Hope: We believe that the role of the ESROs is not the job of a judge in terms of determining community safety. It's not the job of probation and parole officers. They have a specific job to ensure the suitability of living arrangements. So we think that we have our ESROs doing the actual job they should be doing, and that the job that they're doing today is better than it was before, provides more value add for us. The contract, the way we have it structured today, is actually realizing more savings for us, and so, while we always had community safety in mind—that's paramount for us throughout—today this is a better-run contract than it was before.

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Mr. Peter Kormos: I appreciate that there are savings involved, inevitably. Intermittent sentences, the weekend sentences, almost inevitably for second-time drunk drivers or even third-time, I suppose—intermittent sentences pose a risk to the institution. Is that fair? They are more likely to bring in contraband and so on.

Mr. Jay Hope: That's correct. Those who are on intermittent sentences tend to be, when they come in on the Friday night, individuals who have alcohol or drug issues. So they do pose a higher risk for us, given the high nature of their in and out.

Mr. Peter Kormos: How do you deal with that higher risk?

Mr. Jay Hope: We have a number of programs in place with respect to contraband in our institutions. So it isn't just about drugs for us and it isn't just about alcohol; it's also about weapons. The Auditor General made a number of recommendations around drug testing. So we had some issue with implementing that, and that was the fact that the regulations are currently not in place to support the drug testing. But, notwithstanding that, I myself am a police officer with over 27 years' experience in policing, and what I intend to do here in corrections is to begin to focus on prevention, education and enforcement. So, to that, let me speak a little bit about what we're doing in our institutions today.

We currently have 38 BOSS chairs in 31 institutions. These are body orifice security scanners to detect the presence of foreign objects in the body.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Metal?

Mr. Jay Hope: That's correct. We also have a number of metal detection systems, and we have a pilot project going on right now at the Toronto Jail where we have drug wands in place. This pilot project began in the fall. It will end in a few months. We will take the information that comes out of that test; we'll determine if there are

any best practices, and we will determine whether or not we'll bring those to other institutions.

At the same time, we're working with the OPP and local police services with respect to doing searches by way of drug dogs. So we're doing searches of inmates, of grounds and facilities.

Another way that contraband comes into our institutions is through visits, whether they be with family, friends or other. We intend to examine the interactions and the way these interactions take place so that we can limit that.

At the same time, we have recently discussed, and we will be moving forward on, a review of our institutions from a security perspective, and once information from that review is done, we will then examine putting these best practices in all our institutions. So we have a number of things in place to deal with security, not to mention our security threat group criminal intelligence unit, whose job it is to make sure that our institutions are safe—safe for the public, safe for our officers and the inmates as well.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Do all of your institutions have these BOSS chairs? Did I say that right?

Mr. Jay Hope: We have 38 of them in 31 institutions.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So every institution has one?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes, at least one.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But the BOSS chair doesn't help—I understand 35-millimetre film containers are particularly popular for bringing in drugs, amongst other things. If the BOSS chair doesn't detect drugs, what current means is there to determine whether or not somebody is using a body cavity to import drugs?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: There are a couple of things, and you're partially right about the 35-millimetre film containers. Also those Kinder eggs that people use—

Mr. Peter Kormos: My goodness.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: So there are a number of procedures that we have in place to search intermittent inmates when they're coming into the building. We do physical strip searches of all new admissions. We do visual checks of their body, body cavities and their clothing. We do a physical search of the clothing that's on them and make sure that the clothing we issue them has been searched as well.

We keep the intermittent offenders separate from the rest of the population, much to your question earlier about remands and classification, and make sure that all their movements are not only supervised within the institution but that searches take place before the movements take place and along the way at the destination they're headed to. Typically, they're escorted by staff to make sure that there's no contact with the regular population, and we do everything we can to make sure that any contraband that is there is intercepted.

Mr. Jay Hope: But it's important for us to say that the issue of contraband in our institutions is one that we've had discussions about since I was appointed deputy minister. It is a priority for us, and we're looking to do

some things in this regard over the course of the next year.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you, folks.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you, Mr. Kormos. Ms. Sandals.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'll be sharing my time, as we go along, with my colleagues.

Just before I start questioning, I'd like to comment on the Salvation Army. As you know, there's a long history of correctional facilities in Guelph. I was at a celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Salvation Army in Guelph just a couple of weekends ago. I know that over that whole history the Salvation Army has actually been involved with corrections and doing very good work in the correctional area. I'm actually very pleased to hear that the Salvation Army has the contract to deal with the ankle bracelets, because they do have a very long record of doing excellent work with offenders. If they're involved in that aspect of it, then that seems a good choice of delivery.

What I wanted to talk about first was security, because the Auditor General has noted that while the inmate population has actually increased, the number of security incidents has actually decreased, which seems like very, very good news.

In your opening remarks, Deputy, you did talk, however, about the issue around a lot of inmates who are very high-risk individuals, a lot of inmates who may be involved with gangs or other sorts of professional criminal organizations. You mentioned the security threat group criminal intelligence unit. I wonder if you could tell us a little about the work that they do and how they're deployed in correctional institutions?

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly. Thank you for your question. That unit is still in its infancy. We're ramping it up now. What will occur is a number of intelligence officers will be hired. They will be strategically located throughout the province, at both large and small institutions, so that every institution in the province has access to these individuals. They will be the link between the security officer or manager at the institutions and the law enforcement community and provide information both ways.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: So what would be their particular expertise that they would bring to the institutions?

Mr. Steven Small: They will have expertise in the management of security threat group members or gang members, determining what gang members should be housed in what specific living unit, what gang members should be separated from other gang members, what information is being brought into the institution in terms of contraband, and linking with law enforcement agencies to ensure that both parties have access to this information so that we know what this individual was doing in the community and the law enforcement agency is aware of what they're doing within our institutions. So it's an intelligence officer whose primary responsibility will be the sharing of the information so that everyone is informed on the activities of the gang members.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: And I'm assuming that those individuals, being the experts, would also have information about how to identify people who are gang-involved within the institution and would be sharing that information with the other correctional officers.

Mr. Steven Small: Yes. We have initiated a province-wide database within our institutions so that all gang members are readily identified upon their admission, and we continue to add to that database. The individuals, the intelligence officers, will go through a very extensive training program with the involvement of the law enforcement agencies so that they will be able to identify gang members immediately upon their admission.

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Mrs. Liz Sandals: Tied to that, the Auditor General raised the issue of the supervision model: whether there's direct supervision or indirect supervision. My sense would be that currently, the method is chosen based on the design of the building, that certain designs of facility demand certain styles of supervision, so it's really when you're looking at a new facility that there is essentially any decision to be made. Is that a correct assumption?

Mr. Jay Hope: That's correct. Our institutions are a mix of direct and indirect supervision. It's too early for us to say which model we're going to. There's a lot of rich data supporting the notion of direct supervision, but we will be examining that as new institutions come on-line to determine the type that's best for a particular institution.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: What sorts of things would you look at when you're evaluating the two different systems of supervision? What sorts of components go into that evaluation?

Mr. Steven Small: There are a number of components: operational issues, health and safety issues, security issues and financial issues. All these will be considered when we study the programs.

We are visiting other jurisdictions to determine the success of both models. We have engaged the bargaining agent—primarily our correctional workers—to ensure that they have involvement when we finally make a decision in terms of what model will be in place for the two new facilities. That will be the decision-making point, when we open our new facilities in approximately four years, as to what model we will put into those facilities.

Mr. Jay Hope: We have a lot of people who have a lot of experience over time. For each institution, we bring a team together, and that team then goes through the decision-making process about what would work best, based upon the designs we're thinking of for a particular—

Mrs. Liz Sandals: And do you look at what works best in remand versus what works best in sentencing? It strikes me, given that one is more custodial and one is more rehabilitation-oriented, that you might have different requirements for the remand population versus the sentenced population.

