

Systemic Barriers – Correctional Service of Canada Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Recommendation 1

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) should provide the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report:

(1) outlining the changes to the Custody Rating Scale following its revalidation and the potential impact on all offenders, and specifically women, Indigenous and Black offenders;

(2) presenting the analysis of the reasons for overrides to the initial security classification of Indigenous offenders; and

(3) indicating how the agency will ensure that Canada's social history (including factors identified in the Gladu Report) is properly considered for classification decisions.

Response:

Based on Recommendation 33 of the Auditor General's report on Systemic Barriers, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) committed to undertaking several studies to revalidate the Custody Rating Scale (CRS) for all men, Indigenous men, Indigenous women, and non-Indigenous women. An initial validation of the CRS for Black men was also included.

An expert advisory panel, comprised of four academic specialists external to CSC, was established and were consulted for guidance and advice during the research process. The four academics were from different universities and had diverse research backgrounds. Additional analysis was also undertaken to examine the relationship between the actuarial tool – the CRS – and security classification (see: R-471).

The reports have been published in their entirety online. In addition, a one-page summary (Research at a Glance) was produced for each study that summarized results. The six CRS reports can be downloaded from the Government of Canada Publication database using the following links:

- R-476 - [Revalidation of the custody rating scale for Indigenous women offenders / Laura McKendy, Andrew Woodard & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/476E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca](#)
- R-475 - [Revalidation of the custody rating scale for non-Indigenous women offenders / Andrew Woodard, Laura McKendy & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/475E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca](#)

- R-474 - Validation of the custody rating scale for Black men offenders / Laura McKendy, Andrew Woodard & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/474E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca
- R-473 - Revalidation of the custody rating scale for Indigenous men offenders / Laura McKendy, Andrew Woodard & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/473E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca
- R-472 - Revalidation of the custody rating scale for men offenders / Laura McKendy, Andrew Woodard & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/472E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca
- R-471 - Concordance between the custody rating scale (CRS) and offender security level (OSL) among men offenders / Laura McKendy, Andrew Woodard & Leslie Anne Keown.: PS83-3/471E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca

In addition to consultations with the expert panel, meetings were held with CSC stakeholders to interpret the operational implications of the findings. It was determined that the validation studies revealed potential options for ensuring that security assessment tools could be utilized in a culturally responsive way. This includes considering best practices and exploring the way in which a responsive lens can be incorporated systematically when applying professional judgement during the security classification process.

The CSC Research Branch is undertaking analysis in 2024-2025 to support efforts to enhance the security classification process in support of the principle of cultural responsiveness. This will include analysis of discordant decisions (i.e., when professional judgement was discordant from the designation of the actuarial tool) and the trajectories of such discordant cases. The goal is to generate insights from current practices as well as to discern how practices can be enhanced and consistency in approaches be supported.

Research also remains underway externally under a Memorandum of Understanding between CSC and the University of Regina. This research is examining culturally-informed and responsive decision-making, with a particular focus on security classification with respect to Indigenous offenders. Additionally, the Research Branch, in partnership with the Indigenous Initiatives Directorate (IID), has created an Indigenous Research Advisory Circle to provide guidance on the integration of Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, teachings, values, oral traditions, and worldviews, as well as how to best engage Indigenous peoples and community organizations in CSC Research initiatives.

These initiatives reflect ongoing efforts of the Research Branch to provide evidence-based knowledge to enhance CSC operational decision-making.

Responses to recommendation 1(2) and 1(3) will be provided in June 2024.