



# PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE OF CANADA

Prosecuting federal crimes.  
Protecting Canadians.

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**ANNUAL REPORT  
2023-2024**



Public Prosecution  
Service of Canada

Service des poursuites  
pénales du Canada

Canada

If you would like to know more about the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC), please refer to [our website](#) and the following documents:

*[Director of Public Prosecutions Act](#)*

*[Public Prosecution Service of Canada Deskbook](#)*

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This document is available in multiple formats upon request.

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Ottawa, Canada  
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June 19, 2024

The Honourable Arif Virani, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Attorney General:

Pursuant to section 16(1) of the *Director of Public Prosecutions Act*, I am pleased to present you with the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the Public Prosecution Service of Canada. The report covers the period from April 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Roussel  
Director of Public Prosecutions and Deputy Attorney General of Canada

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The PPSC acknowledges Canada as the land of the First Peoples (Nations), Métis and Inuit. We recognize that most of the land we use to live, work, and enjoy is shared in accordance with historic and contemporary treaties. Other land continues to be unceded territory.

We need to more fully appreciate that we are guests on this land and intentionally become better stewards of our surroundings.

Our commitment to truth and reconciliation is reflected in our core values. We acknowledge the historical and on-going failure to protect the lives, values, and culture of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. We seek to reconcile the differing values of the Canadian criminal justice system with those of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Our aim is to build a just relationship that addresses both the over-representation of Indigenous Peoples within the criminal justice system and the high rates of violence against Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous women and girls.

Our [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility \(EDIA\) Action Plan](#) also commits our organization to better understanding the **truth** of how colonialism affected Indigenous Peoples. How it unsettled the relationship between the first stewards and the land. How it directly disrupted the relationship between Indigenous Peoples, their culture, and their relationship with each other in their families and communities. How this brought tremendous disruption to their lives leading to significant and enduring, intergenerational trauma.

Our dutiful role in **reconciliation** is to ensure our prosecutorial work evolves. This means that we can and must intentionally contribute to reducing the mass incarceration of marginalized groups in the criminal justice system, particularly Indigenous Peoples.

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

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I am pleased to present the Public Prosecution Service of Canada's (PPSC) annual report for the year 2023-2024, the last report within my term as Director of Public Prosecutions.

Consistent with our previously expressed goals of public safety while doing our part to reduce over-representation of certain populations in the criminal justice system, particularly First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Black Canadians, the PPSC continued to refine the prosecution policies contained in its [Deskbook](#). The *Deskbook* is the main instrument that serves to guide the exercise of prosecutorial discretion. Changes were made to guidelines related to [resolution discussions](#) and to the [duties of all prosecutors](#) to challenge prosecutors to confront biases they may hold, both conscious and unconscious, and to consider over-representation. Expectations of prosecutors include keeping up to date on jurisprudence and educating themselves on biases. Finally, changes were made to the guideline in respect of [drug treatment courts](#), to clarify and expand admissibility, particularly where complete abstinence may not be realistic, but where the therapeutic approach of the court may nevertheless assist an offender in reducing or eliminating the criminality that arises as a result of his or her substance use disorder. At the time of writing this message, work continues to update further guidelines, particularly in respect of bail and sentencing.



In a similar vein, training has continued for our prosecutors and paralegals in applying a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA) approach to our decision-making. We also were able to roll out training on Historical and Present Indigenous Realities, Trauma and *Gladue* Reports, including an important module on applying *Gladue* principles at various stages of a prosecution. The training, while including common elements throughout the PPSC, is adapted regionally to reflect the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities served in each region.

Our public facing “[Public Feedback and Complaints Policy](#)” was finally published, after a few years of redevelopment, to a policy that invites feedback and provides the public assurance that any complaint will be fully investigated and treated with the seriousness it deserves. It is hoped that the renewed, user-friendly policy, will allow more open feedback from witnesses, victims, accused and members of the public and better reporting in respect of complaints and how they were treated. This is very much in keeping with the goal of being more transparent, where possible, in how we deliver our services.

In respect of people management, the PPSC created the [National Accessibility Plan](#), which led to the creation of the Accessibility Support Centre. The goal is to make our workplace accessible by design, but also to facilitate and simplify accommodation for employees and managers alike.

It was a banner year for judicial appointments from the PPSC, where 11 of our counsel were elevated to the bench in jurisdictions across the country. This is in my view a reflection of the quality of our jurists and of the training we provide to them, day in and day out throughout the Canadian court system.

As this is my last annual report, I want to thank the people of the PPSC for a phenomenal 7 years. We have worked hard, obtained results for Canadians, and enjoyed each other’s camaraderie in the process. I wish you all the best as you continue to work towards improving our organization and addressing emerging issues in criminal law.



**Kathleen Roussel**  
Director of Public Prosecutions



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ABOUT THE PPSC

# ABOUT THE PPSC

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## WHAT IS THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE OF CANADA?

The Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC), a Government of Canada organization, is a national, independent, and accountable prosecuting authority whose main objective is to prosecute cases under federal jurisdiction in a fair manner that is free from any improper influence. Reporting to the Attorney General of Canada, the PPSC is responsible to Parliament.

In this section we introduce:

- » the mandate of the PPSC;
- » the mission and values of the PPSC;
- » the role of the prosecutor;
- » current and future priorities;
- » the organizational structure of the PPSC; and
- » its regional offices.

## OUR MANDATE

The PPSC is a distinct governmental organization managed by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), who has the rank and status of a deputy head (deputy minister) of a department. Mandated by the *Director of Public Prosecutions Act*, the DPP is empowered to:

- » initiate and conduct federal prosecutions;

- » intervene in proceedings that raise a question of public interest that may affect the conduct of prosecutions or related investigations;
- » issue guidelines to federal prosecutors;
- » advise law enforcement agencies or investigative bodies on general matters relating to prosecutions and on particular investigations that may lead to prosecutions;
- » communicate with the media and the public on all matters that involve the initiation and conduct of prosecutions;
- » exercise the authority of the Attorney General of Canada in respect of private prosecutions; and
- » exercise any other power or carry out any other duty or function assigned by the Attorney General of Canada that is compatible with the Office of the DPP.

For the purpose of carrying out these statutory responsibilities, the DPP is the Deputy Attorney General of Canada.

The Act also empowers the DPP to:

- » initiate and conduct prosecutions under the *Canada Elections Act*; and
- » act, when requested by the Attorney General of Canada, in matters under the *Extradition Act* and the *Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Act*.



With the exception of *Canada Elections Act* matters, the Attorney General of Canada can issue a directive to the DPP about a prosecution or assume conduct of a prosecution, but must do so in writing and a corresponding notice must be published in the *Canada Gazette*. In turn, the DPP must inform the Attorney General of any prosecution or

planned intervention that may raise important questions of general interest.

The PPSC is also responsible for administering the recovery of outstanding federal fines under the terms of an assignment issued by the Attorney General of Canada in 2007.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to serve the public interest and help make Canada a safe and just society by:

- » conducting prosecutions in a manner that is equitable, objective and independent, while protecting the rights of every individual; and
- » contributing to the change necessary to support a criminal justice system that is fair to all.

## OUR VALUES

Our values serve as a guide for expected behaviour and action for all employees at the PPSC and this is what Canadians should expect from us. In addition, every PPSC employee has a role to play in creating a work environment where every person can bring their whole self to work and feel valued and empowered to contribute.

### *Respect*

We are committed to treating everyone equitably, with empathy, and compassion because everyone is worthy of respect.

### *Trust*

We work to earn the trust of our colleagues and the communities we serve. We are accountable for what we say and do.

### *Professionalism*

We use our knowledge, skills, experience, and judgment to be effective. Our humility, integrity, and wisdom are apparent in our work. We function as one team to leverage everyone's strengths and remain flexible to



adapt to change. We continuously strive to learn and seek better ways of doing our work.

### *Courage*

We make difficult decisions informed by fairness and justice. We confront biases including our own. We stand up against injustice, harassment, and discrimination.

### *Equity and Inclusion*

We want to contribute to a criminal justice system that truly serves the public interest. We acknowledge our past failures and are determined to eliminate systemic discrimination and the over-representation of Indigenous, First Nation, Métis, Inuit, Black and marginalized community members. We seek to be equitable, accessible, accommodating, and inclusive by design. We are strengthened by people of diverse heritages, faiths, cultures, abilities, and cognitive functioning.

## ***Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation***

We acknowledge the historical and ongoing failure to protect the lives, values, and culture of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. We seek to reconcile the differing values of the Canadian criminal justice system with those of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Our aim is to build a just relationship that addresses both the over-representation of Indigenous Peoples within the criminal justice system and the high rates of violence against Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous women and girls.

## **ROLE OF THE PROSECUTOR**

The mandate, mission, and values of the PPSC all come together in the role of the prosecutor within the justice system.

Prosecutors play a key role in the [Canadian criminal justice system](#) and are working to make it more equitable and fairer to all Canadians. The prosecutor's role in advising investigative agencies and in conducting prosecutions is an independent function that

must be exercised free from any inappropriate considerations, including partisan ones. The importance of this independence is so great that it is a constitutional principle. Prosecutors have the duty to be objective, independent, and dispassionate. The only cases that should be brought to trial are those that have a reasonable prospect of conviction on the admissible evidence and that are in the public interest to prosecute. Cases are prosecuted with competence, diligence, and fairness. Prosecutors must always be of integrity, above all suspicion, and must exercise the considerable discretion bestowed on them fairly, in good faith, and without any consideration of the political implications of their decisions. Their role is not to seek convictions at any cost, but to put before the court all available, relevant, and admissible evidence necessary to enable the court to determine the guilt or innocence of an accused, who is presumed innocent throughout the trial. Prosecutors must avoid wrongful convictions or miscarriages of justice.



## OUR PRIORITIES

Our mandate calls upon all of our employees to uphold public trust and to contribute to the change necessary to support a criminal justice system that is more equitable and fairer to all persons. Each organizational priority is an integral part of achieving the greater goal. It is advancing on all these priorities together that will ultimately lead us to align our services with the ever-changing realities of Canadian society.

### *Take Action Against Systemic Discrimination and Racism in the Criminal Justice System*

We will continue to contribute to the change necessary to support a criminal justice system that is more equitable and fairer to all Canadians.

### *Advance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Workplace*

We will continue to build an accessible, inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace environment where all employees can thrive.

### *Foster a Culture of Trust and Engagement*

We will foster a culture of trust and engagement, where all employees are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. We will also continue to promote public trust in the criminal justice system by enhancing our engagement with external stakeholders and court participants.