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely. That's causing us to look at all our decisions, including our programming. The

effects of remand are affecting everything from A to Z. Given that that tends to be the face of our corrections population today, we are examining that in every way.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you. Mr. Zimmer has some questions, so I'll turn it over to him.

Mr. David Zimmer: I just have one question, and perhaps I'm going to direct it to Dr. Agard, organizational effectiveness division—is that what I would call human resources?

Dr. Ralph Agard: No, not human resources per se.

Mr. David Zimmer: Is someone here from human resources?

Mr. Jay Hope: If you direct your question to me, then I'll attempt to assist you in where it should go, or maybe I have an answer.

Mr. David Zimmer: It's about the absenteeism range. It's generally accepted that it has been going on for a long, long time. How many employees are in the group that the absenteeism has given rise to? Is it a couple of hundred, a couple of thousand?

Mr. Jay Hope: We'll give you that information.

Mr. David Zimmer: Can you give me an idea?

Interjection.

Mr. Jay Hope: We're just trying to gather that information now.

Mr. David Zimmer: Is it in the order of hundreds or in the order of thousands, or what?

Mr. Jay Hope: Do you mean how many are abusing, or how many are in the absenteeism program?

Mr. David Zimmer: How many guards are employed?

Mr. Jay Hope: We have approximately 3,600 front-line correctional officers.

Mr. David Zimmer: Okay. This absenteeism problem has been going on for—some people tell me 10 years, some tell me 15 years. Is that—

Mr. Jay Hope: I believe around 1993 is when it was first noted.

Mr. David Zimmer: All right, so that's 15 or 16 years.

Can you tell me how many guards in that 3,600, approximately, over the last 15 or 16 years have been fired?

Mr. Jay Hope: I couldn't tell you that figure, how many have been fired specifically as a result of this. The information that I have is anywhere between 30% and 40% of that 3,600 are thought to be those who may be abusing the system. That's as close to a number—

Mr. David Zimmer: Okay. Can you tell me when in the last 15 years a guard has been fired?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: I can't tell you when in the last 15 years.

Mr. David Zimmer: Has a guard ever been fired in the last 15 years?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Yes.

Mr. David Zimmer: For what?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: For culpable absenteeism.

Mr. David Zimmer: Okay, so we know of one. Can you get me the numbers for how many have actually been fired in the last 15 years for absenteeism?

Mr. Steven Small: No, I'm sorry, I don't have that figure.

Mr. David Zimmer: Is that information available?

Mr. Steven Small: We will get you that information.

Mr. David Zimmer: So the information is available?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. David Zimmer: Okay.

Dr. Ralph Agard: If I could add, the link between absenteeism and overtime is not a phenomenon unique to Ontario.

Mr. David Zimmer: Sorry, I didn't understand that.

Dr. Ralph Agard: It's not a phenomenon that is unique to our jurisdiction.

Mr. David Zimmer: I appreciate that. I was just looking for the Ontario numbers.

Dr. Ralph Agard: Right. My sense is that the issue is a complex issue that doesn't come down to a singular point.

But if I could just say one other thing: The ministry, as you're aware, is also part of a labour relationship issue.

Mr. David Zimmer: I appreciate that.

Dr. Ralph Agard: So in terms of going forward, the ministry is certainly going to be seized with wrestling this issue to the ground and coming up with some—

Mr. David Zimmer: I appreciate all of that, but I'm just interested in the facts of the numbers. How many guards in 15 years have been fired for absenteeism?

Mr. Jay Hope: We'll get that information.

Mr. David Zimmer: Okay. Thank you. That's my question.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mr. McNeely?

Mr. Phil McNeely: Yes, I have a question. Page 11, the 13 court appearances, on average, in Toronto and the GTA—in Ottawa, this is one of the areas where I see a lot of information in the press. I suppose the number of appearances—I think there have been many cases in Ottawa where it's two to one and three to one for the time you serve because of overcrowding as that facility was being constructed and being completed.

Those are incentives for the person who is going to have to serve time. There are incentives in there for the lawyers; I suppose they get paid for court appearances. I don't know what these two lawyers would think about that.

I'm just wondering, are there incentives to go the other way, incentives for both the person being charged and for the lawyers that would sort of push them in a different direction of having fewer people in there, with all those trips? When it gets overcrowded, the person charged has to be taken to another facility and then brought back and misses his appearances. The whole thing becomes very complex. Do you have any suggestions on incentives that could be put in place that would encourage fewer people being on remand in your facilities?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll take the first part of this question. We are working with the Ministry of the Attorney General on justice, on targets, reductions in the system overall. We're hopeful that by the end of this project, with the targets they've established, we'll be able to contribute to an understanding of the system and those targets at the end of the day.

For ourselves, when any inmate comes into our institution, we do this assessment that Mr. Small talked about and the classification to determine where in the system it's best to have that individual. So we are always trying to balance the overcrowding in our institutions with where best to put a person for their rehabilitation.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Is there any list that goes with—the lawyers are listed here—how many remands their clients get? Is there any list, that we would like to have our lawyers participating in the system in a way that makes it efficient and gets away from this overcrowding? Do we ever record that and show that some of them are 20 remands and some of them are four? Is this something that could be done? That's not your prison system; that would be the court system. It seems to me we have to get the incentives pointing in the right direction. I don't have any other questions.

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Mr. Jay Hope: I think that's a question that's appropriately, as you mentioned, directed to the Attorney General's ministry and not our ministry. What I can tell you, with my colleagues at my level and my assistant deputy ministers, as we sit on the heads of corrections and confer with our colleagues right across the country, and particularly through the changing face of corrections task force, we know what's going on in our institutions and we are developing plans to respond to those things, not just for today but into the future.

Mr. Phil McNeely: Thank you.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: We'll take up again in the next round.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): That's fine. Mr. Hardeman?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I want to get to the question about the challenges of two for one, three for one. I may be an exception in this room; I'm not a lawyer. I don't understand that, but—

Mr. Peter Kormos: To your credit.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I won't go there, Peter.

Am I understanding this right, that depending on which facility you're in, all of which are under the same ministry, you would get a higher credit for time served in some facilities over others?

Mr. Jay Hope: The issue is more acute at the Toronto Jail than at others. Those inmates in that facility are trying to make the argument that, because of the conditions in that facility, they should be given this three for one or two for one. The same argument can't be made at Walkerton jail or some other institutions that don't have that particular type of situation.

What we're trying to do in that particular situation is bring our staff to court. That's what we are required to do

sometimes, but we're trying to do it proactively, where we're able to educate the judiciary about the realities of the overcrowding situation so that they don't unilaterally just offer out a three for one based upon what an inmate says they're experiencing, because that's not the case on each and every day.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I guess that's really where I wanted to go with this. Obviously, from where I sit, I don't see that as a fair approach to things, that the condition under which you were incarcerated should somehow impact the length of time you serve. That, to me, doesn't fit together. The judge says, "You have 30 days," and just because you serve it in a different facility, you only have to stay 10 or 20, or 30. What are we doing—not so much to educate the judiciary—to make sure that we don't have places that would warrant that type of consideration?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'm happy to speak about that. We are providing over 1,000 new beds to the system. In particular, the Toronto South Detention Centre and the South West Detention Centre will comprise the numbers in that area.

But if I could go back just a little before that, we developed, and I mentioned this in my opening remarks, a capacity study. That capacity study has allowed us to examine what's going on in our institutions today. We took institutional capacity data for the last 22 years and plotted that on a straight-line graph and we adjusted it for the changes in Ontario's population, the increases, as well as for the kinds of charges that we think will impact on sentences, and then inmates, in our institution for 15 years out.

