



Prosecution
Service

Annual Report

2022/23

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Message from the ADAG

I am pleased to present the 2022/23 Annual Report for the BC Prosecution Service (BCPS). Our team of lawyers, professional staff, and managers once again performed at an exceptionally high level during the last fiscal year. They consistently met or exceeded expectations, fulfilling our core mandate under the *Crown Counsel Act* of approving and conducting prosecutions and appeals, advising government on criminal law matters, liaising with the public and the media, and developing policies and procedures in respect of the administration of criminal justice in British Columbia.



Peter Juk KC

Assistant Deputy Attorney General

It was a particularly challenging year for our organization as the criminal justice system was the focus of much public attention, discussion, and some controversy. People tend to look to the criminal justice system to fill gaps left when other sectors of society appear challenged or overwhelmed. The criminal justice system, and the BCPS in particular, must play its appropriate part in responding, but the criminal justice system lacks the capacity, tools, and legal authority to remedy underlying social problems and fill all the gaps left by other sectors of society.

Despite unprecedented pressure, and calls from some quarters for simplistic solutions to complex problems, the BCPS has continued to be guided by principle and by its statutory and constitutional mandate to act as an independent prosecution service.

Among others, the BCPS had these notable achievements and innovations during the last fiscal year:

- *Bail Policy* - Under extreme pressure, the BCPS crafted, delivered, and implemented principled amendments to its *Bail – Adults* ([BAI1](#)) policy.
- *Indigenous Justice Framework* – The BCPS continued to provide educational opportunities to our members, with emphasis on existing legal and policy requirements, cultural safety, and related issues.
- *Digital Evidence and Disclosure Management System (DEMS)* - Our DEMS team made significant progress towards full electronic disclosure and file management, configuring a technical connection to and information exchange with our existing case management system; and, in collaboration with police, we launched an operational pilot of the system in March with plans to expand further throughout the rest of 2023.
- *Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (ReVOII)* - As part of the province's *Safer Communities Action Plan*, the BCPS quickly staffed and stood up a ReVOII team of Crown Counsel and professional staff for a prolific offender management model to address repeat violent offending in BC Communities. Working with justice partners, the ReVOII team

developed a model for enhanced case management, early intervention, and improved information sharing that focuses on individuals who present the greatest risk to communities across the province.

- *Comprehensive Bail Program* - The daytime virtual bail process was implemented in several regions, and evening bail operations expanded to all parts of the province.

In this Annual Report, you will find the following information for the 2022/23 fiscal year:

- An overview of the criminal justice process in British Columbia and the role the BCPS plays within it;
- Statistical summaries and data about the work of the BCPS and key performance indicators; and,
- A description of our operational structure, regional spotlights, and a financial summary.

In closing, I would like to express my deep pride, admiration, and sincere thanks to our outstanding BCPS team, whose hard work, creativity, commitment, and professionalism enables us to keep advancing the important work we do in service to the people of British Columbia.

Peter Juk KC
Assistant Deputy Attorney General

About the BC Prosecution Service

Vision

An independent prosecution service that people respect and trust.

Mission

We make timely, principled, and impartial charge assessment decisions that promote public safety, justice, and respect for the rule of law.

We conduct independent, effective, and fair prosecutions and appeals.

We strive to do the right thing for the right reasons and to be transparent about how we do it.

Values

These values guide the BC Prosecution Service in everything we do:

- Justice
- Independence
- Fairness
- Integrity
- Professionalism

Crown Counsel Act

The mandate of the BC Prosecution Service, which is the Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General, is defined by the [Crown Counsel Act](#), RSBC 1996 Chapter 87. Under the [Crown Counsel Act](#), the BCPS:

- a) approves and conducts prosecutions of all criminal and provincial offences in British Columbia;
- b) initiates and conducts all appeals and other proceedings for these prosecutions;
- c) conducts appeals or other proceedings for prosecutions in which the Crown is named as a respondent;
- d) advises the government on all criminal law matters;
- e) develops policies and procedures for the administration of criminal justice in British Columbia;
- f) interacts with the media and affected members of the public on matters respecting the approval and conduct of prosecutions or related appeals; and,
- g) carries out any other function or responsibility assigned by the Attorney General (AG).

The Assistant Deputy Attorney General (ADAG) heads the BCPS and is charged with carrying out its mandate as outlined above. The ADAG designates lawyers as “Crown Counsel”, who represent the Crown in all provincial prosecutions. Subject to the ADAG’s direction, Crown Counsel are authorized to:

- Examine all relevant information and documents and, following the examination, to approve for prosecution any offences they consider appropriate
- Conduct the prosecutions approved
- Supervise prosecutions of offences that are being initiated or conducted by individuals who are not Crown Counsel and, if the interests of justice require, intervene, and conduct those prosecutions

Although the AG is ultimately responsible for prosecutions falling within provincial jurisdiction, the [Crown Counsel Act](#) gives the ADAG effective responsibility for the day-to-day administration of all prosecutorial functions, subject only to specific directions from the AG. Daily prosecution functions are carried out by Crown Counsel.

In carrying out these functions, Crown Counsel have legal and constitutional obligations to act as “ministers of justice”, exercising their prosecutorial discretion independently of government and police, and without regard for inappropriate pressure from any quarter. They must follow the law, as set out in the federal [Criminal Code](#), and interpreted by BC’s courts and the Supreme Court of Canada. They are assisted and guided in this task by BCPS [policy](#), which reflects the prevailing legislation and caselaw.

Political, personal, and private considerations must not influence the way prosecutors conduct their cases. The role of prosecutor excludes any notion of winning or losing. It is a public function carrying with it great personal responsibility, and it must be carried out efficiently, with a sense of dignity, seriousness, and justice.

Role of Crown Counsel and Prosecutorial Independence

Crown Counsel’s paramount duty is to see justice done in each case. Crown Counsel do not represent individual victims. When a crime is committed, it is a crime against society as a whole and Crown Counsel perform their function on behalf of the entire community. In practice, this means that while Crown Counsel conduct prosecutions vigorously, their first duty is to ensure the trial process is fair, the evidence is presented thoroughly and accurately, and the integrity of the justice process is maintained. Crown Counsel are entrusted with the prosecution of all offences and appeals in British Columbia which arise under Canada’s [Criminal Code](#) and do not fall within the jurisdiction of the federal prosecution service (e.g., prosecutions under the [Controlled Drugs and Substances Act](#)). They also prosecute provincial regulatory offences.

Police and other investigative agencies prepare a Report to Crown Counsel (RCC) setting out the evidence relating to an alleged offence. Crown Counsel independently assess whether charges should be laid, based on the whole of the available evidence contained in the RCC. British Columbia is one of only three provinces in Canada where prosecutors, and not police, decide whether criminal charges should be laid before a prosecution is formally commenced.

The charge assessment guidelines that Crown Counsel must apply in reviewing all RCCs are established by policy that is available [online](#).

When charges are approved, the charge assessment standard continues to apply throughout the prosecution. If the standard for continuing a prosecution is no longer met, Crown Counsel must end the prosecution.

Pre-approval of charges by Crown Counsel ensures, as much as reasonably possible, that only viable cases proceed to court and that they are completed in a timely way. Oversight of the charging process by Crown Counsel also acts as a safeguard against miscarriages of justice.

The Supreme Court of Canada has underlined the importance of Crown Counsel's independence from the police, confirming that Crown Counsel's role is:

...to assess whether a prosecution is in the public interest and, if so, to carry out that prosecution in accordance with the prosecutor's duties to the administration of justice and the accused...

"Prosecutors provide the initial checks and balances to the power of the police". ...Independent prosecutorial review of the police's investigative process and decisions helps "ensure that both investigations and prosecutions are conducted more thoroughly, and thus more fairly" ...

(Ontario (Attorney General) v Clark, 2021 SCC 18, at paragraphs 41 to 45)

Role of Special Prosecutors

When in a given case there is a significant potential for improper influence, real or perceived, in prosecutorial decision-making, a Special Prosecutor may be appointed to conduct the charge assessment and any ensuing prosecution and appeal. Special Prosecutors are appointed from a list of senior lawyers in private practice, which is reviewed every five years. Only the ADAG has legal authority under the [Crown Counsel Act](#) to appoint a Special Prosecutor to conduct a charge assessment and prosecution. The paramount consideration in making that decision is the need to maintain public confidence in the administration of criminal justice.

Once appointed, Special Prosecutors perform the same role as regular Crown Counsel. They do not initiate, lead, or control police investigations and they must adhere to the policies of the BCPS when conducting their cases, including the charge assessment guidelines. However, they carry out their functions with greater independence from the BCPS.

The Criminal Justice Process

This section provides a summary of the criminal justice process in British Columbia and statistics on the work of the BCPS. The data source for the statistics, unless otherwise noted, is the Justice Information System (JUSTIN), a case management system that is used by investigative agencies, Crown Counsel, and the courts in British Columbia.

The BCPS has developed key performance indicators (KPIs) which help assess and measure performance, including the following:

- Judicial Stays of Proceedings (for delay only)
- Charge Assessment Duration
- Prosecution File Duration
- Percent of files that resolve at or before arraignment

Data addressing these KPIs appears within the following tables.

Investigations

The BCPS works with numerous police and investigative agencies with diverse mandates. Over 80 percent of RCCs are submitted by police agencies. Most of the remaining RCCs are submitted by BC Corrections, with less than one percent being submitted by other types of investigative agencies, such as the BC Conservation Officer Service and financial regulators.

When an alleged crime is reported to an investigative agency, or the agency itself identifies a possible offence, the agency will investigate and decide whether the incident warrants forwarding an RCC to the BCPS. Crown Counsel do not investigate offences. It is the responsibility of the investigative agency, which functions independently from the BCPS, to investigate and exercise its own discretion in deciding whether to forward an RCC for charge assessment and prosecution.

