



B.C.'s Prosecution Service

Trusted, Fair, Impartial

Criminal Justice Branch

Strategic Plan 2011/2012



Message from Assistant Deputy Attorney General Robert Gillen, QC

I am pleased to present B.C.'s Prosecution Service's strategic plan for 2011/12. Our plan is aligned with the strategic vision of the Ministry of Attorney General, with its five strategic priorities:

- Improve access to justice solutions
- Simplify court procedures
- Combat gangs and guns
- Support our people
- Improve justice system performance and accountability

The prosecution service – the Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General – contributes to the protection of society by conducting or supervising prosecutions and appeals in all levels of court – fairly, impartially, effectively and respectfully.

Our role in the justice system usually begins when police send us a Report to Crown Counsel – around 75,000 reports each year - containing the results of their investigation into a possible crime. In deciding whether to lay a charge, Crown Counsel assess the police's report according to our charge approval standard: whether based on the evidence there is a substantial likelihood of conviction and whether it is in the public interest to prosecute.

Prosecution service members - Crown Counsel and administrative staff – fulfill their professional responsibilities with pride and dedication in every part of British Columbia: from Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson and Fort St. John in the north to Surrey and New Westminster in the south, from Port Alberni on Vancouver Island to Cranbrook in the east.

In this second year of our current planning cycle we are again guided by the seven prosecution service goals displayed in the accompanying table. Our first goal this year and every year is “to strive for ethical and operational excellence in the conduct of all charge assessments, prosecutions and appeals.”

2011/12 Major Projects



Shaping the Branch for the Future

The service to the public described in the Prosecution Service's Goal One and indeed everything we do depends on our people who deliver the service. As we have now entered a period of shrinking resources for the prosecution service and the justice system as a whole, with reduced budgets and fewer staff through attrition, the Criminal Justice Branch last year launched an initiative called Shaping the Branch for the Future to address this reality.

Continuing in 2011/12, the Shaping the Branch for the Future initiative is designed to ensure we can continue to deliver an efficient and principled prosecution service while maintaining a sustainable workload. We are seeking every possible efficiency in our operations that does not compromise the integrity of our service or place an unsustainable burden on staff.

We took various actions in 2010/11 under the initiative. In early 2011, a province-wide consultation with all staff yielded a wealth of ideas on how to meet this challenge. In 2011/12 we are focusing on putting into action more of these ideas, with a special emphasis on sustainable workload.

Major Case Management Project

The prosecution service will implement a new model for managing major cases in 2011/12. These high profile and complex cases often have heavy resource requirements that also affect normal operations in other parts of the organization. The new model will maximize efficiency for such cases.

Alternative Measures Pilot Projects

In 2010, the prosecution service revised its alternative measures policy to emphasize the principle that alternative measures should be considered for any case where the successful completion of an alternative measures program can achieve the most important objectives of a court prosecution. Later in the year, in partnership with the Corrections Branch of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, we launched pilot projects where Corrections staff provide risk assessments for Crown Counsel of candidates for alternative measures. Use of alternative measures is not only a principled justice decision; it is also an efficient use of resources. More pilots will be launched in 2011/12.

New Technology

We are working with justice partners to make best use of new technology to produce a more efficient justice system. Examples in 2011/12 include a pilot project to provide disclosure of Crown case information to in-custody accused and an improved electronic link between police and Crown when police are sending their Reports to Crown Counsel. New technology is also helping us provide essential professional development and research tools to staff wherever they are located in the province.

B.C.'s Prosecution Service Strategic Goals and Objectives

2010/2011 - 2012/2013	
Goal 1.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will strive for ethical and operational excellence in the conduct of all charge assessments, prosecutions and appeals.
	Objective 1.1 - Conduct charge assessments, prosecutions and appeals fairly and appropriately.
	Objective 1.2 - Conduct charge assessments, prosecutions and appeals in a timely manner.
Goal 2.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will provide strong support for the prosecution function.
	Objective 2.1 - Provide practical assistance to Crown counsel, managerial and administrative staff.
Goal 3.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will foster respect for the rule of law, the impartial administration of justice and the key role of the prosecution function through maximizing: communications within the prosecution service; co-operation with other agencies; and legal education of the public.
	Objective 3.1 - Communicate effectively within the prosecution service.
	Objective 3.2 - Strengthen understanding and co-operation between B.C.'s prosecution service and justice system partners and other agencies.
	Objective 3.3 - Communicate effectively the core principles and priorities of B.C.'s prosecution service and its key role in fostering respect for the rule of law and the administration of justice.
Goal 4.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will be a learning organization.
	Objective 4.1 - Provide training and information sharing opportunities for all prosecution service members.
	Objective 4.2 - Increase leadership and management skills in B.C.'s prosecution service.
Goal 5.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will provide its members with a safe, secure, healthy and productive place to work.
	Objective 5.1 - Provide as physically secure a workplace as possible for all prosecution service members.
	Objective 5.2 - Effect positive change.
	Objective 5.3 - Manage our workload.
	Objective 5.4 - Build our team.

	Objective 5.5 - Maintain a strong planning culture in the B.C. prosecution service that emphasizes rigorous setting of strategic priorities, projects and evaluations.
	Objective 5.6 - Maintain the B.C. prosecution service's capacity to continue business in emergencies.
Goal 6.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will be a leader in law reform and innovative justice processes.
	Objective 6.1 - Promote law reform nationally and internationally.
	Objective 6.2 - Lead criminal justice reform with our partners in the provincial justice ministries.
	Objective 6.3 - Innovate in technology and administrative best practice processes.
Goal 7.0	B.C.'s prosecution service will provide consistently high quality and effective criminal law advice to government.