We brought to bear a number of our long-serving, very professional correctional officers to assist us in getting a really good picture of what's going on in our institutions. Not long ago, I was pleased to sign off on this capacity study which gave us the way forward, if you will, in terms of the institutions. What we have now is Toronto South, where we're going to be adding some 1,650 beds, and the South West Detention Centre, 315 beds; over 1,000 new beds to the system.

At the same time, we are working with our staff to examine the issues in the workplace. We do that through local employee relations committees and through occupational health and safety committees, so that we can address the issues and so that the situation in which some people are going to courts and describing is not the circumstance overall.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: You mentioned the 15-year projection. As I look through the auditor's report—now, I'm not going to blame the present company, of course, but past company has not done a very good job of making the projections as to where it's going. Every place I read in the auditor's report, we were projecting to have the need for fewer facilities, and we need more. Now that you've got the report completed, as you mentioned, have you got a projection—this is the first step, I presume—of how many beds we're adding to the system? Have you got a projection over that 15 years of

what's going to be required and how we're going to deal with the projected workload over that time?

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely. We have those data in the capacity study. If I could just give you some sense for what's going on in our institutions, the biggest thing that we're tracking right now is the increasing number of female inmates. Over the last five years, we've seen a 40% increase in the number of women in our institutions. If we go back 10 years, that number is around 47%.

We're seeing an overrepresentation of aboriginal youth and black and African Canadians in our institutions. We have a really good idea of the set of circumstances that are taking place in our institutions. We know that almost 36% of those individuals who come into our institutions have some form of mental health issue. And so these dynamics, whether it be issues of race or gender, the issues related to the fact that 49% of women and 39% of men have no source of income—there are a lot of things that go into play in our institutions today. We're tracking those and doing a really good job of tracking those so that we can come out with this capacity study and be bang on the mark.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you. There also—and this is true in other sectors of our society, people who die in care, or in custody, shall we say—seems to be quite a number, according to press releases anyway, who have died through alcohol and drug usage, or that has been involved in their passing. Is that a big problem? I guess it would be. Not only are a lot of drugs and alcohol consumed, but is it a health problem in our institutions?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'm going to direct this to Mr. Cowie, who will speak to this issue.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Certainly a number of the inmates we receive have some form of addiction. I can't give you an accurate percentage point. Some will have alcohol addiction; some will have drug addiction; some may have dual addictions. As I mentioned earlier, we have health care professionals in each of our institutions who do an assessment of inmates on their admission and continue to follow the inmates throughout the course of their stay with us.

We also have a number of programs that we deal with to help provide people with education, whether it's Alcoholics Anonymous for remanded prisoners, whether it's Narcotics Anonymous, whether it's life skills programming or other things, to help them deal with what their own particular lifestyles are contributing to as far as their own health risks and issues.

Certainly we have had, over the years, a number of inmates with highly compromised immune systems, whether it be due to alcohol abuse, liver failure or other conditions. Unfortunately, with the nature of the population we get, that is one of the risks that they bring to the system, for sure. But with the contracts we have in place with medical doctors and the way we take prisoners, assess their health, send them to hospital for checkups and treatments and specialized care as required, we provide the highest level of care we possibly can to make

sure that those health issues are managed within the facilities.

Mr. Jay Hope: It's important for us to tell you that the number of deaths in our institutions has been going down. So we take that as a really good sign, that what it is we're doing in our institutions is providing care. For example, last year we had 18 deaths; this year we had nine deaths. Two years before that, we had 24 deaths. So the numbers continue to get better over years.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Now, having said that, obviously if you have the statistics for the last three years, how many people have died in the institutions over the past, let's say, 10 years where alcohol and drugs were a factor?

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Mr. Jay Hope: We're looking at a chart here which gives us some numbers, but I don't have the ones specific to alcohol and drugs per se. We will have to get that to you, but we don't have that number.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I would appreciate that.

The other issue, of course—and this is going to be kind of a fishing expedition, I suppose—is the issue of the drugs in our facilities and how they get there. Could you enlighten me as to what's the most likely and what types of things could be going on that allow that? Obviously, when I lock someone in a facility in complete custody, I should find that when they go to bed at night, they have the same things as they had in the morning; they didn't have an opportunity to go to town and do any shopping. So how is this happening in our institutions?

Mr. Jay Hope: Individuals in custody are very creative, and some of them are spending varying degrees of time, so all they have is time to determine new ways. Some of the ways that they've been bringing it in has been through these visits that I talked about, either with counsel—not just through counsel, but also through family visits.

Depending upon the design of an institution, individuals have been very creative about the ways they've been throwing things over our fence line to try and get drugs into the institution. At the same time, some of our correctional officers have been corrupted, and so—not all of them; we have very professional correctional officers—some of them have also been subject to corruption and have been bringing drugs into our institution.

Other individuals—one of the risks to us, because of the high remand, is when they're going back and forth to court, a higher incidence of them interacting with individuals in the public, and drugs come into their possession. You'd heard from Mr. Cowie the ways and methods—canisters, these eggs, etc.—that they digest these drugs and bring them into the system. I can't detail for you all of the methods, but I can only tell you that they are very creative when they know that they're spending days, some not doing very much; others taking the programming that we offer.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: One thing that has troubled me somewhat in this scenario is that they always tell me in communities that the most likely place you will find

the drug trade working actively is the place where there's the most money floating around. I wouldn't think that that would be inside a correctional institution.

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly we don't allow inmates to carry funds within the institution. However, they have come up with creative ways of having individuals, family members or friends, transact money for drugs in the community. Those deals are made on the outside, and they result in attempts to bring drugs inside the institution.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I think that's all I have.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On the absenteeism issue, I just want to understand. When we're talking absenteeism, are we talking about correctional officers, correctional workers or all correctional staff?

Mr. Jay Hope: The issues that have been outlined in the—

Mr. Peter Kormos: The notorious 32.5 days.

Mr. Jay Hope: That's right. We're talking about correctional officers.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Correctional officers. When you base it on a 12-hour shift, it calculates out to 22.8, as compared to 32.5. Is that right?

Mr. Jay Hope: It's either 22 or 32, depending upon whether you're working an eight-hour shift or whether—when you work a 12-hour shift, that's where it comes to 32.5. But our officers are working 12-hour shifts, so that's why they did that calculation. The actual number of days, though, was closer to 22, I believe, 22.8 days.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's not as dramatic a number as 32.5, because there—

Mr. Jay Hope: From our standpoint, it's still unacceptable.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It's not as dramatic a number as 32.5. It's regrettable that that's the number that's been floated out there. Now, are we talking about people out on short-term sick leaves, people who have been injured, let's say? Are they part of this calculation?

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly there are a number of ways of calculating, but we're talking about short-term sickness.

Mr. Peter Kormos: How short-term?

Mr. Steven Small: We're talking up to 124 days. Individuals who are injured, to answer the second part of your question, would go on WSIB.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What about a person whose injury was so short-term that they wouldn't qualify for WSIB? The doctor is not here today, but sprains, that sort of thing.

Mr. Steven Small: Legitimate injuries that one encounters.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes. But the very short-term injuries: the twisted back, where you need three or four days before you can go back to work. Are they calculated—

Mr. Jay Hope: The system provides for those.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Are they calculated in your sick days?

Mr. Steven Small: If it comes under the short-term sickness plan and not WSIB, yes, you're correct.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So they are.

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's not really fair, is it?

Mr. Steven Small: We direct all our staff to file a WSIB if there's an injury at the work site, and certainly we await a decision by the WSIB on that particular injury. If it's not approved, then it would go under the short-term sickness plan.

Mr. Peter Kormos: There's a waiting period before you're eligible to collect, though. Granted, you can file right away, but there's a waiting period, isn't there?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: For WSIB? Typically, what we do is keep people on the payroll for the first 30 days of any injury, and then the board makes a decision on whether or not to grant the claim.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes, but there's a waiting period, isn't there, before you can collect your benefits?