Charge Assessments

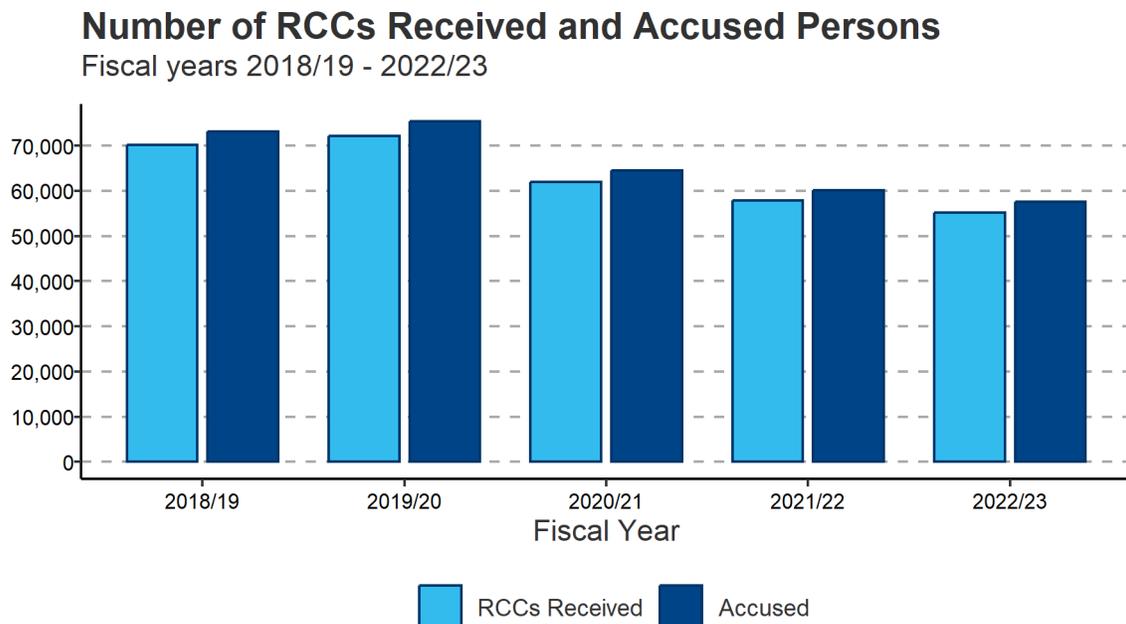
When Crown Counsel receive an RCC, they assess whether charges should be approved in accordance with the BCPS's *Charge Assessment Guidelines* ([CHA 1](#)) policy, which lays out a standard for charge approval. That standard requires Crown Counsel to independently, objectively, and fairly measure all the available evidence against a two-part test:

1. Whether there is a substantial likelihood of conviction; and, if so,
2. Whether the public interest requires a prosecution.

Crown Counsel complete charge assessments as quickly as they can, while still conducting a thorough analysis and making a principled decision. Crown Counsel may decide that charges should or should not be laid, or that the accused person should be referred for alternative measures. For more complex cases, the charge assessment process may be prolonged.

Once the charge assessment has been conducted and charges are approved to court, a new prosecution file is created. The formal court process is initiated by swearing an Information (the charging document).

Figure 1: Number of RCCs Received and Accused Persons



For the most recent fiscal year, the volume of RCCs received was 13% lower than the average for the last five fiscal years. The BCPS received a total of 55,203 RCCs in 2022/23, a decrease of 4.6% from 2021/22. The RCCs received had a total of 57,584 accused persons named, 4.1% of whom were youths (those 12 to 17 years of age on the offence date). As a percentage of all accused named on RCCs received, the number of accused young persons has remained stable over the last several years.

Table 1: RCCs Received and Accused Persons

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
RCCs Received	70,118	72,149	61,979	57,853	55,203
Accused	73,194	75,437	64,580	60,195	57,584
Adult %	96%	96%	97%	97%	96%
Youth %	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%
Accused In Custody	16,898	17,488	12,682	11,565	11,261
Accused In Custody %	23%	23%	20%	19%	20%

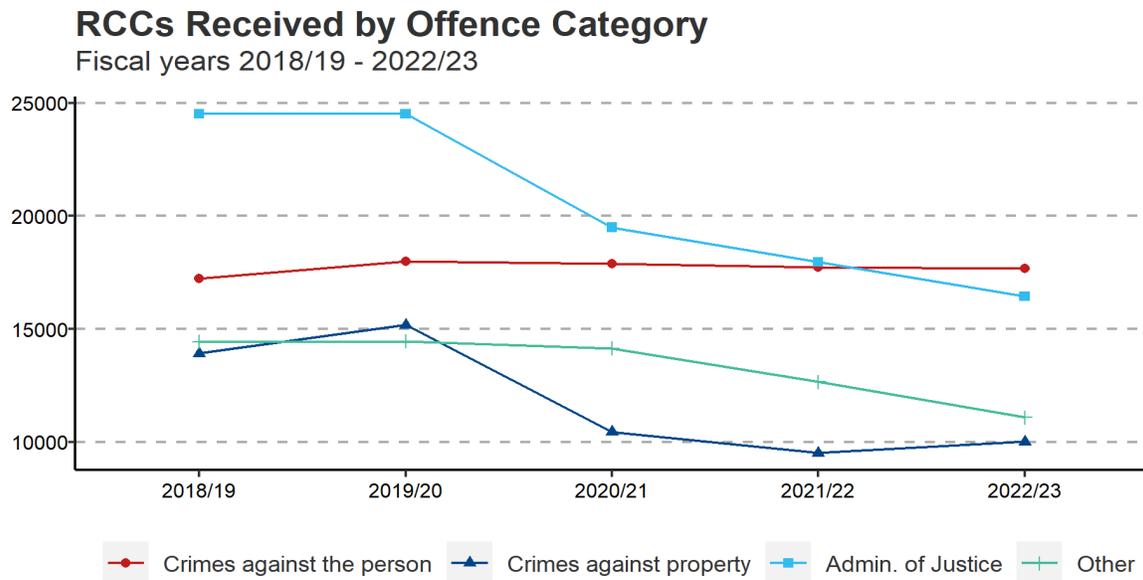
1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. An RCC is counted once based on the date it was first entered in JUSTIN, regardless of the number of accused persons, number of charges, or number of counts. An accused is counted as being in custody on an RCC if the 'in-custody' flag is active in JUSTIN upon receipt of a new RCC.

3. Please note that since this data is based on RCCs captured in JUSTIN, it excludes work done on files where an official RCC has not been received from police, or when the file is originally civil in nature, such as the prosecution for contempt of court arising from a breach of a civil court order.

A significant decrease in incoming RCC counts began after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has persisted through the most recent fiscal year. The decrease in RCC counts has been observed in all categories except crimes against the person, with the biggest decreases involving crimes against property and administration of justice offences (See [Figure 2](#), next page).

Figure 2: RCCs Received by Offence Category



Charge Assessment Decisions

When a decision is made to approve charges, a new prosecution file (or multiple prosecution files) will be initiated. In 2022/23 there were a total of 56,583 charge assessment decisions made for accused named on RCCs, a decrease of 5.1% from the previous fiscal year. A total of 43,136 accused persons had charges approved, resulting in a 76% charge approval rate.

Table 2: Charge Assessment Decisions

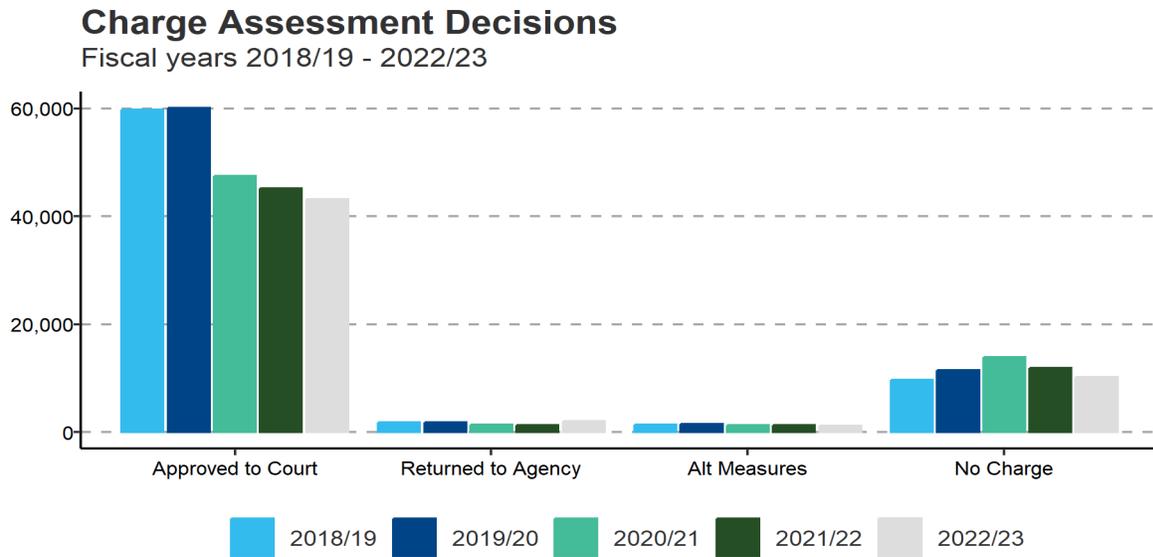
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Charge Assessment Decisions	72,620	74,913	64,006	59,654	56,583
% Alternative Measures	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
% Approved to Court	82%	80%	74%	76%	76%
% No Charge	13%	15%	22%	20%	18%
% Returned to Agency	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. Charge assessment decisions are counted once for each accused person named on RCCs received in the fiscal year. If an accused person has at least one charge approved by Crown Counsel, the charge decision is recorded as 'Approved to Court'.

