



## Quality Assurance at the Parole Board of Canada

### BACKGROUND

- The Quality Assurance Framework assists the Board in ensuring its due diligence and accountability in quality decision-making. It provides products that assist in providing feedback to Regional Vice-Chairpersons (RVCs) and Board members, and helps to identify any gaps in policy or training.
- Quality decision-making is achieved by:
  - Quality decision-makers;
  - Including relevant, reliable and persuasive file information;
  - Unbiased decision, adhering to legislation, regulation and policy, respecting procedural safeguards, applying the Risk Assessment Framework, and weighing all available information; and
  - A written decision with sufficient reasons.
- The Quality Assurance Framework and its operationalizing Strategy assist Vice-Chairpersons in their responsibility to ensure quality decision-making of Board members within their region, as per subsection 150(2) of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act.
- The Quality Assurance team within Professional Standards conducts several activities which contribute to the overall Framework at PBC:
  - Case reviews for various situations, including at the request of an RVC and when serious incidents occur in the community regarding an offender on release.
  - Boards of Investigation, which can be conducted independently or in conjunction with Correctional Service Canada (CSC), to review the circumstances of the case and the community incident and determine if there are any systemic or case-specific concerns that must be addressed.
- These activities provide important support to Vice-Chairpersons by providing information pertaining to specific case reviews, identified trends
- Beyond the activities of the Quality Assurance team, there are supporting activities which ensure active monitoring of decisions, and their quality. Such examples are:

- The Appeal Division: A review of decisions to ensure that the law and Board policies are respected, that the rules of fundamental justice are adhered to, and that the Board's decisions are based upon relevant, reliable and persuasive information. The decision are shared with the Board members who rendered the decision, their RVC, as well as the region in question, so follow-ups can be done regarding any issues identified.
- Performance Evaluations: Every year, RVCs must complete a performance evaluation for Board members. This includes an overview of their performance based on established objectives. For this evaluation, the RVC will review of some of the Board member's written decisions, observe and listen to recordings of their hearings. A Learning and Development plan is completed in order to ensure continued improvement and development.
- PBC employees: Public servants are responsible for preparing cases for decisions, as well as finalizing decisions once they have been rendered. They can therefore also play a role in quality assurance by reviewing the decision and ensuring nothing was missed, but without interfering with Board member independence and fettering their discretion.

## Key Messages

- PBC currently has several quality assurance measures in place and actively monitors incidences of offending in the community when offenders are on parole.
- Reviews of decisions as well as wider trends identified in decisions are consistency completed and provide feedback to staff in the region, Policy, Training, and any other relevant party that could benefit from the findings.

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