Mr. Jay Hope: We don't seem to know, but we'll find out and get back to you.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm pretty sure there is, so if I'm a correctional officer—and I wouldn't do that job for all the money in the world. It's an incredibly tough, demanding job, and all of you in corrections deserve a great deal of credit; you're grossly underpaid too. If I'm a correctional officer and I wrench my back, let's say, removing an inmate from the cell, and I've got a bad back, I know what I've done because that vertebra or that disk was gone years ago and I know what causes it and I did it again, and that it takes three days at home in bed with a whole lot of ibuprofen, and maybe the occasional rye, I call in sick. Is this part of your sick day calculation?

Mr. Jay Hope: Myself and Mr. Cowie will address your question here. But what we really want to focus on are those individuals who are abusing the sick leave.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay.

Mr. Jay Hope: The individual you mentioned who legitimately injures himself at work: From my standpoint, I'm saying, "Take as much time as you need to come back to"—as you described it and I agreed—"a job that is very, very difficult." The majority of our people are very professional, so what we're trying to address are those individuals, as have been outlined by Mr. McCarter, who are taking the time on those long holiday weekends and things that one would think there's something not right.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Bang on.

Mr. Jay Hope: That's my first part. Let Mr. Cowie follow up.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: I just want to follow up to say first that I echo the deputy minister's remarks and comments, but also that as a schedule 1 employer with WSIB, if one of our employees claims an injury, we instruct them to file their claim as soon as they know about it. We then follow up with submitting our own paperwork to the WSIB people. If we file late because we were informed late, we're subject to a fine for that, but that doesn't

matter. The bottom line is that the employee is covered from the date the claim is approved, and we don't take umbrage with that. If you say you've been injured at work, we process the documentation, we keep you on the payroll for the first 30 days, as I mentioned earlier, and then the coverage flows from there.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I hear you, but you know what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the guy or gal who self-diagnoses, who says, "I know exactly what happened. I know exactly what the remedy is. It's not a WSIB claim, so I'm not going to file a WSIB claim. I'm eligible for sick days and I'm going to take them until the spasms stop in my bad back."

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I don't quarrel with anybody's efforts to find out employees who are abusing sick days. What I'm concerned about is that this number of 32.5 is very dramatic. Do you understand what I'm saying, Chair? It gets the public all up in arms, it exploits the anti-civil-servant mentality that's out there—you guys are well aware of it—and it's not an accurate reflection because you've used it. I'm sorry; I apologize. I'm not suggesting you folks have at all, but somebody has used it in an almost inflammatory way.

Your workers have to be 100%, right, like firefighters and cops. You want a worker who's 100% capable—

Mr. Jay Hope: That's not exactly the case. We make accommodations, and accommodations are required according to the Ontario Human Rights Code. If an individual is not 100%, as you've described it, and wants to work, we will find some work, because there are all kinds of things an employee can do in the workplace that would benefit us to ensure the safety and security of the residents of Ontario.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Are there any instances where management couldn't accommodate a non-fully recovered worker in a non-inmate contact post?

Mr. Jay Hope: What the rules suggest we do in that circumstance is that if there isn't a particular job in that institution, perhaps at another institution or at headquarters a person can provide some work and benefit to us. I don't know the exact number as to when that has happened, if that's what you're looking for, but that's what we would do. If an accommodation in one place isn't there, we would try to find it in a place that would suit both the employee and ourselves.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So that means that the correctional worker who has enough seniority to bump out of the Don jail and go to Metro East because it's a far easier commute from his home in Lindsay or Peterborough or even Bowmanville, because of course he can't afford to live in downtown Toronto—you're telling him, "Well, we've got something for you at Metro West," which compounds his commute. Do you understand what I'm getting at?

Mr. Jay Hope: At one point we were talking about sick leave, and now I'm just a little confused.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Accommodation.

Mr. Jay Hope: But what I want to say is—

Mr. Peter Kormos: No, no. You raised the issue. You surely can't be confused about that.

Mr. Jay Hope: On this issue, though, when we're making accommodations, we're going to make sure it works for both the employee and for ourselves. If they want to work—they have a doctor's note that suggests they can do some other type of work, so we know it's legitimate—we're going to work with that individual. We wouldn't send that individual five hours from their home or something that just didn't make sense.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay, but I do appreciate us clearing the air about the 32.5 hours. How many hours do you estimate are the inappropriate sick days? How many sick days would be inappropriate days? You produced the number 32.5.

Mr. Jay Hope: The 32.5 was described by the Auditor General, so you'd have to go—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, that's been out there in the press. Mr. Bartolucci was confronted with it, and he said, "It's unacceptable."

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely. There are cases where individuals have been off for 32.5 days and that is unacceptable.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So, if you eliminate the legitimate ones, what's the real number of illegitimate sick days?

Mr. Jay Hope: We believe that between 30% and 40% of that 3,600 are individuals who may be abusing it. So if you want to take a conservative view, 30% of 3,600, those are the individuals we want to better manage.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You're speculating that they're abusing it.

Mr. Jay Hope: I said "may," so that's—you know.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It's speculation.

Mr. Jay Hope: I don't know exactly what the number is.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But you don't know who they are. You know whom you suspect and you're speculating that they're abusing the sick days, but you don't know that they are, do you, sir?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll say this: There are a number of individuals who have higher sick days than we like, and we want to return all employees to 100% health and contributing to the work we have. I can't say it's John and Diane and Susan and Bill.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mr. Kormos, the auditor is anxious to make one quick point.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Oh, I'm sorry.

Mr. Jim McCarter: Just by way of comparison, we asked BC and Alberta, "What are your sick days?" They average about 15 sick days. I wouldn't want you to jump to the conclusion and say, "Well, 32 minus 15; maybe 17 are inappropriate." I'm not saying that, but that would give you an idea by way of comparison.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Fair enough. Oh yeah, by the way, is there a greater frequency of sick days from certain institutions as compared to others?

Mr. Steven Small: We know that certain institutions have higher sick annual averages than others.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Which are those?

Mr. Steven Small: If you would like to rank them, we have the figures for the 2007-08 year.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay. Give us the rankings.

Mr. Steven Small: Well, we have 31 institutions, and, certainly the Toronto Jail had the highest average annual sick leave for the 2007-08 year.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay. What was the second highest?

Mr. Steven Small: The Toronto East Detention Centre.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Go ahead. The third?

Mr. Steven Small: The central east correctional complex.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Right.

Mr. Steven Small: The Kenora Jail.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'll have a talk with Hampton about that.

Mr. Steven Small: The Toronto West Detention Centre, Sarnia Jail—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Okay, good. So you'll provide us with that list?

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly.

Mr. Jim McCarter: We have the range. Our range went from about 10 up to the high 30s. One was as low as, I think, eight or 10—the numbers that we looked at.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Just an observation, folks: As I mentioned before, Hampton and I were in the Toronto Jail, the Don jail, the new Don jail, if you will. It is as stinky and dirty a place as you could ever be in, because the inmates are throwing garbage and stuff—including urine and feces from time to time—out into the catwalk that surrounds the units or ranges.

The staff washroom consists of a little closet. There are no shower facilities for the staff. The ventilation screens for the air intake, at least down where the prisoners take their clothes off to change back into their prison garb, in one and a half weeks produced a three quarters of an inch layer of crap on the filter, which is being inhaled by those guards. The ventilation system, as you know—and, yes, I know you're building a new Toronto South—is almost non-existent. There's no air exchange in there.

Good God. I felt sick after three hours—the noise, the din, the hooting and hollering and screaming and carrying on, the guys who were bored—and you're right there, never mind once you get into the mental health areas. There's urine flowing out from underneath cell doors. Isn't it logical to expect that to be one of the highest sick day locations? Isn't there some logical connection?