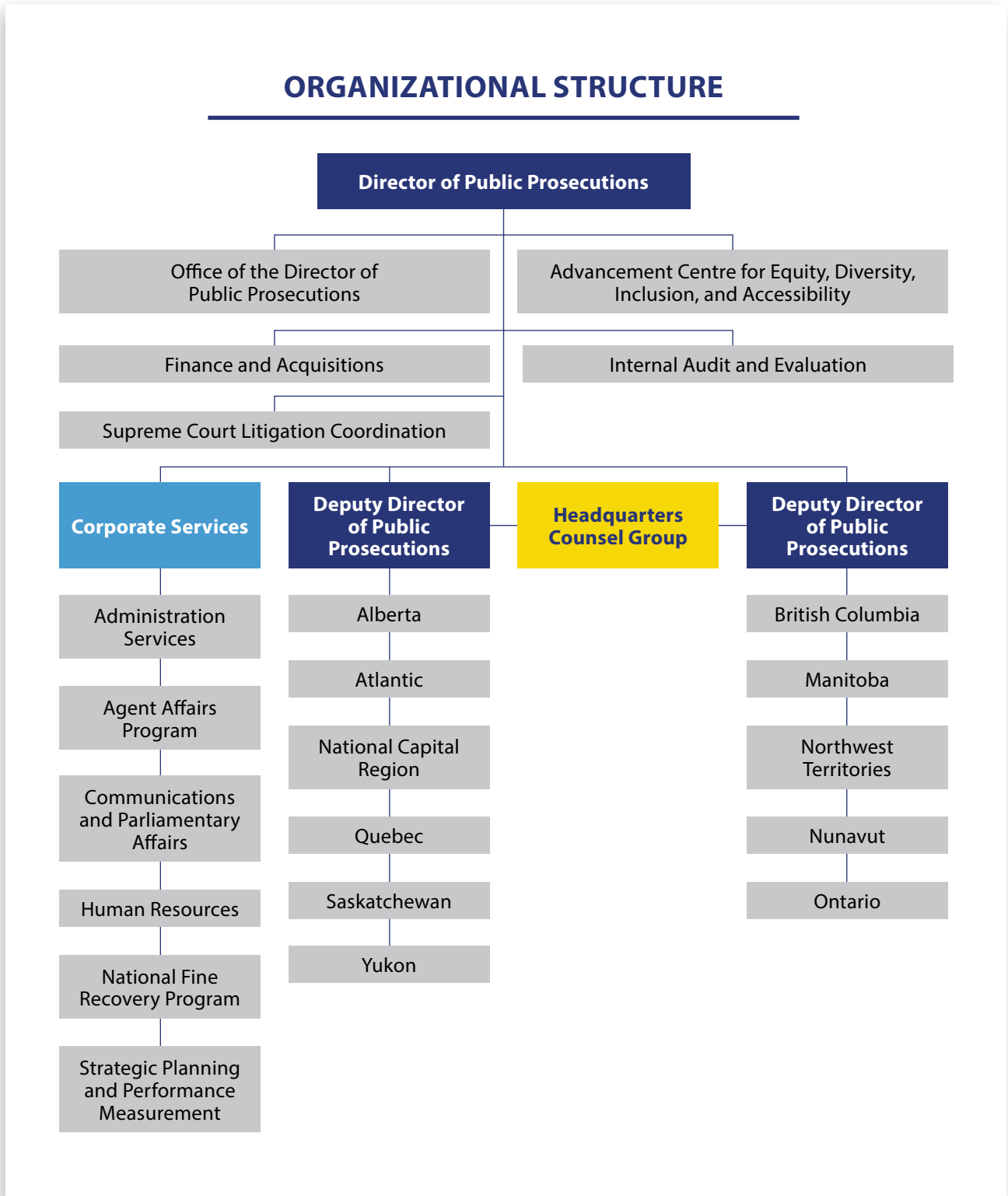
### *Modernize the Way We Work*

Innovation is the way forward to building an agile workforce and a modern criminal justice system. We will continue to modernize our tools and procedures, as well as our prosecutorial policies and practices.



## OUR STRUCTURE

Our organizational structure, headed by the DPP and supported by corporate support services and regional offices, is shown below:





## OUR OFFICES

We have 23 offices spread out over 11 regions across the country, with each region focusing on local needs and priorities. Our regional offices provide advice and training to the law enforcement agencies in their regions, thus strengthening their relations.

We handle a broad range of federal prosecutions, namely federal offences relating to drugs, regulatory and economic offences, and national security offences. In the territories, we prosecute *Criminal Code* offences, as well as offences under all federal statutes.

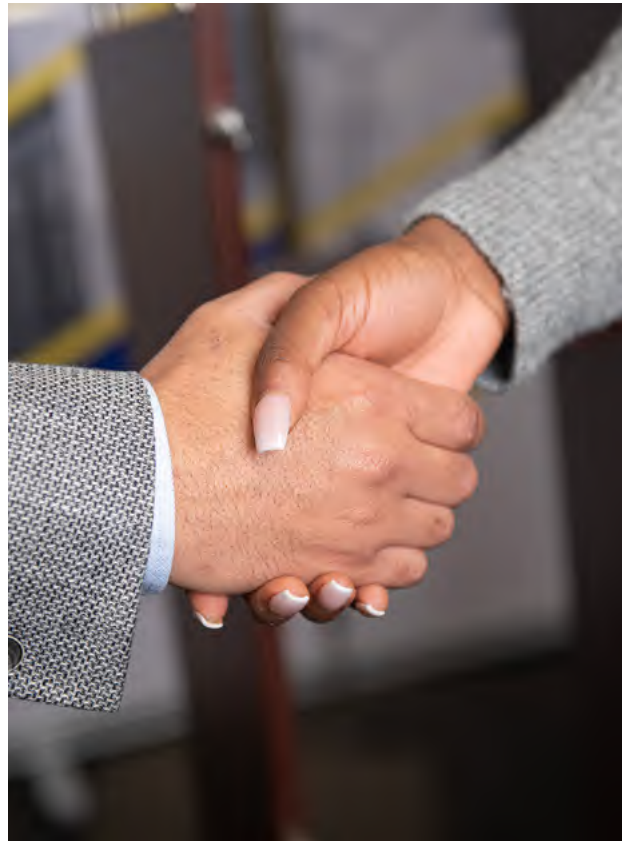
In many provinces and territories, in order to serve smaller communities, our prosecutors travel from community to community throughout the year to provide their services for circuit court. We also retain the services of 98 law firms with 445 staff members (lawyers, paralegals, and support staff) approved to assist with prosecutions on behalf of the Federal Crown where it is impractical or otherwise not cost-effective for our prosecutors to handle prosecutions.

### ***Opening of a new office serving Thunder Bay, Ontario***

We decided to expand to Northwestern Ontario in response to the following challenges:

- » an opioid crisis; and
- » a related increase in the volume of lengthy and complex investigations relating to organized gangs operating in the District of Thunder Bay.

Opening an office in Thunder Bay also helps us work more closely with local Indigenous communities. To advance truth and reconciliation, we understand that it is important to build and strengthen relationships with local stakeholders across the communities we serve.





# 3

## HOW DOES THE PPSC SERVE CANADIANS?

# HOW DOES THE PPSC SERVE CANADIANS?

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In 2023-2024, we supported Canadians through a wide range of prosecutorial activities. In this section we answer questions that Canadians may have about how we fulfil our mandate, including:

- » What is the PPSC doing to keep Canadians safe?
  - » What is the PPSC doing to address substance use-related issues?
  - » What is the PPSC doing to address the over-representation of certain groups in the criminal justice system?
  - » How does the PPSC work with its partners?
  - » What is the PPSC doing in response to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls?
  - » In what Supreme Court of Canada cases was the PPSC involved?
- » cases connected with national security;
  - » violations of federal statutes and regulations that protect environment, safety, health, economic security, and general welfare of the Canadian public;
  - » cases related to drug trafficking, possession, manufacturing, and importation; and
  - » violent crime offences in the three territories.

We have also provided statistics on our prosecution and fine recovery activities for 2023-2024.

## WHAT IS THE PPSC DOING TO KEEP CANADIANS SAFE?

An important part of our role in the criminal justice system is to focus on keeping Canadians safe, such as through the prosecution of:

### **National Security Prosecutions**

Our mandate covers terrorism offences under the *Criminal Code*, offences under the *Security Offences Act* and the *Security of Information Act* (SOIA), war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Our most senior prosecutors with specialized experience and knowledge about national security prosecutions are coordinated by a national coordinator in support of the functions related to national security delegated to one of the Deputy Directors of Public Prosecutions (DDPP). These prosecutors provide pre-charge advice and other assistance to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and other police services across Canada. The DDPP decides whether to provide the Attorney General of Canada's consent to the commencement of proceedings that relate to the national security of Canada.

In 2023-2024, we provided consent to the laying of terrorism charges in 12 cases and for

charges in three cases relating to SOIA offences. As of March 31, 2024, we had 15 terrorism prosecutions before the courts.

During 2023-2024, we consented on behalf of the Attorney General of Canada to the commencement of eight proceedings seeking a terrorism [peace bond](#). A peace bond is a protection order made by a court under section 810 of the *Criminal Code*. It is used where an individual appears likely to commit a criminal offence. As of March 31, 2024, there were six pending applications before the courts for terrorism peace bonds.

### **Regulatory and Economic Prosecutions**

Another fundamental part of our mandate is the work related to regulatory and economic prosecutions. We have dedicated regulatory teams across the country who prosecute offences related to over 75 regulatory statutes and regulations. Some of the common statutes include the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*, the *Fisheries Act*, the *Competition Act*, the *Customs Act*, and the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

These cases can lead to the imposition of fines and sentences of imprisonment, but also to the imposition of measures designed to enhance public health and safety, improve the management and protection of environmental resources, or that discourage financial and economic crime.

Along with conducting prosecutions, we provide advice and support to regulatory enforcement agencies through training initiatives and file reviews. Over the past year, we had several bilateral meetings and national level operational meetings between senior regulatory prosecutors and regulatory enforcement partners. This

collaboration with regulatory agencies promotes dialogue and improves investigations and prosecutions.

### **Drug Prosecutions**

We continue to work with police across the country to cut off supply chains and advocate for meaningful sentences against individuals convicted of high-level drug trafficking offences. In particular, this work seeks to hold individuals responsible for the manufacturing of the toxic drug supply that has caused so many deaths across the country.

Our prosecutors help police understand how the decisions they make during an investigation will affect the decisions prosecutors must make when a case is presented by the police for prosecution. For example, they provide advice on what type of evidence can be used in court. This advice informs the choice of investigative techniques deployed during an investigation and ensures that evidence is collected in compliance with the law. Once the evidence is collected, we work diligently with police file managers to organize it and prepare it for disclosure. This is when all information relevant to a prosecution is shared with an accused, with the exception of privileged information. Getting this ready at the earliest stages helps avoid any delay after the arrest and charge of an accused.

We work with federal partners such as the Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP on the prosecution of cases involving large seizures of controlled substances attempted to be smuggled across the Canadian border.

Problematic substance use in Canada's remote communities creates significant problems for law enforcement agencies and public health services. We strive to conduct effective prosecutions



# VALUES IN ACTION



## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We are committed to equity and inclusion. Within the PPSC, this value not only permeates our internal culture but extends outward in our engagement with the Canadian public. Dami is a prosecutor in the Alberta Regional Office. She handles mainly drug prosecutions. She is the co-lead of the Regional Equity,

Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Committee and co-lead of the National Council of Black Employees. Until recently, Dami was seconded to the Advancement Centre for EDIA where she worked for more than two years influencing change within the PPSC. During this time, she played a pivotal role as a co-facilitator of the transformative Gender-Based Analysis Plus “Expanding Your Mindset” training. This immersive experience shed light on the intricate web of our individual intersectionalities, empowering us to bring our authentic selves to our work. It fostered a deep introspection, urging us to confront our individual biases and recognize their influence on prosecutorial discretion and relationships within the office. We strive to continuously examine our prejudices, embrace our diversity, and cherish the enrichment that it brings to our collective journey.

of these cases so that individuals responsible for the transportation and distribution of these substances receive a meaningful, fair and proportionate sentence that reflects the harm done to the community.