Figure 3: Charge Assessment Decisions

Figure 3: Charge Assessment Decisions

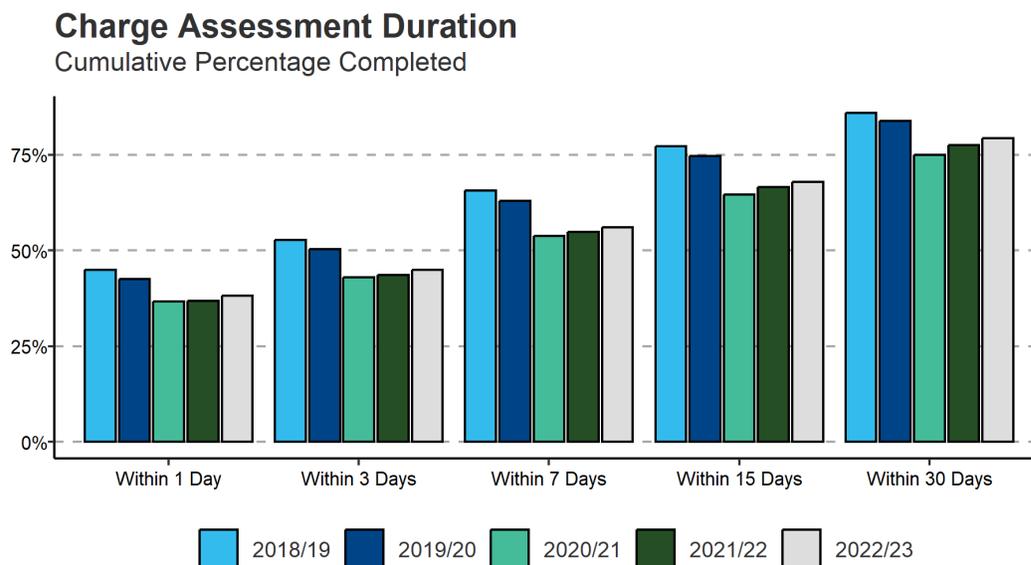


Charge Assessment Duration

This measures how many days it takes Crown Counsel to complete charge assessment, from the date an RCC is received to the date Crown Counsel makes a charge decision.

The data indicates that Crown Counsel are taking more time to make and record charge assessment decisions than they did five years ago. Part of the explanation for the increase in charge assessment duration may be that the volume of RCCs alleging less serious offences has declined significantly over the last couple of years, while the volume alleging more serious offences, such as intimate partner violence and sexual assault, have remained stable or increased, resulting in a higher proportion of RCCs alleging more serious offences needing to be assessed. [Figure 4](#) shows the time taken for crown assessment decisions over the last five fiscal years.

Figure 4: Time to Charge Assessment Duration



Prosecutions & Appeals

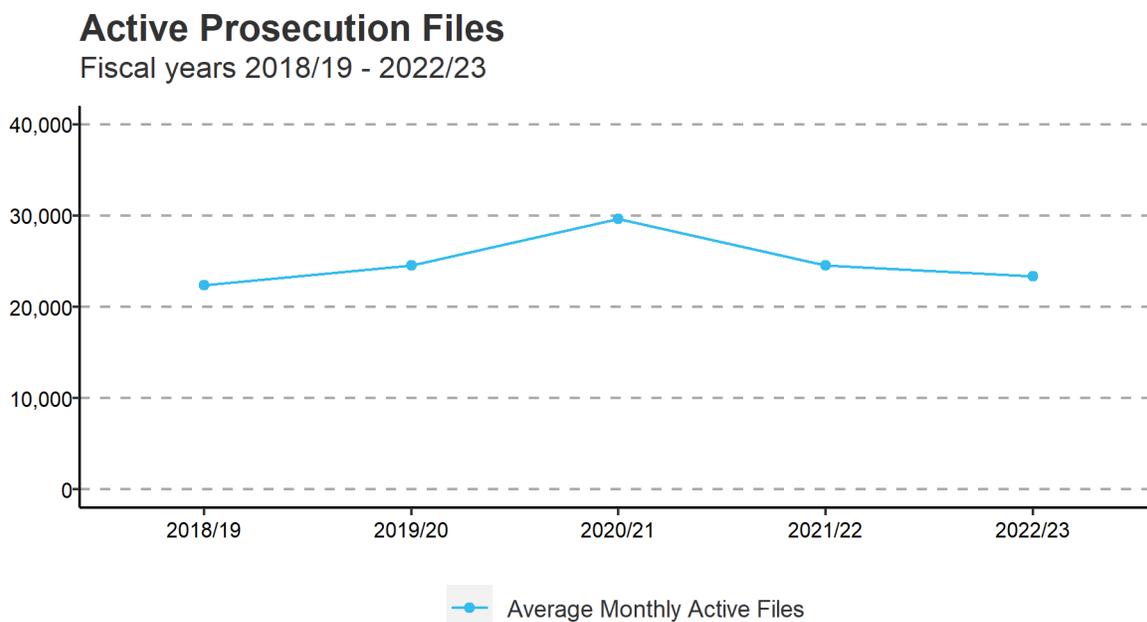
Crown Counsel conduct prosecutions and appeals in every level of court: the Provincial Court of British Columbia, the British Columbia Supreme Court, the British Columbia Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada.

When doing so, they are bound by the legal principles contained in the [Criminal Code](#), as interpreted and applied by the courts of British Columbia and the Supreme Court of Canada. Crown Counsel’s decision making must also be informed by and consistent with the constitutional rights guaranteed under the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#).

Active Prosecutions

After a significant jump in the active file count in 2020/21, related to court process interruptions from COVID-19, the active file count has returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 5: Active Prosecution Files



Concluded Prosecutions

A total of 42,531 prosecutions were concluded in 2022/23. Concluded file volumes have decreased proportionately with the overall decrease in the number of RCCs received.

Table 3: Concluded Prosecutions

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Concluded Prosecutions	60,253	56,836	45,521	45,212	42,531
Adult	57,826	54,774	43,993	43,934	41,280
Youth	2,427	2,062	1,528	1,278	1,251

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. A concluded prosecution is counted once for each accused person on a file that concluded in the fiscal year. If an accused person was on more than one file that concluded in the fiscal year, they are counted each time.

[Figure 6](#) and [Table 4](#) show the outcomes of concluded prosecutions. In 2020/21, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the proportion of guilty findings dropped by approximately 10%. The proportion of cases stayed by Crown Counsel increased by the same amount. The proportions have started to move back towards pre-pandemic levels in the last two fiscal years.

Figure 6: Concluded Prosecutions by Finding

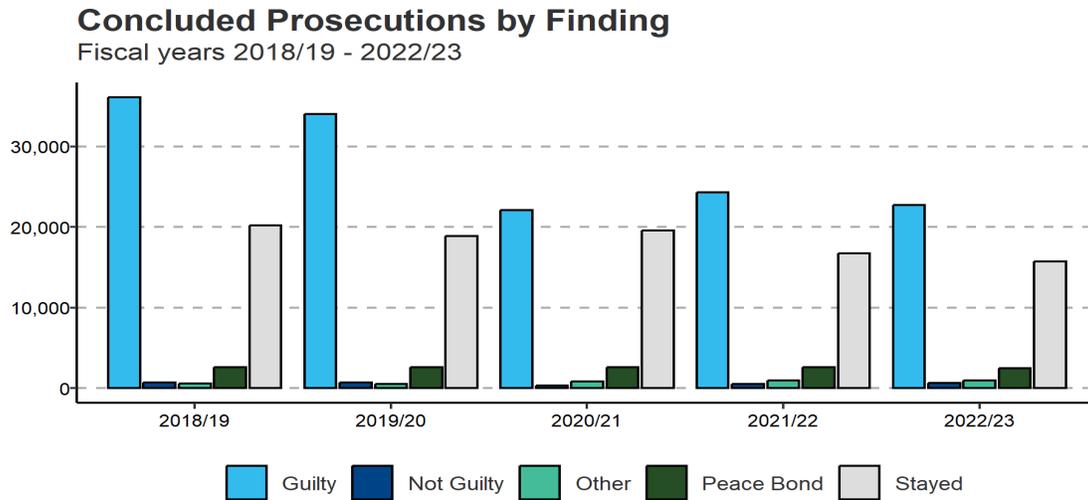


Table 4: Concluded Prosecutions by Finding

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Concluded Files by File Outcome	60,253	56,836	45,521	45,212	42,531
% Guilty	60%	60%	49%	54%	53%
% Not Guilty	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
% Other	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
% Peace Bond	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
% Stayed	34%	33%	43%	37%	37%

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. A concluded prosecution is counted once for each accused person on a file that concluded in the fiscal year. If an accused person was on more than one file that concluded in the fiscal year, they are counted each time.

Percentage of Files Concluded at or before Arraignment

A higher percentage of files concluded at or before arraignment means that a higher proportion of files are concluded at the earliest stages in the criminal process.

The proportion of files concluded early has remained stable over the last five years. Even in the face of court backlogs and delays during the pandemic, the majority of files have continued to be concluded at or before an arraignment hearing.

Table 5: Percent of Files Concluded Early (at or before Arraignment Hearing)

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
% Files Concluded Early	69%	71%	73%	71%	73%

1. Source: Data collected through the BCPS File Closing Survey.

2. 'Early' is defined as a file which was concluded at or before arraignment.

Prosecution File Duration

This measures how many days it takes for a criminal file to conclude. It appears that interruptions and related impacts on court operations that first emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to be a factor in overall prosecution file duration.

Table 6: Prosecution File Duration

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Median Days to Conclusion	94.5	106.5	181.5	193.5	178.5

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. The duration of a prosecution file is measured from the date the Information was first sworn or filed in court to the final disposition date. Any bench warrant days associated with the file are excluded from the calculation.

Stays of Proceedings

Throughout the course of a prosecution, Crown Counsel have an ongoing obligation to assess its viability and ensure that it continues to meet the BCPS charge assessment standard. Many things can affect the viability of charges after they are initially approved, including material changes in the strength of the prosecution's case, new evidence that would provide a principled basis for a finding of reasonable doubt, witness unavailability or lack of co-operation, or new information that changes the assessment of whether the public interest requires a prosecution.