Mr. Jay Hope: If I could just take the first part of this, then I'll turn it over to Mr. Small. Since I've come in as the deputy minister in July, I've gone on a tour of a number of our 31 institutions. I have been there announced, and I have been there unannounced, when they didn't know that I was coming. In any of the visits that

I've taken so far, they've all been well-run, clean, and they haven't in any way approached what you describe. So I'm just saying that the times that I was there, I found the facilities to be, indeed, what they are, jails, but notwithstanding that, they were well-illuminated, they were clean, and I didn't see the urine and the feces that you speak about. So that's not to diminish your experience, only to give you the experience that I've had in 11 of 31 institutions, including two visits to the Toronto Jail with the secretary of cabinet, and they haven't been anywhere near what you've described.

I'd like to also have Mr. Small, who has been a superintendent at the Toronto Jail, speak to you about his experience.

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly, to the member, we have a number of old jails—correctional centres. We are aiming to modernize our system. We are meeting with both health and safety committee members and the employee relations committee members on a provincial and local basis. We know that we need to make improvements at a number of institutions, including the Toronto Jail.

While I was superintendent there, we made improvements, and we're continuing to make improvements. Although it's a difficult job for correctional officers, we are trying to improve those conditions within those facilities where it's needed, and we will continue to do so. We value our employees. We want them to work in an environment that's safe and secure, and we will improve the conditions of our facilities.

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I can point out, though, that while I was superintendent there I didn't experience the same conditions that you experienced on that particular day. But after reading your comments, and the comments of the other member who toured the facilities, we will be addressing those comments with the administrators at the facility, and we will be meeting with the employees to address those concerns.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Mr. Hope, I respect you, but I have to tell you I obtained at least photograph—not taken by myself—of the filthy screens. I observed the hand-made signs at that intake area—you know the one I'm talking about—asking inmates not to shake their street clothing because of the stuff that flies off it in an almost thoroughly unventilated area.

The superintendent travelled with us. We were constantly warned, "Watch out; don't step in that," as we were walking on the catwalks along the ranges. The catwalks were full of spilled coffee, orange peels, other garbage. I was warned, "Don't get too close to this next cell door because that's urine flowing out from the door" of a mentally ill patient who was howling at the moon all the while that they were there.

I hear what you're saying, sir, but I'm sorry, I respectfully disagree. I've been in a whole lot of jails across this province too—and don't make jokes about that—many years ago as a lawyer and over the past 20 years as the corrections critic. I've seen the Niagara Detention Centre,

a new jail. Mind you, it's still not a pleasant place to work in, but it sure as heck ain't the Don, or Toronto.

So the place may have been clean and proper when you were there, but it sure as heck wasn't when I was there, and the superintendent did nothing to persuade me, or even suggest to me, that the day we went there was an exceptional day because maybe it was the day before garbage day.

Mr. Jay Hope: I think on this one it's best that we just say we have two different experiences.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You bet we do.

Mr. Jay Hope: The other thing that I just want to add on this is that the Toronto South Detention Centre is a replacement for the Toronto Jail. It is a replacement. It's not that the Toronto Jail will still be in operation once that facility comes online.

Mr. Peter Kormos: We were talking about sick days. The Toronto South jail may well address the issue of sick days because it may have a contemporary air exchange system. It may have better controls around containing mentally ill people—and we'll talk about that in my next round, because I think I've exhausted my modest 20 minutes, haven't I, Chair?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Fifteen seconds to go.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, we'll move on, then.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you, Mr. Kormos. Ms. Sandals?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'd just like to comment that I too have some experience touring jails—again, not as an inmate. I would qualify as the pre-arranged visitor, as opposed to unannounced, like the deputy. I have been in the Don, I've been in Maplehurst, I've been in Toronto East. I've been in a number of jails. I've been in closed jails; I've been in police cells in jails. And while I agree that the Don is certainly an old, worn-out facility, my experience at the Don was not like your experience. Perhaps they were treating me more respectfully than they were you; I don't know.

I'm going to turn it over to—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Are you suggesting that maybe it's me?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Ms. Albanese.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you for being here. I had some questions on the mental health inmates. In your opening statement, you say that "estimates suggest that approximately 36% of inmates have a mental health issue or disability" and that you are "making great strides in addressing" their needs. First of all, I would like to know if you could describe these great strides that we're trying to make in that direction.

Mr. Jay Hope: I'm happy to talk about what we're doing with respect to those inmates who have mental health issues. I believe that the Auditor General also complimented us for our efforts to divert some of those individuals from the correctional system.

We are working with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in a service enhancement strategy that

is a two-phase pilot project where the aim is to keep individuals who have mental health issues out of corrections, and that's a \$50-million strategy. We also have eight psychiatrists, 18 psychologists and one psychometrist working on the ACC side—adult community care side—to assist individuals in their transition to the community. We have five fitness centres, where individuals come in to determine their mental fitness. We then transfer them to any one of the 432 beds that we have in the system. We have a 100-bed facility in Brockville at the St. Lawrence Valley Treatment Centre for major mental health, male, sentenced offenders, where we're working with the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group in providing assistance and support to those individuals. We're working with Dr. Greg Brown from Nipissing University in the development of a resident assessment inventory tool to, again, assist us in classifying individuals who have mental health issues. We have a number of programs to support individuals with their mental health while they're in our institutions.

So we are grateful that the Auditor General picked up on the many things that we're doing in our institutions. We will continue to try and address those 36% of individuals who have some mental health issues, because we don't believe that they should be in our institutions, but, given the circumstances, we're working with them to make sure that they can be rehabilitated and work well in the community.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: You mentioned that you have fitness assessment—five centres?

Mr. Jay Hope: Five fitness centres, yes.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Yes. I don't know where those are. Are those available to people from all over the province? What happens if you happen not to be in a location that has one of these centres?

Mr. Jay Hope: Again, because of our classification we will try and divert these individuals to the location that can best provide the support. I'll talk a little bit about where they are. The Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, the Algoma Treatment and Remand Centre, the Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre, the Maplehurst Correctional Complex and the Vanier Centre for Women are the five centres that we have.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I understand. The assessment is made as soon as the inmate enters the jail.

Mr. Jay Hope: That's correct.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: And that's a full assessment.

Mr. Jay Hope: We do a full assessment for injuries, for their mental health, for any issues that they may have—diabetes—so that we can provide appropriate care in an institution.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I also had a couple of questions on programs. One of these questions would be: Are you gathering statistics, maybe by institution, indicating which institutions are meeting, let's say, the targets for training programs for inmates, and which ones are not, just to know if there are enough programs?

Mr. Jay Hope: We're trying to do better in terms of the tracking in our offender tracking information system.

We're trying to do that better than we are currently. I believe there was a recommendation related to that. So we just continue to refine our systems all the way along.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: My understanding is that because of the remanding, you're not able to provide as much training as we would all hope to see.

Mr. Jay Hope: If I could just speak a little bit on that?

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Yes, please do.

Mr. Jay Hope: One of the issues on remand is that individuals aren't in our care for very long. The average sentence today is 65 days; the average time that they're actually in our institutions is about 46 days. The people who represent inmates today often don't want them to take our programs because it may then suggest to the courts that that person is actually saying, "I was guilty." Why would a person who was innocent then take any one of the programs directed at whatever it might be—sexual offending or anger management—if they weren't guilty of that particular offence? That's one of the issues.

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The other impact of remand is that our programs are directed to those individuals who have sentences of six months or longer, and given the short stays of those individuals in remand, we are now trying to redirect our programming and refine our programming so that it can impact upon the almost 70% of individuals who are in our institutions.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Actually, my next question would have been: Do you have any suggestions on what type of training, or what type of programs, could be available to people who are there, even though they are on a short-term basis, so that their time could be spent more productively?

Mr. Jay Hope: Sure. Let me just give you a tour about our programming and what we do around programming. This will be supplemented by Mr. Cowie.