### *Prosecutions in Canada's North*

Each province has its own prosecution service that is responsible for *Criminal Code* offences. However, we are the only prosecutors for all those matters in the territories. This means that our prosecutors in the North often work with victims of violent crime.

The territories have some of the highest rates of violent crime in Canada, particularly sexual offences and intimate partner violence. Prosecutors and Crown Witness Coordinators work directly with victims of crime, informing them of the court process and their rights under the [Canadian Victims Bill of Rights](#). Cultural sensitivities, language barriers, and trauma issues require special consideration.

## WHAT IS THE PPSC DOING TO ADDRESS SUBSTANCE USE-RELATED ISSUES?

Substance use-related issues including the catastrophic effects of the opioid crisis remain a key priority for us. There are many ways our organization has and continues to contribute to efforts being made at all levels of government to minimize substance use-related harms. For instance, we contribute to the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy through our work in Canada's Drug Treatment Courts (DTC). To reduce stigmatization, we are treating simple possession offences as a public health issue and only prosecuting the most serious cases that engage significant public safety concerns. We are also focusing resources and attention on the prosecution of individuals responsible for creating and supplying illegal drug markets.

### *Stigmatization*

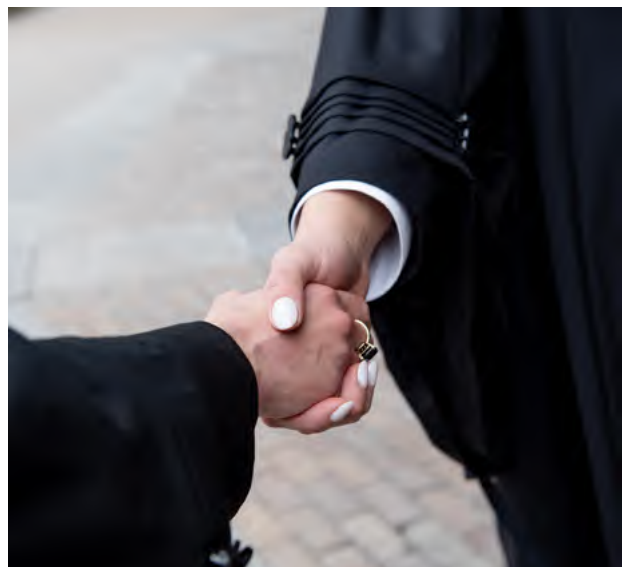
We know that stigma associated with substance use is a barrier that prevents people who use drugs from seeking help and accessing health and social services. We have taken numerous steps to change how we describe and discuss, in our offices and in the court, substance use to sensitize our employees and the public about the harmful effects of stigma.

We have developed new policies and revised existing guidelines to address systemic discrimination and empower our prosecutors to discontinue a prosecution where the alleged offence is better addressed as a public health concern rather than as conduct deserving of criminal sanction. Where prosecution is warranted, our prosecutors are required to consider diverting individuals to health and social services to receive the care and attention needed to stop further entanglement in the criminal justice system.

Since August 2020, we, in consultation with health officials and the police, have moved away from prosecuting any offence related to possession of a controlled substance for personal use except in cases where the alleged offending conduct poses serious and direct harm to others, in particular children. We continue to monitor the effects of this policy which has resulted in year-over-year reductions in the amount of simple possession charges brought to us. The reduction in work prosecuting simple possession charges has contributed to our efforts to dedicate greater resources to prosecutions related to trafficking, and importing/exporting of illicit substances, which all constitute serious public safety concerns.

### *Changes to PPSC's Guidelines on Drug Treatment Courts*

Drug Treatment Courts (DTCs) operate throughout the country. We have dedicated prosecutors who work with the court, defence counsel, police and treatment service providers to end the cycle of re-offending by people who use drugs and address problematic substance use.





# VALUES IN ACTION



## COURAGE

Martin works in the Human Resources Directorate. He developed, planned and facilitated an interactive workshop on social styles. The workshop enabled

employees to identify their preferred communication style, and to recognize the favoured social style of their colleagues, in order to optimize interactions in the workplace. Identifying and practising communication strategies also enabled participants to identify some of the biases that can hinder communication and cohesion. By facilitating this workshop, Martin encouraged participants to examine and challenge some of their biases, while promoting the establishment of an organizational culture where equity and fairness are at the forefront of human interactions. His decision to deliver this interactive face-to-face workshop to a group of nearly 100 employees took courage for Martin, considering that he lives with a hearing impairment. Martin demonstrated a high level of commitment to his goal, despite the challenge of his diminished hearing. Martin's desire and support for PPSC employees has enabled them to explore their potential, both personally and professionally, based on the organization's definition of courage. He is motivated by the desire to improve communication and interaction within teams by helping employees gain a better understanding of different personality types. Martin's objective with the workshop was guided by a deep desire to support PPSC employees in developing a healthy and respectful organizational culture by facilitating the development of a work environment based on diversity, inclusion, justice while eliminating injustice, harassment and discrimination by discovering and respecting the various personality types that make up our organization.

In the past year, we have instituted the most wide-ranging changes to our DTC policies since these courts first started operating in Canada in 1998. Our prosecutors now have greater flexibility in determining eligibility for DTC programs. Admission to a DTC will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will

depend on factors such as risk to public safety, circumstances of the underlying offence and background and systemic factors. Individuals previously convicted of an offence involving violence or who are accused of committing a violent offence will no longer be automatically excluded from participating in a DTC program.



Application to a DTC may occur at any time throughout a prosecution and, where appropriate, will no longer require a guilty plea prior to admission. Prosecutors will also have flexibility to design graduation criteria that move away from total abstinence, which is not a realistic goal for all persons suffering from a substance use disorder.

The objective of these changes is to reduce criminal justice system involvement for persons with a substance use disorder and thereby enhance public safety across Canada. These changes will result in the elimination of unnecessary barriers to entry that contribute to discrimination and the over-representation of marginalized groups in the criminal justice system. These policy changes also reflect a need to expand and grow participation in DTC programs across the country.

There is a clear need for DTC programs, which offer a suite of services to participants that can directly impact public health. We will continue to ensure that we have prosecutors active in these courts to work closely with partners to benefit all participants seeking to avoid further involvement in the criminal justice system.

### **Targeting Illicit Drug Markets**

The toxic supply of drugs is causing a devastating number of overdose deaths across the country. Prosecuting criminal organizations involved in all facets of high-level commercial drug trafficking remains one of our priorities.

Our prosecutors offer advice to law enforcement agencies involved in major drug enforcement investigations, the identification and dismantling of clandestine labs manufacturing deadly substances for sale to unknowing clientele, and the prevention of cross-border smuggling of controlled substances and precursor chemicals. Once arrests are made, our prosecutors work under immediate and constant pressure to move cases along without delay while navigating increasingly complex evidentiary questions. Our prosecutors and paralegals process the exponential growth in the amounts of information including digital materials, forensic evidence, surveillance footage and body-worn camera footage, all of which require enormous investments of time to review and package for disclosure.

## WHAT IS THE PPSC DOING TO ADDRESS THE OVER-REPRESENTATION OF CERTAIN GROUPS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

We are improving our understanding of bias and systemic factors that bring a person before the court. We are committing to applying what we have learned to do our work and to help eliminate discrimination.

Our ongoing initiatives include:

- » the review of the *PPSC Deskbook*; and
- » noteworthy training.

### *PPSC Deskbook Review*

The [PPSC Deskbook](#) sets out the guiding principles which all federal prosecutors, and persons acting as federal prosecutors, must follow. In 2021, the DPP tasked our National Prosecution Policy Committee to review the *Deskbook* and recommend changes to any policy or practice that may contribute to discrimination, systemic racism, or over-representation of Indigenous, Black and racialized individuals in the criminal justice system. In 2023-2024, the DPP implemented changes to three guidelines:

#### **GUIDELINE 2.2 “DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CROWN COUNSEL”**

Prosecutors must consider the systemic and background factors that brought the accused before the court, guard against all forms of biases that may perpetuate historical and systemic discrimination and ensure that their decisions do not disproportionately impact vulnerable and marginalized persons.

#### **GUIDELINE 3.7 “RESOLUTION DISCUSSIONS”**

Prosecutors must avoid contributing to over-representation such as by avoiding “short and sharp sentences” and exploring all available sanctions other than imprisonment that are reasonable in the circumstances.

#### **GUIDELINE 6.1 “DRUG TREATMENT COURTS”**

Prosecutors now have greater flexibility on the design of DTC programs, thus removing unnecessary barriers that may contribute to discrimination and over-representation.

### *Noteworthy Training*

We held various training activities to provide prosecutors and all our employees with the knowledge that they need to address the over-representation of certain groups in the criminal justice system:

- » The “Historical and Present Indigenous Realities, Trauma and *Gladue* Reports” training curriculum was specifically adapted for every regional office to acknowledge and integrate the unique historical and present realities of the First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Indigenous communities living in that particular geographical region and served by the PPSC. Our employees learned about the various factors that may be contributing to the systemic discrimination faced by Indigenous People. Our prosecutors also learned about considerations that are relevant at various stages of the prosecutorial process that will help ensure the equity of outcomes and contribute to reducing the over-representation of Indigenous Peoples within the criminal justice system.

- » Training sessions were held with prosecutors to discuss the changes to [Guideline 2.3 “Decision to Prosecute,”](#) which were implemented last year in the context of the *PPSC Deskbook* review.
- » Our School for Prosecutors devoted a full day of its five-day Level I and II courses to discuss the changes to Guideline 2.3, and to examine the role of systemic and background factors in bail and sentencing.

## HOW DOES THE PPSC WORK WITH ITS PARTNERS?

We continue to collaborate with stakeholders involved in the criminal justice system, whether it be at the community, provincial, and national level, as well as internationally. Highlighted below are a few examples of these collaborations.

### *Working with Stakeholders*

#### **NUNAVUT REGION**

- » Umingmak is the Inuktitut word for “muskox”, a herd animal known to protect their youth by forming a circle of adults around them. The team at the Umingmak Centre is formed of Nunavummiut who help children, youth and their families heal from experiences of abuse by providing a safe, central location for services such as the PPSC, RCMP, Child and Family Services and pediatricians to coordinate around the child or youth and provide care. Their advocates provide guidance and support to the families, and their clinical director offers child- and youth-specific therapy. They work with us and the RCMP to provide a safe place for children to feel comfortable to talk to the investigators and the prosecutors.
- » We work jointly with the Government of Nunavut’s Community Justice division to meaningfully support the work of Community Justice Committees in all communities in Nunavut, as well as the Therapeutic Justice Program in the communities of Cambridge Bay and Arviat. Restorative justice is a crucial step to achieve rehabilitation of an offender by providing community-specific resources and programs, often led by elders. The Community Justice Committees referrals and Therapeutic Justice Program referrals are grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles, aiming for the betterment of the individual and of the community.
- » Victim Services is a part of the Department of Justice of the Government of Nunavut. Dedicated to the well-being of victims of crime in Nunavut, victim service workers help communities support people who have been harmed by crime. Various services and levels of support are provided to victims of crime and their families from the start of trauma, continuing until the victims reach a place where they feel healed and they can move forward. We work closely with Victim Services to ensure that victims receive the support and assistance that they need from us and from Victim Services, at different stages of the proceedings.