If the charge assessment standard is no longer met, Crown Counsel must end the prosecution. Usually that is done by directing a stay of proceedings. Approximately half of all stays of proceedings directed by Crown Counsel still involve some other form of consequence for the

accused, such as a peace bond, a referral to an alternative measures program, or a guilty plea on another file or to a different charge.

Number of Judicial Stays of Proceedings for Delay

This measures the number of times in the fiscal year that judges stayed criminal charges prosecuted by the BCPS due to unreasonable delay.

The number of judicial stays of proceedings of BCPS cases have continued to decline over the last five fiscal years. In 2022/23, a total of four prosecutions concluded with a judicial stay of proceedings.

Table 7: Judicial Stays of Proceedings for Delay

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Judicial Stays of Proceeding	10	8	8	6	4

1. Judicial stays of proceedings decisions are recorded in JUSTIN but the reason for the decision is not recorded. A judicial stay of proceedings can be for reasons other than delay, such as abuse of process. To obtain a count of the judicial stay decisions specifically for delay, the Court Services Branch contacts the relevant court registry to confirm the reason for each judicial stay. Each case is counted once based on the date of the judicial stay decision, regardless of how many accused persons were involved.

File Outcomes

About 53% of the matters in 2022/23 for which charges were approved and which proceeded to court resulted in a conviction – by way of guilty plea or a guilty verdict after trial. If an accused pleads guilty or is found guilty after a trial, Crown Counsel are responsible for making a recommendation on sentence. The decision about what sentence to impose is made by the court.

Criminal Contempt Proceedings

On invitation of the BC Supreme Court, Crown Counsel may intervene and conduct criminal contempt of court prosecutions. In conducting these prosecutions, Crown Counsel are guided by the BCPS *Civil Disobedience (CIV 1)* policy. In recent years, the BCPS has conducted hundreds of individual prosecutions of this type, which can be resource intensive and legally complex. However, because of their unique nature, these cases are not tracked as [Criminal Code](#) matters and are not included in the statistical overview provided in this Annual Report.

Supporting Victims & Witnesses

The BCPS works diligently to ensure that all victims and witnesses are supported in their participation in the criminal justice process.

As defined in the British Columbia [Victims of Crime Act](#) (VOCA), a victim is any individual who suffers physical or mental injury, or economic loss because of an offence. There may also be secondary victims who have suffered emotional trauma because of an offence committed against a family member.

Crown Counsel prepare victims for court and provide them with appropriate information about the prosecution and the criminal justice system. Crown Counsel may meet with victims and their families to assist them in understanding the prosecution process.

When there are victim safety concerns, or there is a request by the victim for ongoing information, Crown Counsel take steps to ensure that the victim is notified about the course of the prosecution, any future court dates, any bail conditions, and any changes in those proceedings or conditions. In appropriate situations, Crown Counsel will make applications for testimonial accommodations for victims who testify.

Under VOCA and the [Canadian Victim Bill of Rights](#), victims are provided with information about the criminal justice process. If charges are approved, a *Victim Impact Statement & Statement on Restitution Information Guide* is sent to victims by BCPS local offices. Information about community impact statements is available through the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Victims, witnesses, and members of the public can also learn more about the BCPS and the work we do from our online [BCPS Information Sheets](#).

Several of the BCPS policies, including *Charge Assessment Guidelines* ([CHA 1](#)), *Intimate Partner Violence* ([IPV 1](#)), and *Vulnerable Victims and Witnesses* ([VUL 1](#)), and information sheets have been translated into French, Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Filipino, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, and Vietnamese.

Statistical Overview

Crime Statistics

The primary workload driver for the BCPS is the volume of RCCs received from police and other investigative agencies and the complexity of the cases those RCCs represent. For this reason, overall crime trends directly affect our organization. It is important to note, however, that police-reported crime statistics reflect all incidents that are reported to police. The numbers of reports police receive can be affected by population, police enforcement strategies, large-scale criminal events, social movements, and changes in legislation, policies, or procedures.

As reported by Statistics Canada, the pandemic had a significant impact on crime numbers.¹ What we saw in British Columbia was generally consistent with the crime trends across the country. The volume and rate of criminal incidents reported to police decreased significantly in 2020. In the 2022/23 fiscal year, all regions of the province saw either a continued decline or a levelling out of the numbers of incidents.

In British Columbia overall, police-reported property crime rates (e.g., break and enter, theft, and shoplifting) plateaued after declining 16% in 2020. By contrast, the rate of police-reported crimes against the person (the category which includes violent crimes) has remained stable for the past four fiscal years. This category did not show any notable change as a result of the pandemic.

¹ Information on this and the broader social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic can be found on Statistics Canada's [\(COVID-19 hub\)](#).

Reports to Crown Counsel

Five-Year Trends

Overall, the total number of RCCs has decreased between 2018/19 and 2022/23, and the proportions of respective categories of offences alleged in RCCs has also changed. Notably, the proportion of intimate partner violence (IPV) RCCs has increased to 21.4% from 18.5% in 2019/20. IPV offences are those involving an accused and any person with whom the accused has, or has had, an ongoing close and personal or intimate relationship. IPV cases involve very serious, prevalent, and complex problems requiring a special response which is pro-active, coordinated, and vigorous. An increase in the proportion of RCCs alleging IPV offences can have a significant impact on workload.

When we look at the five-year trend for RCCs received under the four main offence categories, we see substantive decreases across the board except for crimes against the person which has remained stable:

- *Crimes against the person* – Essentially unchanged from the average of the prior four fiscal years (17,710 to 17,674 in 2022/23)
- *Property crimes* – Decrease of 18.4% from the average of the prior four fiscal years (12,260 to 10,007 in 2022/23)
- *Administration of justice* – Decrease of 24.0% from the average of the prior four fiscal years (21,632 to 16,438 in 2022/23)
- *Other offences* – Decrease of 20.4% from the average of the prior four fiscal years (13,922 to 11,084 in 2022/23)

Although the specific volume of RCCs differs from region to region, the trends within regions are generally consistent with overall provincial trends.

Provincial Overview

The tables on the following pages provide high-level statistics at the provincial and local level. Breakdowns are provided at the provincial level between all files, IPV files, and youth files.

Table 8: Provincial Overview: All Files

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
General Information					
# Crown Offices	40	40	40	40	40
# Court Locations	89	89	89	89	89
British Columbia population	5,048,144	5,138,710	5,157,293	5,251,578	5,399,118
Investigation					
RCCs Received	70,118	72,149	61,979	57,853	55,203
RCCs per 1,000 population	14	14	12	11	10
Crimes against property	13,918	15,174	10,443	9,506	10,007
Crimes against the person	17,238	17,986	17,895	17,723	17,674
Administration of justice	24,530	24,527	19,499	17,970	16,438
Other categories	14,432	14,462	14,142	12,654	11,084
Accused	73,194	75,437	64,580	60,195	57,584
Accused In Custody	16,898	17,488	12,682	11,565	11,261
Charge Assessment					
Charge Assessment Decisions	72,620	74,913	64,006	59,654	56,583
Alternative Measures	1,415	1,564	1,291	1,301	1,162
Approved to Court	59,735	60,098	47,434	45,122	43,136
No Charge	9,658	11,466	13,907	11,881	10,279
Returned to Agency	1,812	1,785	1,374	1,350	2,006
Prosecution					
Average Monthly Active Files	22,410	24,512	29,666	24,570	23,345
Concluded Prosecutions	60,253	56,836	45,521	45,212	42,531
% Files Concluded Early	69.0%	71.1%	72.9%	70.7%	72.7%
Median Days to Conclusion	94	106	182	194	178
File Outcomes					
Concluded Files by File Outcome	60,253	56,836	45,521	45,212	42,531
Guilty	36,116	34,028	22,126	24,307	22,703
Not Guilty	732	701	348	512	629
Other	567	565	841	1,001	961
Peace Bond	2,637	2,628	2,624	2,626	2,487
Stayed	20,201	18,914	19,582	16,766	15,751

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. There are currently 43 staffed court locations and 46 circuit courts

Table 9: Provincial Overview: IPV Files

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
General Information					
# Crown Offices	40	40	40	40	40
# Court Locations	89	89	89	89	89
British Columbia population	5,048,144	5,138,710	5,157,293	5,251,578	5,399,118
Investigation					
RCCs Received	14,033	13,884	13,580	12,853	12,255
RCCs per 1,000 population	3	3	3	2	2
Crimes against property	331	332	315	303	297
Crimes against the person	7,653	7,754	7,954	7,741	7,517
Administration of justice	5,490	5,276	4,805	4,322	3,997
Other categories	559	522	506	487	444
Accused	14,158	13,991	13,674	12,955	12,331
Accused In Custody	4,826	4,952	4,647	4,290	4,128
Charge Assessment					
Charge Assessment Decisions	14,143	13,977	13,660	12,943	12,262
Alternative Measures	115	148	163	188	157
Approved to Court	11,825	11,512	10,482	10,002	9,366
No Charge	1,976	2,098	2,861	2,601	2,490
Returned to Agency	227	219	154	152	249
Prosecution					
Average Monthly Active Files	-	-	-	-	-
Concluded Prosecutions	13,045	11,594	10,619	10,135	9,743
% Files Concluded Early	60.0%	61.1%	69.4%	62.0%	65.1%
Median Days to Conclusion	114	130	170	196	188
File Outcomes					
Concluded Files by File Outcome	13,045	11,594	10,619	10,135	9,743
Guilty	5,577	4,705	3,512	3,488	3,290
Not Guilty	216	197	80	156	180
Other	106	84	156	181	174
Peace Bond	1,446	1,452	1,406	1,343	1,306
Stayed	5,700	5,156	5,465	4,967	4,793

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. There are currently 43 staffed court locations and 46 circuit courts