We have a number of programs and different intensity levels, first of all: introductory to very intensive. The nature of our programs is: For some, we have introductory courses and courses which one might describe as motivational in nature; just short courses, either video or people that we bring in to talk to people. We also have programming directed at what I call the three R's—basic literacy and numeracy.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: You mentioned that there is a high number of inmates that don't even have high school degrees and that they could use some literacy programs.

Mr. Jay Hope: You're absolutely correct, and in fact we're working with the Ministry of Education. We provide programming to assist individuals to get their high school diplomas. We also have programming directed to support individuals in terms of cultural programming. There's aboriginal programming. We're currently going through a process right now where we're trying to make our aboriginal programming and programming for those individuals who are racialized more appropriate, culturally sensitive, so that they can feel better about themselves and understand their culture while they're in our institutions.

We have programs directed to women. We've had women who have given birth in our institutions. So there is the care of your children.

We also have programs which aim to get at criminogenic thinking: those individuals who come into conflict with the law and possibly come back into our institutions time and time again.

We have programs which are evidence-based according to the literature. These are accredited programs. These programs deal with sexual offending, substance abuse, anti-criminal thinking, partner abuse and anger management. We have been, in various studies, lauded for the work that we've done in our programming—the fact that it is evidence-based and tied to literature, and we're working with people in the community who have expertise in these areas.

I'm going to let Mr. Cowie speak as well to this subject.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Yes, and thank you, sir. One of the questions you asked was about how we're measuring how institutions are doing with their program delivery. In March of 2008, we instituted a new tracking instrument on our offender information system that takes a look at where programs are being offered, what's being offered, what the schedule of programs is, what the take-up on those programs is, as well as what the programs are, in need of the community, so that we can make linkages between those who are serving short sentences followed by probation following incarceration and make the appropriate referral to say, "You may start the program here in this institution and then, as you transition to the community with probation, you pick up the program from there," to make sure that we're making the maximum use of the systems we have.

That system hasn't been in place long enough for us to do an evaluation of it yet. As I say, it has been in just for a year at this point. But we're continuing to work at it to refine it to make sure that we're getting the maximum benefit from that.

In addition, the deputy minister spoke about various programs that are offered. As I mentioned in some of my earlier comments, we have an extensive system of volunteers in the facilities, where we would provide, for example, to inmates on remand, Alcoholics Anonymous services, Narcotics Anonymous services, health care teaching, life skills programs and many other programs, as mentioned by the deputy minister.

We also have literacy programs. For example, I may want to upgrade my education. I can take correspondence courses from the Independent Learning Centre. We were previously given a grant from the public guardian's office for literacy training at the Toronto Jail and the Vanier facility of \$10,000 to help advance those programs as well. We take every opportunity we can to offer programs that are available in order to make sure that the population is able to upgrade itself or deal with the issues that they bring to the facilities, so that when they leave us, they're in a better condition than when they came in.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Just so that I understand clearly: Are these types of programs, and the last ones that you have described, available even to the inmates that are on remand?

Mr. Kevin Cowie: The ones that I spoke about, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, etc., yes, absolutely. In fact, we encourage people to attend those programs when they're being offered. They're typically offered in the evening, when the other parts of the institution routine are different, so that more people can attend.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: What about literacy, or maybe life skills? Are those also available?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes, certainly. A number of volunteers from various agencies, including the Salvation Army and other great community partners of the ministry, provide numeracy and literacy programs to remanded inmates on a daily basis.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mrs. Van Bommel?

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I just want to draw your attention to one particular paragraph that I find particularly interesting in your presentation, in which you talk about the overrepresentation of the aboriginal and racialized people. You also talk about the fact that our correctional officers don't necessarily reflect that demographic, and I have a two-part question, in a sense.

First of all, in terms of the inmates themselves—and I think you just sort of touched on it in the previous questions—and in terms of culturally sensitive programming, do you offer things like healing circles for aboriginal people? And how do you address that in terms of your female population versus your male population? I'd like to have just a little bit more information about what you do in terms of cultural sensitivity, and also whether you deal with these things during the remand period or if it's only during the sentence period.

Mr. Jay Hope: I'm going to let Dr. Agard start. There's a piece of this that each of us has an interest in. This is an area of particular interest to me, and in policing and here in corrections it's one that we've brought a lot of focus to and we've made great strides on. I'm going to tie up any pieces that my colleagues here don't address as we start with Dr. Agard.

Dr. Ralph Agard: Let me address the representation piece first. Like many other parts of the OPS, we have to increase the representation and diversity of our employee population. We have just completed an employment systems review, which has identified both systemic as well as attitudinal barriers, and we are on the way in terms of beginning to look at our systems to make sure that we're recruiting a greater diversity of individuals in Ontario. So that's the first thing, and it's well on its way.

I think, as well, since Deputy Hope has taken responsibility, he has, used part of his authority in terms of appointing individuals of a greater diversity to positions that have become available, because one of the traditional challenges for institutions as they change is to consolidate or to find vacancies which become available,

notwithstanding the fact that we have a systems review. You can have all the systems in the world, but you certainly need the opportunities, and he has moved on that. I think that bodes well.

I need to mention that the ESR process is a joint process between ourselves and the bargaining union, OPSEU, so we're on the same page, and we look forward to getting some significant movement with respect to that. Those are the representation issues.

In terms of future recruitment, on the books we are beginning to take a look at how best we increase those who will apply, and that's targeted recruitment, both of aboriginal employees or members of aboriginal communities and racialized communities. We know that racialized communities, in terms of our inmate population, are well represented in the greater Toronto central region, and aboriginal employees up north. I could also ask ADM Small to speak to efforts that we are in fact doing with respect to representation in the northern region.

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I think the overriding thing is that as we go forward, we have a partnership between the two divisions, the P and P division, as I call it—probation and parole—the adult institutional section and our division of organizational effectiveness, so that as we move things forward in terms of programming, these underground capabilities are married with whatever we would like to do from a systems perspective.

From a programs perspective, both AIS and ACC have targeted programs. I'll invite both ADMs to speak to what's currently available etc.

Mr. Steven Small: Certainly, the first thing the ministry does is engage the aboriginal communities in both designing and delivering programs to aboriginal inmates. We have 56 contracts throughout the province with community agencies that represent various aboriginal communities, and they assist us in delivering those programs to the aboriginal inmates. We're committed to ensuring that the spiritual needs of the aboriginal inmates are met on a daily basis. We've held a number of ceremonies at institutions specifically for aboriginal inmates, including sweat lodges, healing lodges and various other programs.

In addition, we worked with the aboriginal communities for discharge planning programs so the aboriginal inmates have a link back to their home communities when they're released from our facilities. In addition, we have a number of native inmate liaison officers and community corrections workers who are aboriginal and work both in the community and in our institutions to provide the programs for the aboriginal inmates.

Mr. Jay Hope: The issue of aboriginal inmates in particular is one that we take very seriously. We think we're doing a lot, but there's always a lot more that we can do.

We have a number of native inmate liaison officers who support these individuals. I believe there are 15 of them in a variety of institutions throughout the province. We have some firsts. We were the first to open an ab-

original praying arbour in Thunder Bay in 2006, and we opened a sweat lodge at the Vanier Centre for Women in July 2006. There are a number of things that we're doing in the area of aboriginal inmates, and we will continue to do more. This is an area of focus and priority for us at this time.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Dr. Agard, you mentioned—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mrs. Van Bommel, we're going to have to move on. Sorry.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Am I done?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Yes. And just so people know and understand, in light of the necessity to end the committee at 3 o'clock in accordance with the House rules, we'll move to about an eight-minute rotation, which we'll cycle through until 3 o'clock.

Mr. Hardeman?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity. I will keep it short.