# VALUES IN ACTION

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## RESPECT

Respect is listening, being attentive to others' needs and fostering an environment in which people feel safe and understood. The Nunavut Regional Office (NRO) exists in a unique reality and proactively shows respect in internal interactions and in interactions with everyone in the community, including victims and accused.

By integrating Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit traditional knowledge and ways of life) into the office, by incorporating cultural insight and practical wisdom of Inuit in our work, and by embracing tradition and innovation, the NRO emphasizes respect for others, fostering good spirit, and decision-making through consensus. Connecting past wisdom with present practices ensures an enduring future for both individuals and the communities in Nunavut.

This is an ongoing process, one that will never end. To foster it, the NRO focuses on cultural training and knowledge building. It promotes collaboration between the teams inside and outside the office to use everyone's strengths to better the justice system for everyone involved, especially victims.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA REGION

- » The Alternatives to Prosecution Project in the British Columbia (BC) region regularly partners with Indigenous justice programs, restorative justice organizations, BC First Nations Justice Council, investigative agencies, BC Corrections, and the BC Prosecution Service. As a result of these ongoing relationships, the region reviewed 190 files for alternatives to prosecution from February 2023 to February 2024.

## ALBERTA REGION

- » In the Alberta region, we work in collaboration with numerous enforcement agencies, both police and regulatory officers, to achieve successful outcomes. We offer various forms of assistance, such as training on evidentiary issues during investigations. For example, Operation Instructor is an interactive workshop-style training delivered by our prosecutors in Calgary to law enforcement officers to

address common Charter issues that arise during traffic stops. To accommodate busy patrol schedules, sessions are flexible on time and venue to reach as many officers as possible. Our prosecutors have delivered over 10 sessions of Operation Instructor to three law enforcement agencies to date. Response to the training has been overwhelmingly positive and the region has seen the impact in improvement on prosecution files, such as fewer files stayed due to preventable Charter breaches.

- » We meet quarterly with senior management for the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service and all police agencies in Alberta to discuss issues and solutions to common concerns, including the implementation of body-worn cameras for officers, ways to tackle increased crime around public transit, and drafting consistent province-wide advice around firearms offences. Small working groups are frequently created to delve deeper into issues and provide fulsome guidance.

- » We also work closely with the courts in Alberta. Working with court clerks and judicial assistants is essential for effective and efficient work on prosecution files. For example, our Edmonton office collaborated with the Edmonton Courthouse to streamline the unsealing process for Information to Obtain Search Warrants and create mutually beneficial templates.

## ONTARIO REGION

- » The Ontario Region seeks to continually build and foster relationships with our justice sector partners including the judiciary, Ministry of the Attorney General for Ontario, various police, and regulatory agencies. This includes working closely and collaboratively on major initiatives where there are common interests, as well as joint initiatives, and major investigative undertakings to ensure proper support is in place, to provide continual and high-level prosecutorial services.



- » We work with our partners to reduce *Jordan* delay through the provision of timely disclosure, streamlining the unsealing process for warrants, expanding specialty courts such as Drug Treatment Courts and Indigenous Peoples' Courts, and to ensure necessary technology infrastructure support is in place, among other initiatives.
- » Members of the office sit on various Court-led committees, and prosecutors routinely work to provide training to investigative agencies on disclosure and other Charter trends.

## QUEBEC REGION

- » In the Quebec region, we work closely with the *Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales*, the *Autorité des marchés financiers* and *Revenu Québec* to find solutions to a variety of matters, including court delays and digital issues. We also sit on administration of justice committees with the judiciary and defence lawyers.
- » We participate in a number of discussion tables with members of Quebec First Nations. This participation enables us to develop important relations with different communities. This relationship building is allowing us to have a better understanding of the different realities of Quebec's Indigenous peoples and is enabling us to work more closely with investigative agencies to identify issues that can be discussed proactively with Indigenous representatives.
- » We also collaborate regularly with key stakeholders in different communities to share useful information. These collaborations are particularly helpful to

assess whether it would be appropriate to pursue a case or whether other measures, such as restorative justice, would be more appropriate.

- » Our regional office also offers training courses to investigative agencies to assist them in their practices, specifically with disclosure.

## **Federal-Provincial-Territorial Heads of Prosecutions Committee**

Established in 1995, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Heads of Prosecution Committee brings together the leaders of Canada's prosecution services, including those of the military prosecution service. Its goal is to promote mutual assistance and co-operation on operational issues and to ensure that consistent advice and litigation in criminal matters are provided by federal and provincial prosecution services. The PPSC provides coordination services to the Committee and the DPP acts as co-chair.

The Committee, as a national body, has become an integral part of the prosecution landscape of Canada. The Heads of Prosecutions are frequently consulted on proposed amendments to the *Criminal Code*, as well as by law enforcement agencies on cross-cutting issues. The Committee discussed topics such as the best practices on the use and storage of electronic evidence gathered by body-worn cameras, explaining sensitive prosecution decisions through public statements, and the mental health and wellness of frontline prosecutors.

## **FPT Subcommittee on the Prevention of Wrongful Convictions**

The FPT Subcommittee on the Prevention of Wrongful Convictions, composed of senior prosecutors, police and policy analysts from across the country, continued to provide national coordination for the dissemination of information on the prevention of wrongful convictions. In 2023-2024, the subcommittee transitioned to a new co-chair due to the retirement of long-standing co-chair Stephen Bindman. The subcommittee reviewed the recommendations from the 2018 Subcommittee Report and prosecution services' policies to see whether there were any recommendations that remain unaddressed and that it could assist in implementing. It has two projects underway: development of recommendations for file and exhibit retention policies within police agencies, prosecution services and the courts in anticipation of the pending independent Miscarriage of Justice Commission; and a webinar which is anticipated to discuss the impact of bias and prosecutorial discretion on the risks of wrongful convictions, and how various prosecution services are working to guard against them.



## **WHAT IS THE PPSC DOING IN RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION AND THE CALLS FOR JUSTICE OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MURDERED AND MISSING INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS?**

We continued our work in supporting the Government of Canada's [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#). Through Budget 2021, we received \$23.5 million over three years to respond to Calls for Justice 1.5, 5.12, 9.2, 9.2(ii), 10.1, 16.27, 17.8 and 17.29, to improve the level of justice provided to Indigenous victims, witnesses and communities experiencing sexual violence and intimate partner violence in Yukon, the Northwest Territories (NWT), and Nunavut.

As highlighted in the report, [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), the PPSC, as part of the criminal justice system, is currently unable to provide the full extent and continuity of support victims and witnesses deserve throughout the court process. We have continued to work on hiring additional prosecutors, Crown Witness Coordinators, paralegals and administrators across the three territories. These resources are needed to provide prosecution teams sufficient time and continuity on individual prosecutions to establish trust and properly prepare victims and witnesses. Supported and well-informed victims and witnesses are much more likely to engage in the court process, which in turn facilitates a more timely administration of justice. These resources also allow for more efficient and

meaningful case management; provide a more equitable distribution of work; alleviate the impact of the grueling travelling schedules and improve the work-life balance of prosecution teams.

Throughout 2023-2024, we bolstered our efforts to continue supporting these challenges through the following initiatives:

- » Crown Witness Coordinators
- » Specialized Sexual Violence Prosecution Team
- » The Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Project
- » The Inuit Court Worker Program
- » Specific Training initiatives

### **Crown Witness Coordinators**

Our Crown Witness Coordinators (CWCs) help victims and witnesses understand the court process, the roles of the court participants and, for the victims, their rights under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. CWCs work closely with the prosecutors and travel to communities during court circuits to assist victims and witnesses. They provide court updates, accompany witnesses to court, provide support during and after testimony, and assist with trial preparation. CWCs also act as liaisons between prosecutors, victims, and witnesses to ensure that their concerns are considered during the judicial process. As a large percentage of the workload of CWCs involves serious crimes of violence such as intimate partner violence, sexual assault and homicide, CWC responsibilities include identifying support needs of the victims and ensuring they are referred to appropriate territorial support agencies to address those needs.

Increasing the complement of CWCs in the territories has enabled us to establish and maintain communication with victims, provide them with information and support much earlier in the prosecution process than before and to maintain continuity of support. This early contact allows us to establish a stronger trust relationship with the victim, which is essential when dealing with vulnerable victims.

Further, all CWCs in Nunavut can communicate with victims and witnesses in Inuktitut, allowing victims to communicate in their language of choice.

### **Specialized Sexual Violence Prosecution Team**

Nunavut and the Northwest Territories have the highest rates of sexual violence in the country. Sexual violence causes significant suffering and trauma to survivors.

The Specialized Sexual Violence Prosecution Team (SSVPT) in our NWT region consists of two senior prosecutors, a paralegal, two CWCs, and a third prosecutor position which is filled on a rotating basis. The SSVPT's overarching goal is to create institutional change in the way sexual violence cases are understood and addressed, especially those involving Indigenous women, girls or people who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. They aim to achieve this goal by reviewing every sexual violence file, providing strategic assistance, training and mentorship to prosecutors and police, providing improved and consistent support for victims, and engaging with external stakeholders on sexual violence. This project is a direct response to the Calls for Justice for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.





# VALUES IN ACTION

## PROFESSIONALISM

Heather is a prosecutor in the British Columbia Regional Office. She has a congenital limb difference of her arms and hands. Over the years, Heather has had to carefully curate her environment to be accessible to her. Everything she uses, she has chosen because she can use it easily: from the type of pen, shoes, and headphones, to her customized Supreme Court robes.

Heather is helping the PPSC become more effective at leveraging the skills of other employees living with a disability by sharing her knowledge and experience in the workplace. She is a member of the National Council of Employees Living with a Disability, and is the co-chair of the British Columbia Regional Office Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Her continuous work to normalize conversations about accommodation has made it possible for us to find better ways of working. Heather reminds us that by remaining flexible to the needs of employees we can provide a work environment that supports the development of an individual's strengths, and increase our organizational efficiency.

- » **Qanuqtuurniq:** Being innovative and resourceful.
- » **Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq:** Respect and care for the land, animals and the environment.

The Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit project will allow our prosecutors to consult with Inuit Elders, benefitting from their knowledge and wisdom, and to further consider Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in their assessment of a reasonable prospect

of conviction and public interest. It will better equip our prosecutors to provide trauma informed and culturally informed decision-making to better support victims and witnesses. One file has informally gone through the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit process in early 2024, with local consultation on reasonable prospect of conviction and public interest to prosecute.

The outcome in this case is that local associations who have parallel jurisdiction are coordinating a locally sourced response.

Full implementation of the program has been delayed as we consider solutions to remunerate Elders. Existing contracting mechanisms within the federal government are not necessarily suitable.