Table 10: Provincial Overview: Youth Files

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
General Information					
# Crown Offices	40	40	40	40	40
# Court Locations	89	89	89	89	89
British Columbia youth population	545,939	552,725	554,802	570,424	902,300
Investigation					
RCCs Received	2,721	2,710	1,821	1,681	2,025
RCCs per 1,000 youth population	5	5	3	3	2
Crimes against property	474	408	210	194	233
Crimes against the person	929	1,059	865	964	1,173
Administration of justice	696	720	431	267	354
Other categories	622	523	315	256	265
Accused	3,004	3,030	2,029	1,861	2,360
Accused In Custody	515	521	248	191	265
Charge Assessment					
Charge Assessment Decisions	2,991	3,012	2,022	1,856	2,311
Alternative Measures	291	338	246	268	305
Approved to Court	2,124	1,978	1,195	1,095	1,358
No Charge	483	597	512	434	545
Returned to Agency	93	99	69	59	103
Prosecution					
Average Monthly Active Files	912	891	949	723	805
Concluded Prosecutions	2,427	2,062	1,528	1,278	1,251
% Files Concluded Early	72.9%	73.0%	69.8%	70.4%	71.5%
Median Days to Conclusion	108	124	222	232	192
File Outcomes					
Concluded Files by File Outcome	2,427	2,062	1,528	1,278	1,251
Guilty	1,321	1,115	690	613	588
Not Guilty	43	34	19	28	25
Other	12	14	6	12	8
Peace Bond	83	88	83	82	84
Stayed	968	811	730	543	546

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. There are currently 43 staffed court locations and 46 circuit courts

3. 'Youth' is defined as anyone aged 12-17, inclusive. Youth population data is reported per calendar year as of July 1 and released at the calendar year end. For this table, the population under each fiscal year is based on the calendar year that most closely aligns (e.g., 2020/21 population is used to compare to 2021/22 data).

Table 11: Fiscal 2022/23 At A Glance

RCCs Received	Charge Assessment Decisions					Time to Charge Assessment Decisions					
	Alternative Measures	Approved to Court	No Charge	Returned to Agency	Total Decisions	Within 1 Day	Within 3 Days	Within 7 Days	Within 15 Days	Within 30 Days	
Vancouver Island – Powell River Region											
Campbell River	687	12	536	124	33	705	33%	40%	51%	67%	79%
Colwood	1,086	42	885	190	9	1,126	38%	48%	63%	75%	87%
Courtenay	955	10	807	140	32	989	45%	52%	68%	79%	88%
Duncan	1,173	35	781	269	61	1,146	24%	30%	39%	52%	68%
Nanaimo	1,503	57	1,161	296	46	1,560	25%	30%	38%	49%	62%
Port Alberni	1,006	5	865	130	22	1,022	35%	42%	55%	72%	85%
Port Hardy	361	13	295	47	24	379	68%	69%	76%	83%	89%
Powell River	270	16	200	61	10	287	21%	25%	31%	46%	62%
Victoria	3,614	84	2,813	637	148	3,682	30%	35%	45%	61%	78%
Total	10,655	274	8,343	1,894	385	10,896	32%	39%	49%	63%	77%
Vancouver Region											
North Vancouver	1,437	47	1,012	357	48	1,464	22%	28%	40%	52%	68%
Richmond	1,159	40	898	199	46	1,183	45%	50%	58%	67%	76%
Sechelt	431	14	319	112	4	449	57%	67%	80%	85%	91%
Vancouver	8,678	174	6,506	1,636	425	8,741	49%	54%	62%	70%	79%
Total	11,705	275	8,735	2,304	523	11,837	45%	51%	60%	68%	78%
Fraser Region											
Abbotsford	2,432	32	2,025	404	63	2,524	49%	57%	67%	77%	85%
Chilliwack	1,876	16	1,450	305	86	1,857	42%	48%	58%	69%	78%
New Westminster	872	14	773	99	11	897	51%	61%	70%	79%	87%
Port Coquitlam	2,987	97	2,370	543	84	3,094	34%	41%	53%	68%	81%
Surrey	6,731	62	5,613	1,062	212	6,949	45%	54%	65%	76%	85%
Total	14,898	221	12,231	2,413	456	15,321	44%	51%	63%	74%	84%
Interior Region											
Cranbrook	1,098	33	854	233	21	1,141	27%	33%	43%	58%	71%
Kamloops	2,002	46	1,464	490	62	2,062	35%	42%	57%	73%	83%
Kelowna	2,636	27	1,994	565	102	2,688	28%	35%	46%	59%	73%
Nelson	763	20	572	183	15	790	36%	45%	56%	70%	81%
Penticton	1,063	14	870	168	29	1,081	25%	31%	45%	63%	78%
Salmon Arm	440	5	317	110	17	449	26%	35%	53%	71%	88%
Vernon	1,333	28	1,084	222	30	1,364	41%	46%	59%	70%	81%
Total	9,335	173	7,155	1,971	276	9,575	32%	38%	51%	66%	78%

RCCs Received		Charge Assessment Decisions					Time to Charge Assessment Decisions				
		Alternative Measures	Approved to Court	No Charge	Returned to Agency	Total Decisions	Within 1 Day	Within 3 Days	Within 7 Days	Within 15 Days	Within 30 Days
Northern Region											
Dawson Creek	697	12	577	125	27	741	20%	24%	35%	45%	59%
Fort Nelson	268	3	212	59	3	277	39%	48%	60%	70%	81%
Fort St. John	861	24	729	116	11	880	38%	45%	59%	74%	86%
Prince George	2,598	45	2,130	458	88	2,721	43%	51%	66%	77%	85%
Prince Rupert	728	52	537	141	46	776	31%	38%	51%	62%	75%
Quesnel	631	12	554	56	30	652	33%	42%	56%	69%	80%
Smithers	633	19	411	215	10	655	32%	38%	49%	63%	74%
Terrace	726	9	537	160	29	735	25%	34%	43%	61%	76%
Vanderhoof	555	18	354	150	46	568	27%	38%	47%	65%	79%
Williams Lake	788	22	540	195	54	811	25%	31%	42%	57%	75%
Total	8,485	216	6,581	1,675	344	8,816	34%	41%	54%	67%	79%
CASP											
CASP	126	3	91	22	22	138	25%	27%	28%	31%	37%
Province											
Total	55,204	1,162	43,136	10,279	2,006	56,583	38%	45%	56%	68%	79%

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. Vancouver includes Main Street, Downtown Community Court, Vancouver Youth Court, and Vancouver Supreme Court. New Westminster includes New Westminster Provincial Court and the New Westminster Supreme Court. CASP includes Crown Counsel in Special Prosecutions, Commercial Crime, Health Fraud, ICBC Fraud, Workers Compensation, and Welfare Fraud.

Table 12: Fiscal 2022/23 At A Glance

	Concluded Files	% Files Concluded Early	Median Days to Conclusion	Concluded Prosecutions by File Outcome									
				Guilty	Not Guilty	Other	Peace Bond	Stayed	% Guilty	% Not Guilty	% Other	% Peace Bond	% Stayed
Vancouver Island – Powell River Region													
Campbell River	446	65%	179	295	7	20	23	101	66%	2%	4%	5%	23%
Colwood	871	72%	170	507	24	14	45	281	58%	3%	2%	5%	32%
Courtenay	783	60%	176	442	10	24	40	267	56%	1%	3%	5%	34%
Duncan	818	64%	206	363	14	27	38	376	44%	2%	3%	5%	46%
Nanaimo	1,253	66%	211	594	11	35	89	524	47%	1%	3%	7%	42%
Port Alberni	822	77%	108	420	6	12	40	344	51%	1%	1%	5%	42%
Port Hardy	242	44%	260	123	20	2	19	78	51%	8%	1%	8%	32%
Powell River	220	58%	166	115	2	3	24	76	52%	1%	1%	11%	35%
Victoria	2,629	77%	124	1,533	46	54	113	883	58%	2%	2%	4%	34%
Total	8,084	70%	156	4,392	140	191	431	2,930	54%	2%	2%	5%	36%
Vancouver Region													
North Vancouver	918	67%	200	413	5	18	83	399	45%	1%	2%	9%	43%
Richmond	1,046	84%	180	567	17	13	55	394	54%	2%	1%	5%	38%
Sechelt	293	71%	184	143	10	1	18	121	49%	3%	0%	6%	41%
Vancouver	5,948	81%	142	3,243	75	78	235	2,317	55%	1%	1%	4%	39%
Total	8,205	80%	156	4,366	107	110	391	3,231	53%	1%	1%	5%	39%
Fraser Region													
Abbotsford	1,876	87%	217	941	15	55	126	739	50%	1%	3%	7%	39%
Chilliwack	1,472	63%	267	645	19	34	124	650	44%	1%	2%	8%	44%
New Westminster	733	79%	192	397	15	23	38	260	54%	2%	3%	5%	35%
Port Coquitlam	2,123	83%	169	1,065	13	47	196	802	50%	1%	2%	9%	38%
Surrey	5,964	82%	190	3,299	64	124	339	2,138	55%	1%	2%	6%	36%
Total	12,168	81%	200	6,347	126	283	823	4,589	52%	1%	2%	7%	38%
Interior Region													
Cranbrook	917	48%	230	443	36	58	48	332	48%	4%	6%	5%	36%
Kamloops	1,568	66%	160	932	31	43	70	492	59%	2%	3%	4%	31%
Kelowna	2,088	50%	266	1,205	40	59	95	689	58%	2%	3%	5%	33%
Nelson	659	70%	186	301	13	8	70	267	46%	2%	1%	11%	41%
Penticton	734	56%	303	390	8	30	52	254	53%	1%	4%	7%	35%
Salmon Arm	330	71%	139	204	2	10	16	98	62%	1%	3%	5%	30%
Vernon	1,158	64%	146	585	22	18	78	455	51%	2%	2%	7%	39%
Total	7,454	59%	190	4,060	152	226	429	2,587	54%	2%	3%	6%	35%