First of all, I'm starting to feel like I'm spending the whole afternoon apologizing, first that I wasn't a lawyer, and second, that I have never been in a jail, okay? So far, I've avoided that at every opportunity—except jails that have been taken out of service for incarceration and actually been turned into other buildings that serve very well. The county facility in London and the board of health building in Woodstock in my great riding of Oxford county have been converted into some nice buildings.

A couple of questions, just very quickly. In the report, there's a section on food preparation, and four out of the five facilities checked had contracted out the service. But one of the things that comes out of that is that it seems the facilities are producing more meals than we have people to eat them—it may have been that they were expecting guests; I don't know—but the auditor suggests that there's some \$700,000, over the 4,000 people who are there, with the excess meals. There's a saving of \$700,000 available there. I wonder if you could give me some idea of what the ministry is doing about that and whether we are looking and finding ways of better efficiency on those meals?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'll answer your question. I want to talk broadly and then get specific. We have a food production centre called the Cook Chill Food Production Centre, which is a 42,000-plus-square-foot certified facility. It is in Maplehurst and Vanier. It started in three or four places and is now in seven different locations. We provide up to 12,000 meals per day.

One of the issues again, which I mentioned at the outset, is that we don't know how many people we're going to get or how long they're going to stay, so sometimes we have been producing meals to ensure that we have enough meals for the inmates. One of the issues in good offender management is making sure that people are as happy as they can be, and meals go a long way in that regard.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So do drugs.

Mr. Jay Hope: The Cook Chill Food Production Centre is one that provides for us uniform costs, known meals, training opportunities and some efficiencies because we buy in bulk. But the Auditor General quite rightly noted that there are efficiencies that can be realized, and so, as a result, we've paid a lot of time and attention to that. There is a committee that reports directly to me every other month, and there's ongoing work on a daily basis on the Cook Chill contract. This is a contract that we have with an external service provider, Eurest Dining Services, and there are a number of things that we're looking at: How we can reduce the meals—waste, which is how you may have described it. Is there a way that we can better know what our exact needs are? So we're looking at that. We're looking at our staffing levels in each institution to determine whether or not we're properly resourced. We're looking at whether or not we are providing too high a caloric intake or too much food, because we're providing the same amount of food to men and women, so there is some question as to whether or not we should be doing that.

We are leaders in the number of meals that we provide. We provide 14 meals to individuals based upon their medical needs, religious and cultural needs, dietary requirements, whether they're vegetarians, vegans, Muslims and the like. So in order to examine our costs, we need to examine whether or not we will continue to do that.

We're even taking it down to the point of determining whether or not we need to provide meat in all of the recipes that we have. Lasagne, for example: Can we go to a protein, soy-based replacement product over meat? I'm very satisfied that today we are examining how we do business under this Cook Chill Food preparation program to provide the most cost-effective resources for the taxpayer that we can.

On the issue of contraband that was mentioned, that is a very serious issue for us. You kind of just mentioned something there while I was speaking to it. It's not one that we take lightly at all. Again, it is a priority for me, as I now come into this position. We're doing some interesting things on this particular issue, and it's one that we will see results on.

I just wanted to say that to your main question and to the one I heard as a sidebar.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much. My question really wasn't based so much on the quality and the process. I was just taken, when I was reading the report, by the fact that the price is set at \$11.60. If you look strictly at the meals that were prepared for people who weren't there to eat them, it's \$700,000. The Auditor General says it varied from 4% excess to 11% excess. It would seem to me that immediately, if you brought the 11% down to the 4% and said that there was always 4% because we don't know who's coming or going—if you always had at least 4% excess, it would seem to me that you could cut it down by 7% and nobody—

Mr. Jay Hope: That's one of the areas that we're examining. Thanks for bringing that to our attention. I'd like Mr. Cowie to address some issues on that particular point.

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Mr. Kevin Cowie: I was going to mention, as the deputy mentioned in his opening remarks, that we did take a careful look at the recommendations from the Auditor General and we're working hard to implement many of those recommendations now.

My colleague Mr. Small and I have had several meetings and discussions to talk about what is driving the extra meals. You can appreciate, based on the deputy's comments about the in-and-out movements that we have and the high volume of movements, that the food service managers in the retherm institutions have to, to an extent, estimate what the number of meals will be in a day. For example, in one of the larger institutions, if they start with 1,000 inmates—they're feeding breakfast to them—they may have 100-plus inmates going to court. Of the 100 going to court, they're estimating that perhaps 100 will come back, and there may be some new arrivals in there. So there's a lot of flux in the system.

One of the issues that we face in meal preparation is that we can't prepare meals throughout the day. For example, if some of the courts from Durham region are arriving back at the Central East Correctional Centre at 8 o'clock at night, we need to have meals prepared and ready for those inmates to eat so that we don't spend two hours trying to prepare meals. You can appreciate, maybe, how unworkable that would be.

So we're taking a look at where we can find efficiencies, not only from the number of meals ordered within an institution to make sure that we're forecasting what the inmate counts will be as accurately as we can—but we're also taking a look at where we can find efficiencies in that process.

One of the things that we can't do is send meals from the retherm kitchen to an admitting and discharge area or something else, and then bring them back and refrigerate them again. There are food handling safety rules that we need to comply with. So once they've left the kitchen, they are, in effect, served.

Working with my colleague, we're looking at a number of ways to find efficiencies in that. Certainly, based on the auditor's numbers and recommendations, we're satisfied we're going to find significant savings.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Mr. Kormos.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you, Chair. My apologies; I had to leave the room for a moment.

I think the last question I'm going to ask you is about absenteeism. Out of 3,400 correctional officers, how many do you speculate, as you say, may be taking inappropriate sick days?

Mr. Jay Hope: It's just an estimate: somewhere between 30% and 40%.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Back in 2001, this committee was told by the ministry of corrections that it was introducing

random testing of inmates for drug and alcohol use. How's that coming along?

Mr. Jay Hope: I talked a little bit earlier about the regulations not being in place to support a framework. So we can't do it right now because the regulations aren't in place. In any event, the direction that I'm intending to go toward, with the support of my minister, is around prevention, education and enforcement. What we're trying to do is prevent the drugs from coming into our institutions, rather than to be reactive, which it seems to me that drug testing is. We will confirm who has it in their system, but we don't want it even coming through our doors. So that's where we're at.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Have the regulations been written?

Mr. Jay Hope: I'm not sure. If any of my colleagues—

Mr. Steven Small: No, and I want to add to what the deputy said. A recent Supreme Court decision indicated that it wasn't possible to conduct random tests of inmates for drugs and alcohol. We're still following that case and certainly will take every possible method we can to prevent—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Of course you will.

I wonder if, Chair, we could get, along with the list of highest-to-lowest-sick-days institutions—do you know the name of that decision off the top of your head?

Mr. Steven Small: It's Shoniker, I believe, v. Regina.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Where was that? Superior Court or Court of Appeal?

Mr. Steven Small: I believe it was Supreme Court.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It's just interesting, I suppose, from our perspective.

Would you use random drug and alcohol testing if the regulations were in effect and if it weren't contrary to court rulings?

Mr. Jay Hope: That is one of the strategies in the fight against keeping drugs out of our institutions. In a perfect world, and if it was there and at our disposal, we would absolutely consider it.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I understand you can't do cavity searches.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: No. Cavity searches are very tightly restricted. They can only be conducted by a health care professional, with the consent of the individual.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Gotcha. So consent; there you go.

Mr. Kevin Cowie: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Metal detectors don't detect anything that isn't metal; to wit, a plastic-type container that's full of drugs. You say there are new programs. Is this for dealing with detecting drugs coming in?

Mr. Steven Small: We are conducting a pilot project regarding the use of drug detection wands, narcotics detection wands.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What do they identify?

Mr. Steven Small: Up to 15 different narcotics.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Marijuana?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What about tablets?