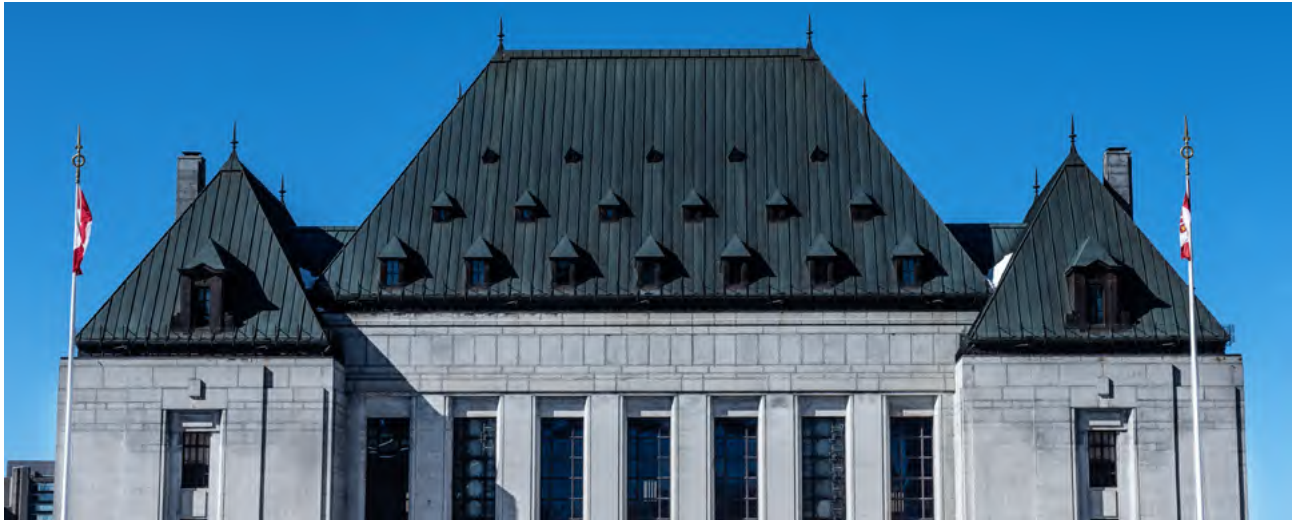
### ***Inuit Court Worker Program***

In the Nunavut region, we are committed to increasing Inuit representation in decision-making in the criminal justice system. As part of this commitment, the region launched, in 2022-2023, the Inuit Court Worker (ICW) Program, a first of its kind in the country. The ICW Program is an intensive training program that includes university courses, self-study, practical training and hands-on experience under the direct supervision and mentorship of a senior prosecutor. The objective of the Program is to prepare trainee court workers to become paralegals able to act independently

on behalf of the PPSC in the Nunavut Justice of the Peace Court and in summary conviction matters throughout Nunavut. The ICW Program is now fully operational and ICWs have been in charge of the summary offences court in Iqaluit for more than nine months, very successfully, and have now started going on circuit to address summary matters in all communities in Nunavut. Our senior court worker has started addressing summary matters in the Nunavut Court of Justice unified court. In addition, a senior prosecutor will be included as part of the onboarding and training to increase long-term retention of ICW.

The ICW Program responds to a number of Calls for Justice for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people and is the result of a long-held goal by the PPSC and other justice participants in Nunavut that the Court and its participants should be more representative of the population in Nunavut.





## IN WHAT SUPREME COURT OF CANADA CASES WAS THE PPSC INVOLVED?

During the reporting period, we were involved in the following appeals and interventions before the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC).

### *Appeals*

#### ***R. v. Zacharias***

On December 1, 2023, a majority of the SCC dismissed an appeal from a conviction for possession for the purpose of trafficking 101.5 pounds of marijuana. The trial judge found the police breached the appellant's rights during a dog sniff search and investigative detention but held that the evidence should not be excluded under s. 24(2) of the Charter.

Before the Alberta Court of Appeal, the appellant argued several new Charter breaches, that were a cascading result of the dog sniff search, and should have been considered by the trial judge. The majority refused to hear the new issues and dismissed the appeal. The dissenting Justice would have allowed the new issues to be raised and would have found that the impact of the additional breaches leads to the exclusion

of the evidence based on a balancing of the factors set out in *Grant*, [2009 SCC 32](#).

At the SCC, three of the five judges agreed that the additional consequential breaches did not warrant exclusion of the evidence under s. 24(2). The appellant's conviction was therefore upheld.

#### ***R. v. Hodgson***

On February 15, 2024, the SCC heard this appeal by leave from the Nunavut Court of Appeal. The appeal dealt with the power of the Court of Appeal to order a new trial for second-degree murder after an acquittal at trial. The appellant tried to neutralize the victim at a party by using a chokehold technique causing his death. The Nunavut Court of Appeal concluded that the trial judge committed errors of law that had a material bearing on the acquittal, notably by failing to consider that a chokehold was an "inherently dangerous act." At the SCC, the appellant submitted that the trial judge did not commit any errors of law warranting intervention by the Court of Appeal. The Court unanimously allowed the appeal from the bench and restored the appellant's acquittal with reasons to follow.

## **Interventions**

### ***R. v. Kahsai***

This appeal from the Alberta Court of Appeal concerns the scope of the role of *amicus curiae* when an unrepresented accused is unable to advance a competent defence. The DPP intervened to argue that the impartial duties of trial judges and the legal and ethical responsibilities of prosecutors ensure unrepresented accused receive a fair trial. *Amicus curiae* should remain impartial with an overriding duty to assist the court but may be empowered to assist the court in acquiring a comprehensive appreciation of the facts and the applicable law, to test the Crown's evidence and to make submissions. While not endorsing a partisan role, the Court accepted that *amicus curiae* can discharge many adversarial functions typically performed by defence counsel where necessary to a fair trial.

### ***R. v. Bertrand Marchand***

On November 3, 2023, the SCC released its decision concerning the constitutionality of mandatory minimum penalties for the crime of luring children and youth. The DPP intervened to defend the constitutionality of those sentencing provisions. However, in applying the analytical framework of s. 12 of the Charter, the majority of the SCC concluded that the mandatory minimum penalties for the offence of child luring of one year of imprisonment when prosecuted by indictment and six months by summary conviction are unconstitutional.

### ***R. v. B.E.M.***

This appeal from the Alberta Court of Appeal concerns the appropriate remedy in cases of improper Crown conduct at trial. The majority of the Court of Appeal found that the Crown's use of a personal anecdote during closing submissions to the jury did not affect trial fairness and upheld the appellant's conviction for historical sexual offences. At the SCC, the appellant argued that the lower court's decision condones a culture of misconduct and proposed a new analysis focused on the seriousness of the Crown misconduct and its effect on the repute of the justice system. The DPP intervened against the adoption of this new test as trial courts are already well equipped to address Crown conduct. The SCC dismissed the appeal from the bench, stating that the trial judge's general instructions, in the absence of a defence objection, remediated any potential for trial unfairness resulting from the improper submissions and did not address the proposed new test.

### ***R. v. Brunelle***

The main issue raised in this appeal by leave from the Quebec Court of Appeal concerns the standing required to seek a remedy under s. 24(1) of the Charter. In the SCC, the appellants argued that a systemic violation of the right to counsel by the police undermined the integrity of the justice system, contrary to the rights guaranteed by s. 7 of the Charter. As a result, all those targeted by the investigation, even those who were able to exercise their right to counsel, should benefit from a stay of proceedings under the residual category of the abuse of process doctrine.

The DPP intervened to defend that a personal infringement is a prerequisite to obtain a remedy under the Charter and that courts should first

turn to the specific guarantee which applies in the circumstances when facing an allegation of abuse of process that raises various Charter rights. The SCC determined that an accused person has standing to apply for a s. 24(1) remedy under the residual category of the abuse of process doctrine, insofar as the alleged abusive conduct took place in the context of a police investigation aimed at gathering evidence to prove their guilt in relation to the charges brought against them, even if they have not suffered any of the infringements constituting the alleged abusive conduct. However, the Court underlined that there is a fundamental distinction between the standing required to raise an abuse of process claim and the merits of that claim. The appeal was dismissed, and the case was sent back to the Superior Court for a new hearing on the Charter motions.

***R. v. Bykovets***

In this decision, the SCC considered whether an IP address (internet protocol) obtained by the police voluntarily from a third-party payment processing company attracts a reasonable expectation of privacy. In a 5 to 4 split, the majority held that the answer is yes. The SCC imposed on police a requirement to obtain a previous judicial authorization before allowing them access to the IP information.

The DPP intervened to impress upon the Court the vital need to balance competing interests: the nature of the individual’s privacy interest in an IP address with the duty and ability of the police to investigate cybercrime. The DPP supported the respondent Crown’s position that no reasonable expectation of privacy attaches to an IP address. The majority rejected that argument and decided that it was necessary to focus on the potential of the address to reveal personal or biographical information that can

be revealed when correlated with other online information, particularly that held by third parties such as Google. Hence, s. 8 must protect the IP addresses of Canadians to meaningfully protect their online privacy against state intrusion.



# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Veltman*

**Topic:** *Criminal Code*

**Summary:** Terrorist activities

### **Detailed Summary:**

Nathaniel Veltman was found guilty by a jury of all charges for deliberately running over the Afzaal family in his Dodge Ram pickup truck on June 6, 2021, because they were Muslim. During the 12-week trial, the jury heard evidence that the offender was motivated by right-wing extremist and Islamophobic views, describing himself as a “White Nationalist”. He wrote a justification for his attack that was racist and dehumanized Muslims. On February 22, 2024, the Ontario Superior Court in London found that these crimes constitute a terrorist activity. He was sentenced to life imprisonment without eligibility for parole for 25 years for the first-degree murder of Talat Salman, Syed Salman Afzaal, Madiha Salman, and Yumnah Afzaal. He was also sentenced to life imprisonment for the attempted murder of the youngest member of the Afzaal family, the lone survivor, who was only nine years old at the time of the attack. He is appealing his conviction and sentence.



# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Sert*

**Topic:** *Criminal Code*

**Summary:** Terrorist Activities

### Detailed Summary:

On November 28, 2023, the Ontario Superior Court, sitting as a youth justice court, imposed an adult sentence on a young person. Oguzhan Sert was motivated by the extremism of the incel (involuntary celibate) ideology when he attacked two women at a spa. Mr. Sert was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole eligibility for 10 years for the first-degree murder of Ashley Arzaga, and the attempted murder of a second woman.

Mr. Sert was just five months shy of his 18th birthday when he committed these offences. The sentence is the maximum allowable under the *Criminal Code* for a young person sentenced as an adult.

On September 14, 2022, Mr. Sert pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and attempted murder. In June 2023, the Ontario Superior Court ruled that in the circumstances of this case, the offences fell within the definition of terrorist activity.

This is the first terrorism prosecution in Canada involving the incel ideology, which has been linked to numerous violent acts in Canada and internationally.



# CASE PROFILE



## Case: *R. v. Mohammed Omar*

**Topic:** *Criminal Code*

**Summary:** Terrorist activities

### Detailed Summary:

In an Agreed Statement of Facts filed with the Court, Mohammed Omar admitted that on March 19, 2022, he entered the Dar Al-Tawheed Islamic Centre armed with a hatchet and bear spray with the intent to kill the congregants who were praying inside. Mr. Omar was motivated by a hateful ideology, and the attack was aimed at intimidating a segment of the public (Muslim Canadians). Interviews with Mr. Omar as well as a search of his computer revealed that he planned the attack over the course of a year and had thought of other ways to commit his attack.

On July 19, 2023, in the Ontario Superior Court, Mr. Omar pleaded guilty to the following three criminal offences that also constitute terrorist activity:

1. Administering a noxious thing (bear spray) with intent to danger life or cause bodily harm;
2. Assault with a weapon (hatchet); and
3. Mischief to religious property with the motivation of bias, prejudice, or hate based on religion.