Statistical Overview

	Concluded Files	% Files Concluded Early	Median Days to Conclusion	Concluded Prosecutions by File Outcome									
				Guilty	Not Guilty	Other	Peace Bond	Stayed	% Guilty	% Not Guilty	% Other	% Peace Bond	% Stayed
Northern Region													
Dawson Creek	501	60%	270	263	7	21	39	171	52%	1%	4%	8%	34%
Fort Nelson	194	27%	196	99	3	3	15	74	51%	2%	2%	8%	38%
Fort St. John	617	58%	199	317	10	8	62	220	51%	2%	1%	10%	36%
Prince George	2,190	59%	164	1,237	18	50	83	802	56%	1%	2%	4%	37%
Prince Rupert	588	78%	205	285	5	16	46	236	48%	1%	3%	8%	40%
Quesnel	477	68%	148	284	4	6	24	159	60%	1%	1%	5%	33%
Smithers	383	64%	221	233	9	4	22	115	61%	2%	1%	6%	30%
Terrace	487	63%	178	286	15	22	29	135	59%	3%	5%	6%	28%
Vanderhoof	449	54%	224	246	6	4	50	143	55%	1%	1%	11%	32%
Williams Lake	629	53%	238	226	17	11	43	332	36%	3%	2%	7%	53%
Total	6,515	60%	196	3,476	94	145	413	2,387	53%	1%	2%	6%	37%
CASP													
CASP	105	54%	316	62	10	6	-	27	59%	10%	6%	-	26%
Province													
Total	42,531	73%	178	22,703	629	961	2,487	15,751	53%	1%	2%	6%	37%

1. Source: JUSTIN database (extracted July 12, 2023)

2. Vancouver includes Main Street, Downtown Community Court, Vancouver Youth Court, and Vancouver Supreme Court. New Westminster includes New Westminster Provincial Court and the New Westminster Supreme Court. CASP includes Crown Counsel in Special Prosecutions, Commercial Crime, Health Fraud, ICBC Fraud, Workers Compensation, and Welfare Fraud.

3. A concluded prosecution is counted once for each accused person on a file that concluded in the fiscal year. If an accused person was on more than one file that concluded in the fiscal year, they are counted each time.

Indigenous Justice Framework

The history of colonialism, and the displacement, forced assimilation, and systemic discrimination of Indigenous persons have all contributed to their unacceptable overrepresentation in the criminal justice system as accused persons and victims. Working within its mandate to try to address this overrepresentation, the BCPS introduced the Indigenous Justice Framework (IJF) in 2019. The IJF encompasses three pillars: education and training, partnerships and engagement, and policy and practice.

Education and Training

The BCPS recognizes the need to provide educational opportunities for all employees around existing legal requirements, cultural safety, and related issues. To date, approximately 70% of BCPS members have completed Indigenous cultural competency training.

Partnerships and Engagement

The BCPS is committed to engagement and partnership with Indigenous communities to improve the criminal justice system. At the provincial and local level, BCPS members have built connections with and learned from Indigenous persons through training events, cultural celebrations, and discussions regarding Indigenous justice, reconciliation, and the impacts of residential schools.

In addition, the BCPS:

- is regularly involved in National Indigenous Persons Day celebrations, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day observations, and other events;
- supports and participates in the BC Government's Indigenous Youth Internship Program;
- annually recruits Indigenous articulated students;
- actively participates in the BC Indigenous Courts and other related initiatives in the criminal justice system; and,
- has an internal Indigenous Prosecution Service Resource Group, which brings together self-identified Indigenous Crown Counsel and professional staff to network, build relationships, and share advice, best practice tips, and lived experiences to support each other and assist the broader BCPS community.

FY 2022/23 Highlights



Approximately 70% of BCPS members have completed Indigenous cultural competency training. All Crown Counsel must complete the Law Society's Indigenous Intercultural course by the end of 2023.



To date, the BCPS has created or revised 15 policies under the IJF.



The percentage of RCCs approved to court for Indigenous accused has decreased 9% since FY 2018/19.



Indigenous accused referred to alternative measures has increased 16% since FY 2018/19.

Policy and Practice

The BCPS has introduced several new and revised policies aimed at increasing fairness and reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous persons in the criminal justice system. These policies provide guidance on the unique circumstances that should be considered in cases involving Indigenous accused and victims.

Outcomes

The IJF informs every consideration, decision, and action we take in relation to Indigenous persons. The BCPS is developing a baseline for measuring outcomes related to Indigenous persons across time, focussing on RCCs.

Early highlights include:

- a decrease over the last five years in the percentage of Indigenous persons accused of non-violent non-IPV RCCs
- a decrease in the overall percentage of RCCs with an Indigenous accused approved to court between 2018/19 and 2022/23
- a trend over the past five years towards increased use of alternative measures for Indigenous offenders, with a greater likelihood of Indigenous accused being referred for alternative measures

ACCUSED REFERRED TO ALTERNATIVE MEASURES - NON-VIOLENT, NON-IPV FILES					
	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23
Total Indigenous Accused	10,461	10,644	8,448	7,312	6,877
# Indigenous Accused Referred to Alternative Measures	259	274	195	238	202
% Indigenous Accused Referred to Alternative Measures	2.5%	2.6%	2.3%	3.3%	2.9%
Total Non-Indigenous Accused	36,928	38,273	30,508	27,920	26,102
# Non-Indigenous Accused Referred to Alt. Measures	853	838	514	566	590
% Non-Indigenous Accused Referred to Alt. Measures	2.3%	2.2%	1.7%	2.0%	2.3%

ACCUSED APPROVED TO COURT - NON-VIOLENT, NON-IPV FILES					
	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23
Total Indigenous Accused	10,461	10,644	8,448	7,312	6,877
# Indigenous Accused Approved to Court	8,543	8,333	5,920	5,310	5,137
% Indigenous Accused Approved to Court	81.7%	78.3%	70.1%	72.6%	74.7%
Total Non-Indigenous Accused	36,928	38,273	30,508	27,920	26,102
# Non-Indigenous Accused Approved to Court	30,555	30,900	22,695	21,361	20,091
% Non-Indigenous Accused Approved to Court	82.7%	80.7%	74.4%	76.5%	77.0%

Regional Profiles

The BCPS has approximately 525 Crown Counsel and 450 professional staff and managers serving the public in communities across the province. There are five regions which conduct most prosecution functions at the local level: the Northern, Interior, Fraser, Vancouver, and Vancouver Island-Powell River Regions. The Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions (CASP) section, which has a province-wide mandate, has offices in Vancouver and Victoria. Headquarters personnel are located in offices around the province.

Headquarters

Headquarters is responsible for the BCPS business operations, legal operations, policy development, and strategic planning.

Business Operations

The Business Operations team leads the annual budget process, including submissions to Treasury Board and delegation of the annual budget at the regional level, and oversees expenditures. This includes developing and ensuring compliance with administrative policy. Business Operations provides provincial-level facilities management functions, human resources services, business continuity planning, security, and occupational health and safety programs.

Business Operations is also responsible for the development and management of the BCPS technology-based applications and infrastructure, including major transformative initiatives and projects to support BCPS operations. Members of the team also manage data and business intelligence available from applications.

Policy and Justice Issues

The Policy and Justice Issues (PJI) team develops and implements legal policies, practices, protocols, and procedures to support the BCPS in fulfilling its mandate. Central to this is the publicly available [Crown Counsel Policy Manual](#), which provides both general and situation-specific guidance to Crown Counsel in the exercise of their discretion.

Members participate in intra-provincial and inter-provincial working groups and committees to recommend, develop, and implement criminal law reform. Crown Counsel in PJI also advise government on criminal law and related matters.

The PJI team oversees compliance with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), civil litigation involving the BCPS, and responses to correspondence received by the Minister



Victoria Inner Harbour and Provincial Legislature

and Deputy Minister regarding BCPS-related matters. The PJI team is responsible for the strategic management of the BCPS Indigenous Justice Framework.

Legal Operations

The Legal Operations team works with and supports BCPS personnel, in collaboration with justice sector partners, to promote consistency and efficiency in the delivery of criminal justice services. This may include identifying challenges or implementing solutions and initiatives such as the comprehensive bail program or the development or implementation of specialized courtrooms.

BCPS Communications Crown Counsel

The BCPS Communications Crown Counsel responds to media requests for information and prepares media releases and clear statements on the status and outcome of BCPS cases. Communications Counsel briefs the ADAG on cases that may attract increased public scrutiny and liaises with government and police communications professionals with respect to BCPS-related matters.

Vancouver Island-Powell River Region (Region 1)

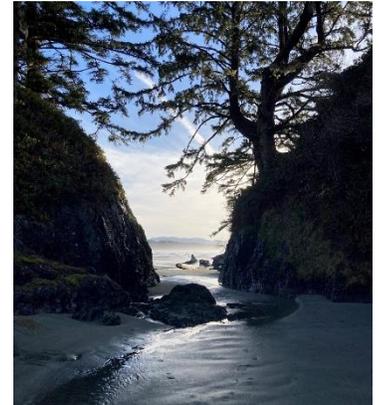
Region 1 encompasses Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, the Outer Islands, and Powell River on the Sunshine Coast. There are 136 dedicated prosecutors and legal administrative professionals who work in nine offices, 14 court locations, and on dedicated teams, and receive RCCs from 30 police agencies and RCMP detachments.

Our personnel work with other justice system partners, community agencies, and Indigenous communities to provide prosecution services that are responsive to the local communities they serve. Region 1 works with local restorative justice agencies, which offer programs aimed at repairing the harm caused by crime and violence by addressing victims' needs, holding offenders meaningfully accountable for their actions, and engaging the community in the justice process. We continue to seek out and develop partnerships with groups dedicated to these goals.