Mr. Steven Small: It's based on detecting the residue, so it depends on what—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Oh, it's like the stuff at the airport where they dab your luggage and look for gunpowder?

Mr. Steven Small: That's basically the principle, yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: How would that work with a plastic object that's inside the person's body?

Mr. Steven Small: This type of equipment isn't designed for that, but the deputy mentioned that we've involved the law enforcement agencies in terms of the use of canine searches.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Will canine searches—they can't smell inside-body drugs, can they?

Mr. Steven Small: They can.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Really?

Mr. Steven Small: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Some of you are going to have to be more careful at the airport. Is that being worked with yet?

Mr. Steven Small: Pardon me?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Is that being worked with? Is that happening? You mentioned earlier, OPP—

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely. We've done that in the past.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You said you were working with OPP. Where is it being done now? At what institution are you running some sort of experiment with it?

Mr. Steven Small: For example, the Toronto Jail uses the OPP canine search unit on a regular basis.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But I'm talking about inmates returning from, let's say, remand court.

Mr. Jay Hope: This is a situation that works best when we're not telling individuals when we're going to do it, so we do it at a number of different institutions on a surprise basis. We do it at our intermittent facility at Mimico. We do it at a number of different places.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You search cells, right?

Mr. Jay Hope: Yes.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You don't search inmates. You don't have the dog—

Mr. Steven Small: Cells, living units, other areas of the institution.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Because this isn't a joke. I remember coming back with some kielbasa from the old country, from my family. That little beagle from the Ministry of Ag and Food got me, but that was kielbasa. What can I say? You didn't need a dog to find it. I smelled of it.

The new institutions—we've got Toronto South and—

Mr. Jay Hope: South West Detention.

Mr. Peter Kormos: How many beds are being shut down and being replaced by the new institution?

Mr. Jay Hope: These institutions will provide over 1,000 new beds and we will replace the Toronto Jail with the Toronto South Detention Centre.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So 1,000 new beds is an additional number of beds?

Mr. Jay Hope: It's an additional number of beds.

Mr. Peter Kormos: That includes the mats on the floor?

Mr. Jay Hope: We're just talking our beds.

Mr. Peter Kormos: We've got to talk about the mats on the floor too—the third person in the cell.

Mr. Jay Hope: We only go to those circumstances when we have overcrowding.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I know.

Mr. Jay Hope: But our 1,000 number does not include a mat on the floor.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So what's the number of beds that are being replaced?

Mr. Steven Small: We have approximately 550 at the Toronto Jail and over 125 at the Windsor Jail, in those two facilities. We're building approximately 350 at the South West Detention Centre in the Windsor area and over 1,600 at the Toronto South Detention to replace the Toronto Jail.

Mr. Peter Kormos: So 1,600 to replace 550, and we know, of course, the Toronto Jail is almost inevitably over 100%.

What is your correctional-officer-to-inmate ratio at Toronto Jail now?

Mr. Jay Hope: You have 300 staff at the Toronto Jail and 562 beds.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes, 600 or 700 inmates. What's the staff ratio going to be? Let's say close to 700—right?—at the Don, from time to time. You're doubling the number of beds plus 100. Are you going to double the number of staff?

Mr. Steven Small: That decision on staffing model hasn't been made yet.

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Mr. Peter Kormos: Is it going to be direct supervision as compared to indirect?

Mr. Steven Small: That decision is under consideration. We're reviewing both a direct and an indirect model of supervision. Again, as I said, we're studying the benefits of both models and we will engage the bargaining agent representatives in those reviews.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly, folks.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you, Mrs. Van Bommel?

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I'm really glad, and I know every farmer in this country is glad, that that little beagle is on the job over there. What were you thinking?

Mr. Peter Kormos: It was old country kielbasa, family-made, for Pete's sake.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I know, but—

Mr. Peter Kormos: "Peter, take kielbasa home."

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Dr. Agard, I wanted to go back to your response. Just for my information and maybe for others, you mentioned ESR. What is ESR?

Dr. Ralph Agard: Employment system review.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: What does that do?

Dr. Ralph Agard: It is a process of taking a look at—let me just take half a second before that. There's an underlying assumption that systems—and by that, I mean practices. If they're not generating the desired results,

then change is necessary in that system. On average, we should be recruiting a lot more diversity in and among our correctional officers, but we note, for instance, at graduation that there is not visibility; it is very small. So we operate on an assumption that our systems have to be retooled.

So we've taken—I think it is two years?—a two-year exercise, or a year and a half, in terms of actually formalizing what we want to look at, and we've had some consultants in with that speciality who are taking a look at the way we do recruitment, the way we look at some retention issues, why those whom we hire don't stay, why we are not having a pool that is as diverse, what our systems—for example, when we cut off true recruitment, are we in fact taking a look at all of the skills that are available to us as an employer? So we have that in hand now and, with recommendations etc., we're about to put it in place.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: In terms of not just recruitment but among current staff, is there a training program or an education program, I guess for lack of better words, to create a cultural sensitivity to the aboriginal and racialized population of your institutions?

Dr. Ralph Agard: Yes. We do that in two ways. One is from an organizational effectiveness position that recognizes that we have to change the way we've done business for many years, and that includes our attitudes and belief systems toward cultural and racial differences etc. So we've just completed—last year we trained every manager in corrections with a three-day exercise in what is termed anti-racism, anti-sexism, understanding differences etc., and how you manage those in the workplace.

We're looking forward to the next fiscal period to work and do a similar exercise on conflict resolution because at the heart of issues arising that are discriminatory or otherwise—some of it, particularly because of the nature of the work that we do, stems out of conflict resolution. So we're increasing that capacity among managers and on a regular and ongoing basis designing education and change practices.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: You talked earlier about having a prayer garden at Thunder Bay and the sweat lodge at the Vanier Centre. How do you make sure that all aboriginal people have access to that kind of thing? Do you present those kinds of things in all of your 31 institutions, or do you move people? How do you manage that?

Mr. Jay Hope: Some of this is a voluntary thing, in that individuals either have an awakening while they're in institutions or they come with a conscious sense of themselves and what they want in terms of their own spirituality. So they ask for programming. We don't have this programming in all of our institutions. We're moving, though, to ensure that our programs are culturally sensitive, that the communities have had some input into them, and we're going through that process right now.

We can do better in this regard. We've come some way, but there's more to do on this front, I think it's safe to say.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I've been talking about the aboriginal people, but I want to address the racialized people as well. You're doing the same sorts of things for them?

Mr. Jay Hope: Absolutely. When I first came in, we did an inventory, if you will, of our programming on this front. We have some exciting opportunities coming up even within the next 45 days, where we're going to make sure that our programs are better for racialized and aboriginal communities. We need to, first of all, make sure that they're well grounded, that the community supports them, and these are some of the programs that we're going through.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): No further questions? At this time, the auditor wanted to make some comments.

Mr. Jim McCarter: I'll just be very quick. I should have mentioned it this morning, but just to put it on the record, I'd like to say that we had excellent co-operation from the ministry on this audit. In particular, I'd like to

highlight the fact that we visited seven institutions. We talked to superintendents, COs, intake people, rehab people and medical people, and they really were very forthright in talking to us. They were almost happy to see the auditor, which is a bit of surprise. If you could pass that along to your people, I would appreciate that.

Mr. Jay Hope: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): At this time, we thank you for taking the time to be here today and answering all our questions.

Mr. Jay Hope: Could I just make one final and quick comment?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Yes.

Mr. Jay Hope: I just want to thank the people who supported me here today. I've got two great ADMs and a great support staff; all of them haven't been mentioned. We're very excited about the future. I couldn't do what I do without them, and we certainly couldn't do what we do without the full support of our minister, Rick Bartolucci. I just wanted to say that in conclusion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette): Thank you. This committee is adjourned until 9:30 of the clock on March 25.

The committee adjourned at 1456.

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