On July 25, 2023, Mr. Omar was sentenced to eight years in prison. Counsel for the PPSC, counsel for the Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario and counsel for Mr. Omar made joint submissions for the eight-year sentence, which is significantly higher than sentences usually received for the substantive offences because of the terrorism component. The Court agreed with the joint submission and imposed the recommended sentence.

The Crown's sentencing submissions took into account the aggravating factor that the offences also constitute terrorist activity. In addition to Mr. Omar's ideological motivation, he was motivated by hate, and the intent to harm indiscriminately. The attack was also conducted at a place of worship at a time when the congregants were praying, and their backs were towards the offender. All of these factors contribute towards the seriousness of the offence.

As for mitigating factors, Mr. Omar is a relatively youthful first-offender. He resolved to plead guilty at an early stage of the proceedings and apologized to the congregants of the mosque in a statement to the court.

# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Cameron Jay Ortis*

**Topic:** *Security of Information Act*

**Summary:** Communicating special operational information to unauthorized individuals.

**Detailed Summary:**

Cameron Jay Ortis, who was, at the time of his arrest, Director General at the National Intelligence Coordination Center of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), was found guilty of four offences under the *Security of Information Act* for intentionally and without authority communicating special operational information to unauthorized individuals. He was also found guilty of fraudulently obtaining a computer service, and of breach of trust.



During the eight-week-long trial, the jury heard how Mr. Ortis, while he was employed by the RCMP, communicated with four separate individuals who were the subject of international investigations. His communications offered them assistance to evade the authorities. As an intelligence analyst, Mr. Ortis was privy to high-level national security information, but his position did not permit him to share this information with anyone.

On February 7, 2024, the judge imposed a global sentence of 14 years. The Crown has filed an appeal against sentence. The defence has filed an appeal against conviction and sentence.

# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Canada Bread Company Limited*

**Topic:** *Competition Act*

**Summary:** Price fixing

**Detailed Summary:**

On June 21, 2023, Canada Bread Company Limited (CBCL) was sentenced to fines totalling \$50 million after the company pleaded guilty to four counts of fixing prices contrary to s. 45 of the *Competition Act*.

This case stems from a lengthy Competition Bureau investigation targeting two of Canada's largest fresh commercial bread suppliers, namely CBCL and its main competitor Weston Foods (Canada) Inc., as well as a significant number of major retailers.

In an Agreed Statement of Facts filed with the Court, CBCL admitted that they entered into arrangements with Weston Foods (Canada) Inc. and others to increase wholesale fresh commercial bread prices on four occasions, resulting in two price increases in October 2007 and March 2011.

The fine represents the maximum applicable under the law, less a leniency rebate of approximately 30% accepted by the PPSC for the collaboration and guilty plea of CBCL.

Price fixing artificially inflates the cost of goods. This sentence discourages future price fixing in the bread industry, helping to ensure Canadians pay a fair price for a staple food.



# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Pedro Acuna Saavedra*

**Topic:** *Food and Drugs Act*

**Summary:** Misleading advertising and unauthorized sale of drugs for medical purposes.

**Detailed Summary:**

Following a Health Canada investigation, Pedro Acuna Saavedra was charged under the *Food and Drugs Act* for misleading advertising and the unauthorized sale of drugs containing sodium chlorite, commonly known as Miracle Mineral Solution (MMS). MMS is promoted through the secular “Genesis II Church of Health and Healing” based out of the United States. Mr. Acuna was a “Bishop” promoting and selling the product in Canada.



MMS is represented as a treatment for a variety of diseases and conditions ranging from cancer to HIV/AIDS to childhood autism to COVID-19. It is sold as a kit of sodium chlorite solution to be activated with a citric acid solution. The ingestion of both these solutions can cause poisoning, kidney failure and harm to red blood cells. It can cause abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. A Health Canada risk assessment concluded that there is a reasonable probability that the exposure of Canadians to Miracle Mineral Supplement, an unapproved product with no clinical safety, efficacy and quality evidence, will cause serious adverse health consequences or death.

On July 7, 2023, Mr. Acuna pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a \$12,000 fine and two-year probation with various conditions including not to be in contact with anyone from Genesis II Church and not to possess sodium chlorite.

# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Keitsch*

**Topic:** *Fisheries Act*

**Summary:** Fishing for prawn in a protected area

**Detailed Summary:**

A British Columbia fisherman, Dean Keitsch, was found guilty as the captain of a commercial fishing vessel for numerous violations in relation to illegal fishing gear, failure to use the electronic monitoring system on the vessel, failure to keep an accurate log book and report information, and fishing for prawns in a protected area. The area is closed to all prawn fishing to protect the highly sensitive nature of glass sponges. The reefs are a “globally unique ecosystem” providing habitat to spot prawns, rockfish, herring, halibut and sharks, and the glass sponges are extremely fragile because their skeletons consist almost entirely of silica (glass).

Mr. Keitsch received \$250,000 in financial penalties and was ordered to forfeit \$80,000 worth of equipment.



# CASE PROFILE



## Case: *Projet Collecteur*

**Topic:** *Income Tax Act* and the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act*

**Summary:** Major money laundering operation

**Detailed Summary:**

*Projet Collecteur* was a major money laundering investigation that led to a complex and major prosecution. *Project Collecteur* was aimed at dismantling a vast network for laundering the proceeds of crime.

This network took charge of money received from criminal groups in Montreal. These sums were then transported to Toronto, where they were used to offset requests for transfers of securities with links to Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, the United States and China. The corresponding funds held in third-party countries were then sent back to drug-exporting countries such as Colombia and Mexico. The accounts seized reveal that between 2016 and 2018, some \$500 million transited through this laundering network.

This major prosecution includes several related components of a complex nature, requiring coordination with several partners: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Revenue Agency, Revenu Québec, the Government of Canada's Seized

Property Management Directorate and Correctional Service Canada.

As of February 2019, charges have been laid against 19 individuals. This was a first in Canada, in that charges of this magnitude had never before been laid against professional money launderers and their accomplices.

The team worked hard to prepare and plead multiple prosecution files, disclose over 95,000 documents and negotiate exemplary settlements.

Since then, legal proceedings have resulted in:

- » guilty pleas by 14 defendants, including the two heads of the money-laundering network;
- » sentences ranging from 9 years' to 12 months' imprisonment in the community;
- » forfeiture of 4 properties worth over \$4.6 million;
- » forfeiture of over \$8.2 million in seized cash;
- » fines totalling over \$2.8 million under the *Income Tax Act* and the *Proceeds of Crime and Terrorist Financing Act*; and
- » payment of civil tax assessments totalling over \$8.3 million.

Legal proceedings are continuing against 2 individuals, with trials expected in 2024, so the case is still partly before the courts.

# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: *R. v. Deol and Singh*

**Topic:** *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*

**Summary:** Drug possession with the purpose of trafficking

**Detailed Summary:**

Mandeep Singh Deol drove a rented van from Vancouver to Toronto with a passenger – Babaljit Singh. Mr. Deol was pulled over for speeding near Brandon, Manitoba. Searching for opened bottles of liquor, the police found 26 kg of fentanyl and approximately 50 kg of methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA) in the back of the van. Some of the fentanyl seized was also cut with benzodiazepines, which makes the drug even more dangerous. The street value of these drugs is approximately \$1,120,000 and \$400,000, respectively. This was the largest fentanyl bust in Manitoba history. On May 5, 2023, Mr. Deol was found guilty of possession for the purpose of trafficking fentanyl and MDA and was sentenced to 14-year imprisonment. The passenger, Mr. Singh, was acquitted at trial.



# CASE PROFILE

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## Case: Manto Sipi Cree Nation and the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Protocol Agreements

**Topic:** *Indian Act*

**Summary:** Extended pilot project allowing any of the 26 First Nations represented by the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak to sign protocol agreements to have the PPSC prosecute violations of bylaws enacted pursuant to the *Indian Act*.

**Detailed Summary:**

The PPSC started a two-year pilot project with the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), a Manitoba-based First Nations advocacy organization. The pilot project allows any of the 26 First Nations represented by MKO to sign protocol agreements to have the PPSC prosecute violations of bylaws enacted pursuant to the *Indian Act*. Unlike the PPSC's previous COVID-19 bylaw prosecution initiative, the bylaws prosecuted under the expanded pilot project do not have to be related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Manto Sipi Cree Nation (the Nation) is a member of MKO. In early August 2023, the Nation enacted a bylaw prohibiting the possession, consumption, sale or supply of intoxicants within the boundaries of a reserve of the Manto Sipi Cree Nation, pursuant to sections 81 and 85.1 of the *Indian Act*. On August 11, 2023, a protocol agreement was signed by the Chief Federal Prosecutor of the PPSC Manitoba Regional Office, the Chief of the Nation, and a representative from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We anticipate that additional MKO-affiliated First Nations will pass similar bylaws and move forward on protocol agreements in the near future.



## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2023-2024

### Prosecution Activities

In 2023-2024, we worked on 45,720 files. This figure includes 23,178 files opened during the year, as well as 22,542 files carried over from previous years. Overall, our prosecutors and paralegals, legal support staff, and legal agents working on behalf of the PPSC spent a total of 1,079,057 hours working on prosecution files during the year. Our prosecutors and paralegals spent an additional 249,204 hours providing legal advice to investigative agencies, participating in various committees, both national and regional, and assisting with other important corporate work, as well as providing or receiving training.

### OUTCOMES OF CHARGES (BY ACCUSED)

ACQUITTAL AFTER TRIAL	293
FINDING OF GUILT AFTER TRIAL	590
GUILTY PLEA	5,876
JUDICIAL STAY OF PROCEEDINGS	49
CHARGE WITHDRAWN AND/OR STAY OF PROCEEDINGS (CROWN) <sup>1</sup>	11,126
OTHER <sup>2</sup>	25

- 1 To learn more about judicial outcomes, refer to our Canadian federal criminal justice process infographic.
- 2 The category "Other" includes the outcomes of discharge at preliminary hearing, and mistrial.



### TYPES OF OFFENCES<sup>1</sup> (% OF FILES)

FILES INVOLVING DRUG-RELATED OFFENCES (32,531)	71.2%
FILES INVOLVING <i>CRIMINAL CODE</i> OFFENCES (8,351)	18.3%
FILES INVOLVING REGULATORY OFFENCES AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES (4,415)	9.7%
FILES INVOLVING OTHER OFFENCE TYPES (423)	0.9%

- 1 Because some files contain offences of more than one type, a categorization hierarchy has been used to eliminate duplicate counting. Files with regulatory or economic offences are counted as such. Files with drug offences and no regulatory or economic offences are counted under "Drugs". Any remaining files with *Criminal Code* offences are included under "*Criminal Code*". All other files are identified as "Other" this includes territorial offences, files with offences under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and other statutes, as well as files for which the statute has not been specified or that were mislabelled in the case management system.