Region 1 participates in the following specialized courts:

- **Duncan First Nations Court:** This court receives referrals of Indigenous offender files, mainly from the Cowichan area. The court focuses on balancing rehabilitation, accountability, and healing, recognizing the unique circumstances of Indigenous offenders within the framework of existing laws.
- **Intimate Partner Violence Courts, Nanaimo, and Duncan:** These courts are staffed by designated Crown Counsel who work with defence counsel and community agencies to engage resources that can assist victims and offenders. The approach seeks to reduce the traumatic impact of intimate partner violence with the goal of improving prospects for rehabilitation and victim safety.
- **Integrated Court, Victoria:** This court is staffed by a designated Crown Counsel who works with justice partners towards the goal of improving access to health, social, and economic services for mentally disordered and drug addicted chronic offenders, improving public safety, and holding offenders accountable for their actions in a timely manner.

The Victoria Crown Counsel office is piloting the new Digital Electronic Management System (DEMS) which will positively transform how the BCPS manages disclosure and file materials. Region 1 will be the first in the province to implement this initiative Region-wide.



Tofino Beach at Sunset.

Did You Know?

- Region 1 acknowledges the lands and people of the over 50 First Nations within our area, comprising three tribal Regions – Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw. This equates to almost 20% of the provincial First Nations population and about 6% of the national total.
- Tofino is the Region's wettest court location with an average annual precipitation of 3270.7 mm.
- Population served: 907,480
- Crown Counsel offices: 9
- FTEs: 125

Vancouver Region (Region 2)

The Vancouver Region has a diverse, multicultural population. It includes western areas of the Lower Mainland and the southern coast. Regional headquarters is in Vancouver.

The largest office in the Vancouver region is the Vancouver Provincial Court at 222 Main Street and the Downtown Community Court at 211 Gore Avenue. Many offenders in downtown Vancouver have health and social problems, including addiction, homelessness, and poverty.

Crown Counsel personnel at Downtown Community Court work together with justice partners, including health and social services, in one location and take a problem-solving approach to address offenders' needs and the underlying causes of criminal behaviour. Offences committed in Burnaby are also prosecuted at 222 Main Street.



Vancouver Law Courts

Did You Know?

- The Richmond RCMP detachment (the third largest in BC) and YVR (the second busiest airport in Canada) are both covered by the Richmond office
- Of British Columbia's six major metropolitan areas, Vancouver has the highest linguistic diversity
- Vancouver's Downtown Community Court is the first community court in Canada
- Population served: 1.5 million
- Crown Counsel offices: 7
- FTEs: 185

A separate Youth Court office is located in the Robson Square Courthouse complex. Crown Counsel personnel based in Vancouver are responsible for prosecutions in the central coast communities of Bella Bella, Bella Coola, and Klemtu, and regularly travel to attend circuit court at these locations. The region's smallest office is in Sechelt and serves the communities of the Sunshine Coast.

In addition to dealing with cases arising in Richmond, the Richmond Crown Counsel Office prosecutes matters arising from the University Endowment Lands, including the University of British Columbia, and Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

The North Vancouver Crown Counsel Office serves a wide range of communities, including West Vancouver, Bowen Island, Lions Bay, Squamish, Bowen Island,

Pemberton, and Mount Currie. It is also home to the North Vancouver Chet wa nexwniw'ta S7ekw'i7tel Indigenous Court which is working to assist in healing and rehabilitation and to reduce recidivism while acknowledging the harm done to victims and recognizing the needs of the local community.

Fraser Region (Region 3)

The Fraser Region is the most populous BCPS region and covers the geographic area from New Westminster on the west to Boston Bar on the east. There are five Crown Counsel Offices located in Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Surrey, Port Coquitlam and New Westminster. Approximately 250 Crown Counsel, paralegals and professional staff in the Region work on roughly 17,000 cases per year. The Fraser Region Crown offices serve a diverse population of almost 1.8 million.



The Fraser and Pitt River

This past year was an exceptionally busy one and featured several exceptionally large and complex prosecutions. This included the case of *R v Coban*, the prosecution of a Dutch citizen charged with offences related to the extortion of a lower mainland teenager. The team of four Crown Counsel, two paralegals and several professional staff conducted an extremely complex jury trial that received international media attention.

In addition to that case, there have been numerous major crime prosecutions in the Region, managed by an extremely talented and committed group of Crown Counsel, paralegals, and professional staff.

The Port Coquitlam Courthouse is presently undergoing renovations in anticipation of the addition of a Supreme Court Registry and Court capacity to serve the Tri-City and Maple Ridge communities. There will now be Supreme Court cases tried in four of the five Fraser Region courthouses.

Did You Know?

- Region 3 works with several RCMP detachments, and the Surrey, Port Moody, Abbotsford, and Delta Municipal Police Services
- The Fraser Region has the longest running Indigenous Court in British Columbia
- Population served: 1.8 million
- Crown Counsel offices: 6
- FTEs: 226

Interior Region (Region 4)

The Interior Region comprises central and southeastern British Columbia, a large and diverse geographic area bounded by the US and Alberta borders, the Fraser canyon and Lillooet to the west and a northern border at Clearwater. Crown Counsel and professional staff in seven offices work with 47 RCMP detachments, 5 community policing outlets, and a municipal police force. Region 4 Crown Counsel and professional staff shepherd cases through 23 court locations, including 8 full-time courthouse registries and 12 circuit courts.

The Regional headquarters is in Kelowna, a growing urban centre with a rich agricultural industry including many vineyards. From Kelowna, lakeside highways wind along to the two other Okanagan Crown Counsel offices in Penticton (to the south) and Vernon (to the north). Due north of Vernon lies Salmon Arm, the Shuswap community that houses Region 4's smallest Crown Counsel office. To the west of Salmon Arm, is Kamloops, Region 4's second largest city and Crown Counsel office, on the banks of the Thompson River. Crossing east into the Columbia Mountains from Salmon Arm are the two Crown Counsel offices in the Kootenays, Cranbrook and Nelson.



A winery in Kelowna



A mountain range in the Interior

Region 4 is the traditional territory of six distinct Indigenous

Did You Know?

- Five of the top 10 ski resorts in Canada are in Region 4.
- The Okanagan Desert (Nk'Mip Desert or Osoyoos Desert) is known as Canada's only desert. It is, however, debated whether the semi-arid shrubland centred around Osoyoos and the heart of wine country meets the definition.
- Population served: 797,668
- Crown Counsel offices: 7
- FTEs: 112

language groups comprised of 40 diverse First Nations communities. The population also includes members the Métis Nation. Region 4 has two active Indigenous courts, in Kamloops and Merritt, and will see a third starting in the fall of 2023 in Lillooet. Region 4 is also the home of one of four Indigenous Justice Centres in the province (also in Merritt) and the head office of the First Nations Justice Council (in West Kelowna).

The Kelowna Integrated Court, established in May 2021, is one of three courts in the province focused on connecting accused persons with services that will help address the factors underlying their criminality. The court has seen dedicated support from the RCMP and community stakeholders.

Northern Region (Region 5)

The Northern Region is approximately 544,000 kilometres in size and covers two-thirds of the province, a vast geographical area that stretches from the Yukon border in the north to 100 Mile House in the south, the Alberta border to the east, and Haida Gwaii to the west. With headquarters in Prince George, the region works in 10 offices, serving 35 court locations and receiving files from 36 RCMP detachments.

This Region has three Indigenous Courts, located in Prince George, Williams Lake, and Hazelton. Local Indigenous Elders participate in crafting rehabilitative sentences that recognize the unique circumstances of Indigenous offenders before the Court, while promoting rehabilitation, healing, and accountability. Working with Indigenous justice and local community partners, personnel in Region 5 actively engage in ongoing development of restorative justice programming throughout the Region/territory.

Most bail hearings in Region 5 continue to be conducted online, which improves access to justice. Accused get timely bail hearings at the location of their arrest, eliminating the need transport prisoners long distances on icy winter roads.

Crown prosecutors and professional staff work with witnesses and victims throughout the Region to ensure they can access justice wherever they live and are provided the support they

need to participate fully in the criminal justice process. Some victims and witnesses are in very remote communities with limited connectivity. Region 5 personnel are dedicated to providing the same high level of service to all justice system participants.

Recently, Northern Crown Counsel and professional staff collaborated with sheriff services to transport new equipment to remote victim service locations, as far as 1100 km away, to make the spaces a more friendly environment for traumatized victims attending court to provide evidence. These improvements were designed to encourage victim's participation in trials and sentencings, and in so doing, increase access to justice.



Totem pole raised in reconciliation at the Daajing Giids RCMP detachment.



Atlin, on the traditional lands of the Taku River Tlingits.

Did You Know?

- Region 5 works with RCMP detachments in Northern British Columbia and the Yukon
- The Northern Circuit (Atlin, Good Hope Lake, and Lower Post) is the longest circuit distance travelled: over 1900 km, and includes travel through the Yukon on the Alaska Hwy
- Many of the remote circuit courts are held in community halls or band offices, with limited or no cellular service or internet connectivity
- Population served: 343,256
- Crown Counsel offices: 10
- FTEs: 115

Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions (CASP)

Serving the entire province, Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions (CASP) has specialized units handling indictable appeals, major case management, proceeds of crime, commercial crime, occupational health and safety, and alleged police misconduct. CASP is also responsible for Legal Resources, Learning and Development (LRLD) and the High-Risk Offenders Identification Program. The various CASP teams work collaboratively with colleagues throughout the BCPS. This year, we highlight the role of three CASP units:



Members of LRLD, the Review Board Crown office and CASP Director at a team-building event

The Review Board Crown Counsel office handles files that are referred to the BC Review Board after a court makes a finding of unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible by reason of mental disorder (NCRMD). The Review Board

Did You Know?

- Four accused under the Review Board's jurisdiction still have the "Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity" designation that was replaced by "NCRMD" in 1991.
- PSU dealt with 214 notices raising constitutional questions in 2022/23. In addition to providing advice and legal education to their colleagues, PSU lawyers were in court 149 days.
- In 2022, counsel from Criminal Appeals argued 73 appeals before the BC Court of Appeal and made four appearances before the Supreme Court of Canada.

determines if an accused is a risk to public safety, and whether they should be in hospital or can be in the community. The Review Board Crown Counsel office consists of two lawyers and two professional staff, supplemented by specially trained Crown Counsel located around the province.

