



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

January 13, 2015

Overcrowded prisons and lack of programs creating risks for inmates and staff

VICTORIA - The Auditor General of British Columbia, Carol Bellringer, has published her report, [An Audit of the Adult Custody Division's Correctional Facilities and Programs](http://www.bcauditor.com/pubs) (www.bcauditor.com/pubs) which assessed whether the Adult Custody Division is planning for and providing the facilities and programs it needs to meet its mandate.

Correctional centres in British Columbia are over capacity, operating at a 140% capacity rate on average, with individual centres ranging from 107% to 177%. Prison overcrowding increases risks to both inmates and staff, and contributes to rising tension and the potential for conflicts. Although the Adult Custody Division does regular inspections, risk assessments, monitoring, and critical incident reviews, the audit found that it cannot adequately demonstrate whether operating its prisons at these capacity levels provides for safe custody.

The audit also found that inmates are not getting timely access to the programs that they need to reduce their risk of re-offending once they are released. This is similar to findings in the Office's 2011 report, [Effectiveness of Community Corrections](#). Re-offending has a direct cost to taxpayers and poses safety risks to a community.

"For the Adult Custody Division to achieve its mission of providing safe, secure custody and reduce the risk of re-offending, it needs to map out what it wants to achieve and how it will get there," said Ms. Bellringer. "It's about thinking more strategically and making decisions that are fully informed by evidence."

This report contains eight recommendations to assist the Adult Custody Division in planning for, and providing, the facilities and programs it needs to meet its mission.

Bellringer noted, "This report examined only one part of the criminal justice system. There are many factors that contribute to custody pressures, criminal behaviour and re-offending. Improving outcomes requires strategies and approaches that consider the broader criminal justice system."

The report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website at [An Audit of the Adult Custody Division's Correctional Facilities and Programs](http://www.bcauditor.com/pubs) (www.bcauditor.com/pubs). Auditor General Carol Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a teleconference.

Teleconference Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Time: 11 a.m. (Pacific Time)

Dial-in Information:



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