## BREAKDOWN BY NUMBER OF FILES<sup>1</sup>

REGION	TOTAL	REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC	DRUGS	CRIMINAL CODE	OTHER
Alberta	5,281	617	4,585	63	16
Atlantic	3,071	1,211	1,753	87	20
British Columbia	4,735	1,149	3,346	211	29
Headquarters	111	11	45	31	24
Manitoba	2,177	63	2,042	30	42
National Capital	5,768	257	5,395	90	26
Northwest Territories	3,554	4	165	3,323	62
Nunavut	2,592	1	27	2,531	33
Ontario	13,665	312	13,184	109	60
Quebec	1,000	685	141	85	89
Saskatchewan	1,932	105	1,799	16	12
Yukon	1,834	0	49	1,775	10

1 Because some files contain offences of more than one type, a categorization hierarchy has been used to eliminate duplicate counting. Files with regulatory or economic offences are counted as such. Files with drug offences and no regulatory or economic offences are counted under "Drugs". Any remaining files with *Criminal Code* offences are included under "Criminal Code". All other files are identified as "Other" — this includes territorial offences, files with offences under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and other statutes, as well as files for which the statute has not been specified or that were mislabelled in the case management system.



## TOP 10 FEDERAL STATUTES

THE MAJORITY OF CHARGES AROSE FROM THE FOLLOWING TEN FEDERAL STATUTES.

STATUTE	NUMBER OF CHARGES
<i>Criminal Code</i>	93,132
<i>Controlled Drugs and Substances Act</i>	73,244
<i>Fisheries Act</i>	4,147
<i>Cannabis Act</i>	3,955
<i>Employment Insurance Act</i>	1,426
<i>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</i>	835
<i>Customs Act</i>	726
<i>Excise Tax Act</i>	533
<i>Income Tax Act</i>	466
<i>Excise Act, 2001</i>	340

## NATIONAL FINE RECOVERY PROGRAM

During 2023-2024, the National Fine Recovery Program (NFRP) processed over 5,459 accounts and collected \$44.7 million in unpaid fines. The overall inventory of unpaid fines at the end of March 2024, contained 30,834 fines representing over \$269 million, a decrease of 3.3% compared to March 2023.

The NFRP has continued to modernize in order to make it easier for Canadians to pay their fines online. This work has strengthened our accountability and efficiency.





**4**

**AWARDS  
AND  
ACHIEVEMENTS**

# AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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We are proud to highlight the achievements of our outstanding staff members over the last year.

## APPOINTMENTS

In 2023-2024, we were pleased to see 11 employees appointed as judges: Cindy Afonso (Ontario), Faiyaz Alibhai (Nunavut), Angela Caseley (Nova Scotia), Mark Erina (British Columbia), Christopher Greenwood (British Columbia), Manon Lapointe (Quebec), Gary Magee (Northwest Territories), Anne-Marie Manoukian (Quebec), Jonathan Martin (Alberta), Thi Trang Dai Nguyen (Quebec), and Karen Rehner (Newfoundland and Labrador).

## FORMAL AWARDS

### *The Director of Public Prosecutions Achievement Award*

This award recognizes an individual or a team who, in performing their duties or executing a project, made an exceptional contribution to address the priorities of the PPSC. It was awarded to a team in the British Columbia Region: Jessica Lawn (Team Leader/Senior Counsel), Alexandra Rice (Team Leader/Senior Counsel), Oren Bick (Senior Counsel), Tracey Ferreira (Counsel), Chantelle Coulson (Counsel), Edlyn Laurie (Senior Counsel), Gillian Angrove (Counsel), and Lauren McAuley (student).

This group of employees has been at the forefront of prosecution innovation and the advancement of social justice ideals. Their collective work has focused on reducing racial profiling and discrimination, addressing the over-representation of Indigenous and other

marginalized communities in the justice system, as well as adopting a more meaningful and rehabilitative-centered approach for accused persons dealing with substance-use disorders, mental health disorders, and other illnesses.

### *Prosecution Excellence Award*

This award recognizes an individual prosecutor or a team of prosecutors who demonstrated a high level of commitment and dedication to the ideals of justice over a sustained period, and demonstrated excellence, professionalism, and ethical behaviour. It was presented to the following team assigned to *Projet Collecteur* from the Quebec Region: Fabienne Simon (General Counsel), Sabrina Delli-Fraire (Counsel), Guillaume Lemay (Counsel), Ngoc Thang Nguyen (Counsel), Sara Moussa (Counsel), Rita Haddad (Acting Paralegal Team Leader), Nicholas Dumouchel (Counsel), and Judith Yergeau (Legal Assistant).

*Projet Collecteur* was a major money laundering investigation that led to a complex and major prosecution. As of February 2019, charges were laid against 19 individuals in 8 files. This was a first in Canada, in that charges of this magnitude had never before been laid against money launderers and their accomplices. The team worked hard to prepare and plead multiple prosecution files, disclosed over 95,000 documents and negotiate exemplary settlements.



### **Leadership Excellence Award**

This award recognizes an employee who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and who has exerted a strong influence on a group, enabling them to achieve a common goal. This year, the award was presented to Judy Bray (Legal Assistant Supervisor, Alberta Region).

Judy inspires those she works with through her sense of commitment and enthusiasm. She always ensures that the entire team is working towards the same goal by communicating her vision clearly and directly and by respectfully listening to each team member so that everyone can work together, learning from each other's strengths, points of view and ongoing contributions. Judy never loses sight of the impact events have on people's personal lives, while making sure that the service to the public through the work of the PPSC continues to be accomplished seamlessly.

### **Creativity and Innovation Award**

This award recognizes an individual or a team who have contributed to the improvement of the way the organization functions and was awarded to one individual, Anna Stuffco (Senior Counsel, Alberta Region)

and the Electronics Communications team at Headquarters: Guylain Racine (Senior Electronic Communications Advisor), Éric Lemieux (Electronic Communications Officer), and Thomas Commerford (Junior Electronic Communications Officer).

Anna developed the BIAS Protocol, which was circulated nationally in May 2023. The acronym stands for Bail, Interest (Public Interest), Alternatives (Alternative Courts) and Sentencing. The BIAS protocol works in conjunction with our corporate values and updated PPSC *Deskbook's* Guideline 2.3, Decision to Prosecute, which aims to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous People in the criminal justice system. To learn more about the BIAS Protocol, refer to the profile on p. 57 of this report.

In 2019, the Electronic Communications team started the process of creating a new PPSC intranet site for our employees. The team reviewed every page to determine what needed to be archived or updated. They worked closely with clients and a web development company to create a site with relevant content and a user-centric design. The new site was officially launched in 2023.

### ***Workplace Excellence Award***

This award recognizes an individual or a team who have promoted and contributed to the improvement of a better workplace, and was presented to Alison Lewis (Counsel, Northwest Territories Region).

In addition to Alison's typical responsibilities that come with being a northern prosecutor, she also holds the responsibility of training prosecutors within the office. She welcomes fly-in relief prosecutors and new prosecutors by providing an initial orientation, as needed individualized legal and practical training, and serving as an important knowledge base and mentor as they adjust to working in the North. She has also taken on the role of developing and delivering training sessions to RCMP members throughout the Northwest Territories to enhance their knowledge of the law and foster greater cooperation and understanding between the PPSC and the RCMP. Alison consistently goes above and beyond to build connections between members of the office and foster a respectful and welcoming workplace for all.

### ***Administrative Professional Award***

This award recognizes an individual or a team who have supported or contributed behind the scenes in ways that reflect well on the federal public service and the PPSC. It was presented to two employees: Brent Simms (Legal Assistant, National Capital Region) and Anne Fisher (iCase Administrator, Saskatchewan Region).

Brent is a legal assistant to three senior prosecutors who have a very busy litigation practice. In addition to supporting them, he is responsible for putting together bail packages, trial letters, subpoena requests, officer availability, expert notices and reports, Certificate of Readiness forms for court, delegation letters, and forfeiture orders for the entire team. When the need arose, Brent was asked to backfill as a legal assistant on Court of Appeal matters on a temporary basis. He quickly mastered that role and showcased his ability to handle complex cases and to maintain a high level of professionalism. Brent is committed to continually seeking ways to deepen his understanding of the law and the specific issues and challenges the team faces in court.

Anne began her career as a legal assistant in 1973. She spent many years as a legal assistant responsible for the Saskatchewan Regional Office's docket desk. In this role, she developed a vast network of contacts and leveraged these contacts to achieve remarkable efficiency and productivity for the regional prosecutors. In 2013, Anne was promoted to iCase coordinator. In recent years, Anne's performance has been recognized at the national level. While fulfilling her iCase coordinator duties, she has remained a valuable regional support for the legal assistants.



# 5

## SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF THE PPSC

# SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF THE PPSC

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We could not fulfil our mandate without the ongoing commitment of the 1,143 people employed across the country who are working to advance the PPSC's priorities. To ensure all employees are welcomed, accepted, and supported, we worked on a number of initiatives.

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

As stated in our [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility \(EDIA\) Action Plan](#), our EDIA Commitments are:

- » To foster authentic, respectful, transparent, and accountable relationships.
- » To intentionally promote, recruit, and retain employees to reflect diverse perspectives.
- » To integrate an intersectional lens in our prosecutorial work.

Throughout 2023-2024, we remained focused on two broad but critical objectives:

- » ensuring that we continue to mature as an equitable, diverse, inclusive and accessible organization for our employees; and
- » making changes to our prosecutorial practices to be an intentional contributor in reducing the mass incarceration of marginalized groups in Canada's criminal justice system.

Our EDIA Governance Structure is essential to our EDIA maturity. The Advancement Centre for EDIA

has hosted quarterly meetings of the co-leads of our five National Councils of Employees (NCEs), as well as our eleven Regional EDIA Committees (REDIACs). Sharing information regularly with both groups, supporting their priorities and working to alleviate their concerns, is central to building trust within the organization. The DPP had the opportunity to meet most of the NCE members and welcomed their feedback on areas where focus needs to be given to support PPSC's growth.

We invested in activities that would help advance the objectives we set out for ourselves in our EDIA action plan. The Advancement Centre for EDIA worked with other divisions, such as Human Resources and Communications, on the following:

- » published the PPSC's first EDIA Progress Report;
- » hosted 13 Learning Labs entitled "Intentionally Diversifying our Workforce" with sub-delegated managers to discuss inclusive hiring practices and targeted EDIA staffing;
- » solicited interest in creating a pool of diverse assessment board members;
- » reviewed and strengthened staffing tools;
- » supported the beginning of equity sub-group data analysis;
- » initiated plans to establish targeted EDIA staffing goals;



# VALUES IN ACTION



## TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Anna created a quick reference tool, the “Indigenous BIAS Analysis: A Guide to Prosecuting Indigenous Persons”, for prosecutors to ensure that at every stage of a file, we are continuously considering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Call to Action #30 – the elimination of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in custody. The acronym BIAS stands for Bail, Interest (Public Interest), Alternatives (Alternative Courts) and Sentencing. It provides specific references to the various tools prosecutors have to reduce Indigenous offenders from over-incarceration. Anna is committed to the pursuit of justice for all accused people, with a dedication to eliminating systemic discrimination and the over-representation of Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black and marginalized community members. Anna’s commitment and strong advocacy on behalf of these community members inspire excellence, professionalism and ethical behaviour in all Alberta regional employees who regularly deal with marginalized groups.

- » embedded EDIA staffing best practices in the recruitment process for senior general counsel;
- » offered vicarious trauma training;
- » offered Indigenous employees the Myrna McCallum’s “LoveBack” course on Trauma and Healing in the Workplace; and
- » marked various EDIA-related commemorative days, weeks, and months.

## PROGRESS RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is a priority for us. We are striving to become an organization where every employee living with a disability feels that they belong.