The Organized and Major Crime (OMC) unit provides advice to police and prosecutes cases which typically involve covert investigative techniques, the interception of private communications, and the use of undercover operators or agents. Our OMC prosecutors have expertise in the nature and dynamics of criminal organizations, including gang conflicts within BC, the membership and hierarchy of those gangs, and their ongoing criminal activities.

The Prosecution Support Unit (PSU) is a group of six lawyers and two professional staff. PSU lawyers provide advice to Crown Counsel across the province on constitutional issues,

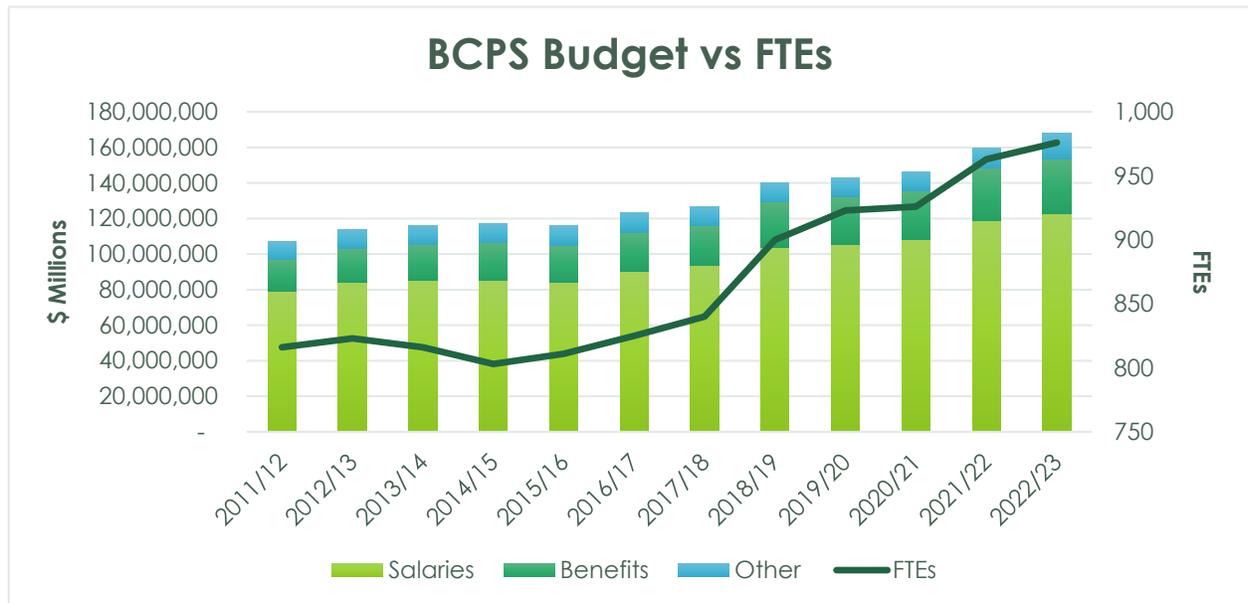
statutory interpretation, and novel or complex legal issues that arise in prosecutions at the pre-trial, trial, or appeal stages. Advice offered ranges from informal phone calls to formal legal opinions and written briefs. PSU lawyers personally litigate constitutional challenges to criminal legislation and other select issues in all BC courts and at the Supreme Court of Canada.

Fiscal Year Financial Overview

The BCPS had a small budget surplus in fiscal 2022/23. As a front-line operation, salary and benefits costs made up 95% of year end expenditures. The BCPS was able to successfully manage its budget, in part due to stringent controls on hiring, employee travel, and other operational expenditures. Some internal savings related to COVID-19 continued, which offset other cost pressures.

Over the past decade, there has been a significant increase in both the BCPS budget and the number of employees. Much of the budget increase is directly attributable to negotiated salary increases for Crown Counsel. Additional funding has been provided for the Digital Evidence and Disclosure Management System and the expansion of Crown Counsel responsibilities for bail. Since fiscal 2011/12 the BCPS budget has increased by 57% and the number of full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) has increased by 20%.

Budget and Expenditures 2022/23	
Estimates Budget	\$167,852,000
Contingencies Vote	\$ -
Total Authorized Budget	\$167,852,000
Expenditures	\$166,817,586
Variance	\$1,034,414



Innovations and Accomplishments

Comprehensive Disclosure Strategy/DEMS

The BCPS accomplished several key milestones on its Comprehensive Disclosure Strategy this fiscal year. We continue to work with police agencies and justice sector participants in British Columbia to modernize the way we exchange information, creating efficiencies in the disclosure process with a view to reducing trial delays. We have completed configuration of the Digital Evidence and Disclosure Management System (DEMS), which includes technical connection to and information exchange with our existing case management system. In collaboration with police, we began an operational pilot of DEMS in March of 2023 and plan to expand it to more users in the fall of 2023. DEMS supports a standardized digital system and uniform formatting as set out in our provincial Memorandum of Understanding on disclosure with police. Once in place DEMS will facilitate the expeditious flow of digital investigative materials from British Columbia police agencies to the BCPS for charge assessment and prosecution and provide a secure digital transfer system to defence counsel and accused persons, enhancing access to justice. Full provincial implementation is planned to begin late in 2023.

Bail

The BCPS has continued to play a critical role in the implementation of virtual bail processes across the province. Further to the launch in Region 5, the daytime virtual bail process has now been expanded into Regions 1 and 4. As well, weekday evening bail operations have now been expanded to all five regions. Crown Counsel now conduct after-hours bail hearings throughout the province on weekends, statutory holidays, and weekday evenings.

In November 2022, the AG issued a directive under the Crown Counsel Act to the BCPS ADAG to identify and implement amendments to the *Bail – Adults* ([BAI 1](#)) policy that could, to the full extent possible under the law, address the risk that repeat violent offenders pose to public safety in British Columbia. The updated policy created in response to the AG's directive requires Crown Counsel to seek the detention of every repeat violent offender charged with an offence against the person or an offence involving a weapon, unless Crown Counsel are satisfied the risk to public safety can be reduced to an acceptable level by bail conditions.

Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (ReVOII)

Following the LePard-Butler report recommendations, and announcement of the BC Government's *Safer Communities Action Plan*, the BCPS worked with justice partners to develop and launch the Repeat Violent Offender Intervention Initiative (ReVOII). Undertaking a national hiring process, the BCPS stood up five regional ReVOII prosecution teams, consisting of dedicated Crown Counsel and professional staff, to provide criminal law advice, and independent prosecutorial support and services in conjunction with 12 community hubs. Each

BCPS ReVOII team has members who live and work in the communities they serve, are familiar with local issues and concerns, and have established working relationships with local police officers and corrections staff.

The work of the ReVOII teams will involve collaboration and improved information sharing with probation officers, correctional supervisors, and police agencies throughout the province, without compromising the constitutional independence of the BCPS or its organizational commitment to addressing overrepresentation of Indigenous persons in the criminal justice system.

Awards and Achievements

- In November 2022, David Simpkin, Lynett Jung, and Grace Oh were appointed to the Provincial Court of British Columbia.
- In March 2023, Administrative Crown Counsel for Bilingual Prosecutions, Jean-Benoit Deschamps, was named co-chair of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Heads of Prosecutions working group on access to justice in both official languages.
- Crown Counsel Anne Baines was honoured with a justice sector AG/PSSG 2022 Excellence Award in the Diversity & Inclusion category.

Forty-five BCPS personnel received Long Service Awards in 2022:

- Riaz Bassari, Caroline Croft Labadie, Ronald Edwards, Terri Irving, Farrah LeCounte, Marilyn MacLean, Nicola Mahaffy, Laura Mayes, Amy Millar, Leah Ann Nicholson, Grace Oh, Stacey Penney, Sharon Preston, Susanne Smith Kerr, Vanessa Soon, Sheila Schmidt, Pamela Sivertson, Debbie Stevenson, and Ariana Ward completed 25 years of service;
- Geoff Baragar KC, Ursula Botz KC, Tracy Buchanan, Trevor Cockfield, Jennifer Fefchak, Victoria Hanna, Curt Johnson, Karen Kowal, John Mark Labossiere, Adrienne Lee, Jane Lowther, Shirley Meldrum, Jacqueline Milacic, Kirstin Murphy, Linda Ostry, Aynsley Spivey, Lori Stevens, Julie Tillmanns, and Russell Zapp completed 30 years of service;
- Linda Boehm, Velma Clifton, Daljeet Dhillon, Jim MacAulay, and Catharine Sloan achieved 35 years of service; and,
- Janis Mort and Tina Pasin passed the impressive milestone of 40 years of service.

BC Prosecution Service Awards

Each year the BCPS presents awards in three categories: Crown Counsel Leadership; Professional Staff Leadership; and Crown Counsel Recognition. Our 2022/23 award recipients were:

Crown Counsel Leadership Awards

- Lexi Pace – Vancouver Island-Powell River Region
- Jenny Dyck – Vancouver Region
- Colleen Stewart – Fraser Region
- Karla Dodds – Interior Region

- Anne Baines – Northern Region
- Jean-Benoit Deschamps – CASP

Professional Staff Leadership Awards

- Kira Kane – Vancouver Island-Powell River Region
- Martha Espinoza – Vancouver Region
- Lisa Lindhout – Fraser Region
- Yukiko Yamada – Interior Region
- Alice Grant – Northern Region
- Dawn Weaver – CASP
- Cathy Wolsey-Lee – Headquarters

Crown Counsel Recognition Awards

- Nick Barber – Vancouver Island-Powell River Region
- Jacinta Lawton – Vancouver Region
- Dorothy Tsui – Fraser Region
- Sarah Firestone – Interior Region
- Denise Payne – Northern Region
- Shannon Gerrie – CASP



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