During the past year, we worked collaboratively with internal stakeholders to make sure that progress continues to be seen and felt at all levels. Some of our undertakings included:

- » published our first National Accessibility Plan Progress Report;

- » developed a confidential feedback form which allows employees to provide information related to barriers in the workplace anonymously;
- » drafted and shared an internal document entitled, “Duty to Accommodate Guidance for Supervisors and Managers” to assist with exceptions and accessibility requests in the context of the return to office;
- » continued to promote the GC Workplace Accessibility Passport;
- » held two training events led by a Workplace Accessibility and Neurodiversity Specialist, Tara Beaton, aimed to develop awareness and expand understanding of neurodiversity and better understand neurodiverse communications, performance and mental health at work;
- » conducted internal audits of many of our office spaces to assess barriers in the workplace; and

- » increased the use of plain language in reporting, announcements, and communication products.

The most significant accomplishment of the past year was the creation of the Accessibility Support Centre (ASC) for employees living with a disability. This new support centre was established as a two-year pilot project.

The ASC will become a centre of expertise for all matters related to accessibility and workplace adjustments for employees living with a disability. It will:

- » Create awareness, educate, and help employees get the tools and resources they need to succeed in their jobs.
- » Inform managers and employees of their role in accessibility and equip them with the tools they need.
- » Increase collaboration with internal stakeholders and unions to ensure that accommodations are provided in a timely manner.





# VALUES IN ACTION



## TRUST

*R. v. Veltman* was a joint prosecution with the Province of Ontario and was led by Sarah and Kim from the Ontario Regional office. In this case, it was very important to the prosecution team to build trust with the surviving victim, and with the extended family members of all the victims. The prosecutors knew that this trust needed to be earned. They worked closely alongside the provincial Victim Witness Assistance Program representatives towards this goal. The team held regular meetings with numerous family members before, during, and after the trial. They spoke with the family members who were present at trial every day and met more formally with the families once per week. The team took the time to explain every legal ruling, including what they meant and the impact on the prosecution. They described the evidence that was expected to come next, and helped the families anticipate other legal issues that might arise. Taking the time to listen to the families' concerns, hearing about their frustrations, and allowing them to convey the difficulties they were having within the justice system helped in establishing that trusting relationship.

## GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS PLUS

The GBA Plus Responsibility Centre provided its perspective by contributing to several reports and/or projects over the last year. The Centre's most significant accomplishment was the successful completion of a multi-year plan to support the integration of GBA Plus at the PPSC by means of an in-house training program for prosecutors and paralegals; the program, called *"Expanding your Mindset – Applying an intersectional Lens to Prosecutorial*

*Work: A GBA Plus Approach,"* is aimed at building internal capacity in the application of GBA Plus considerations, also known as intersectional analysis, in prosecutorial work. This was accomplished in collaboration with the Advancement Centre for EDIA and the Centre for Intercultural Learning. In the span of two years, 97% of prosecutors and paralegals have completed the training.

## WORKPLACE WELL-BEING

We are committed to ensuring the physical and psychological safety of our employees in the workplace and outside of the workplace when conducting official business. The organization conducted a workplace harassment and violence risk assessment and developed an implementation plan that identifies the risks and prevention/protection measures recommended to mitigate those risks. This year, we implemented most of the identified mitigating measures, including:

- » PPSC-specific workshops on workplace harassment and violence prevention;
- » Training on civility and respect;
- » Training on vicarious trauma;
- » Training on anti-racism; and
- » Information session on the Employment Assistance Program, Healthy Workplace Services, and Informal Conflict Management Services.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We are investing in our leaders to ensure they are well equipped to support our operations and to effectively deliver on our mandate.

### *The Supervisors' Network*

The Supervisors' Network is a community of practice that connects PPSC supervisors to their peers, partners and senior managers to network, exchange ideas and share knowledge in a supportive environment.

In 2023-2024, the Network offered a variety of workshops and training opportunities to all of our supervisors which created opportunities for growth and learning, and helped build collaborative relationships. Notably the Network hosted training on the following subjects:

- » Integrating a Coaching Approach to your Management Role
- » Compensation
- » Managing Performance

In addition, the Supervisors' Network established contacts with the National Managers' Community to expand the opportunities for our supervisors and managers to discuss and collaborate with colleagues outside of the organization.

### *Character-Based Leadership Skills in Action*

We have fully integrated character-based leadership in the selection process for senior leaders. In 2023-2024, seven executives were appointed after having successfully completed character leadership interviews. This involved an evaluation of 11 dimensions of character<sup>1</sup>, alongside competence, during the leadership selection process. In the past two years, over 227 supervisors, managers, and executives from the PPSC, which represent 88% of all the supervisors, have completed the Leadership Development Program, comprising a series of workshops on character-based leadership and various leadership themes, including:

- » Authentic Communication
- » Managerial Courage
- » Performance Management

<sup>1</sup> The 11 dimensions of character that the PPSC assess are: integrity, humility, courage, humanity, drive, accountability, temperance, justice, collaboration, transcendence, and judgment.

## DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS

Over the course of the year, we have been leveraging people management data in an intentional way to make informed decisions. This data also supported the decisions being made in response to both the [Office of the Auditor General of Canada](#) and [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) audits; it brought greater accuracy to our workforce availability data and was used to inform hiring goals for equity groups. We have also used this data to support budget and human resources planning, as well as leadership training and development.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

We have taken steps to continue to modernize operations. Human resources and financial records have been digitized, and we implemented our first online workflow for processing complaints, making it easier to receive and manage the information.

## EMPLOYEE DATA

The following tables provide data on the number and distribution of our workforce throughout Canada.

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES : 1,143

REGIONS	PPSC EMPLOYEES
Headquarters	253
Alberta	114
Atlantic	67
British Columbia	116
Manitoba	43
National Capital Region	92
Northwest Territories	54
Nunavut	49
Ontario	204
Quebec	80
Saskatchewan	30
Yukon	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,143*</b>

\* This data includes only active indeterminate and term employees, excluding those on leave (both paid and unpaid), while also excluding employees on secondment or dual employment. The data reflects information as of March 31, 2024.

FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGE	PPSC EMPLOYEES
English	880
French	263
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,143</b>

	RACIALIZED GROUPS	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	PERSONS LIVING WITH A DISABILITY	WOMEN
PPSC representation <sup>1</sup>	21.3%	6.6%	7.0%	66.2%
PPSC Workforce availability <sup>2</sup>	15.8%	5.5%	8.8%	62.3%
Public service Representation <sup>3</sup>	21.7%	5.3%	6.9%	56.6%

- 1 Representation of Employment equity (EE) groups at the PPSC as of March 31, 2024 - based on information from the self-identification form in PeopleSoft that is not mandatory for employees to fill out.
- 2 PPSC workforce availability is based on the occupational groups working at the PPSC on March 31, 2023. The workforce availability estimates are derived from the 2016 Census of Canada and the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability.
- 3 Representation of EE groups in the Public Service of Canada as of March 31, 2023, as per the Treasury Board Secretariat report on [Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2022 to 2023](#).



# 6

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

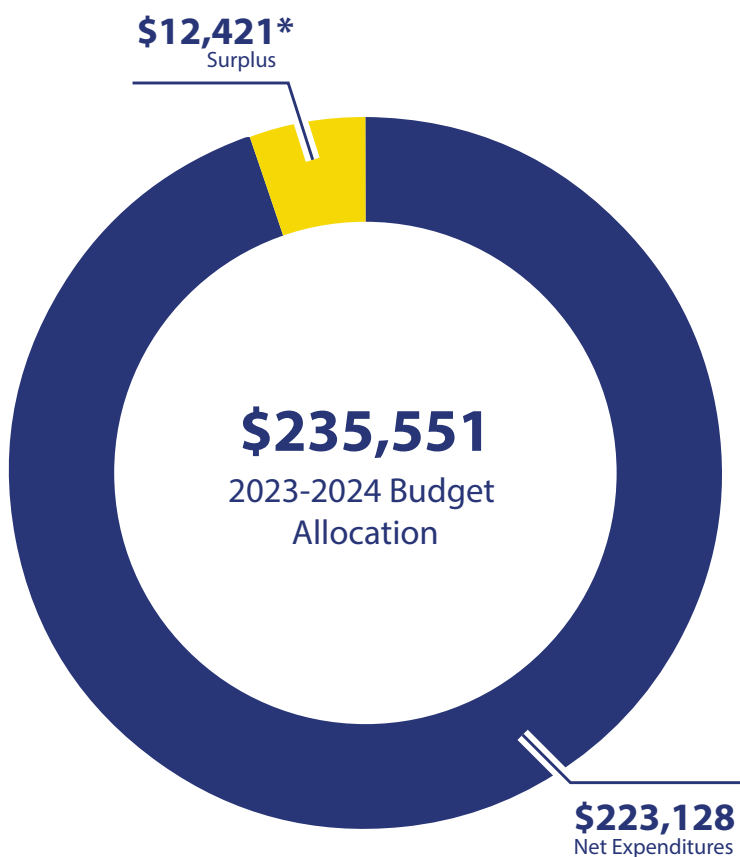
# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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## OVERVIEW

During fiscal year 2023-2024, Parliament allocated a net vote operating budget of \$235.6 million, including \$231.7 million for regular operations and \$3.9 million specific to the collection of outstanding federal fines. Furthermore, we recovered \$15.3 million from other government departments, agencies and Crown corporations for prosecution activities related to their mandates. At year-end, there was a total net spending of \$223.1 million and a total carryover of \$12.4 million, including \$2 thousands of dollars available for use in subsequent years of proceeds from the disposal of surplus of Crown Assets. From that carryover, an amount of \$10.8 million resulting from the operating budget can be spent in the next fiscal year.

Information about funding and spending is summarized in the following graph (**amounts in thousands of dollars**):



\*This amount includes \$2,000 available for use in subsequent years of proceeds from the disposal of surplus of Crown Assets.

## CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

We have one core responsibility, namely prosecution services, that falls under the mandate of the Attorney General of Canada. We also have a number of administrative services grouped under the heading "Internal Services". Information regarding the spending by core responsibility and internal services is provided in the following table:

	BUDGET ALLOCATED BY PARLIAMENT		AMOUNTS RECOVERED	TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING	TOTAL EXPENDITURES		%	Carryover	
	Operating	Fine Recovery			Net Operating Spending	Fine Recovery Spending		Operating	Fine Recovery
(amounts in thousands of dollars)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)
				(A)+(B)+(C)			(E) + (F)	(A)-(E)	(B)-(F)
Prosecution Services	188,203	3,880	15,202	207,285	178,907	2,308	81%	9,296	1,572
Internal Services	43,468	0	93	43,561	41,913	0	19%	1,555	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>231,671</b>	<b>3,880</b>	<b>15,295</b>	<b>250,846</b>	<b>220,820</b>	<b>2,308</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10,851</b>	<b>1,572</b>

Note 1: The complete carryover for Fine Recovery is not permitted to be spent in the next fiscal year.

### Prosecution Services

This core responsibility accounts for 81% of our total expenditures, mainly attributed to salaries and Crown agents' retainers.

### Internal Services

Administrative activities such as financial services, communications, human resources, information management, information technology, security, facilities, as well as health and safety, all of which support the core activities. These activities account for 19% of the total expenditures.



# 7

## CONTACT INFORMATION

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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## PUBLIC ENQUIRIES

### Public Prosecution Service of Canada

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1-877-505-7772

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