


Progress Monitoring Committee

**Annual Report
(2023-24)**

The background of the page is a dark blue gradient. It features several abstract, flowing lines in various shades of blue and white. A prominent white line curves from the bottom left towards the top right. Other lines in lighter blue and white are scattered across the lower half of the page, creating a sense of movement and depth.



We Remember

Tom Bagley

Kristen Beaton and an unborn child

Greg and Jamie Blair

Joy Bond and Peter Bond

Lillian Campbell

Corrie Ellison

Gina Goulet

Dawn and Frank Gulenchyn

Alanna Jenkins and Sean McLeod

Lisa McCully

Heather O'Brien

Jolene Oliver, Aaron Tuck, and Emily Tuck

Constable Heidi Stevenson

E. Joanne Thomas and John Zahl

Joey Webber

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Mental Health and Wellness

Reading about distressing or emotionally overwhelming tragedies that have occurred may be difficult. As you read this document, please make sure to keep mental health and wellness in mind. If you or someone you know needs support, please check-in with your local health authority or the [Canadian Mental Health Association](https://cmha.ca) at <https://cmha.ca> to find resources in your area. Resources are also available at: <https://novascotia.ca/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>.

Executive Summary

In April 2020, the lives of countless people were forever changed in a devastating mass casualty that affected communities in Nova Scotia, Canada, the United States and beyond. The mass casualty created profound grief to those most impacted and today we continue to remember the far-reaching effects of this tragedy.

In response, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia created the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC), which examined the mass casualty events. On March 30, 2023, the MCC issued its Final Report, which set out Recommendations that could help prevent and respond to similar incidents in the future.

Following this, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia jointly established the Progress Monitoring Committee (PMC) in 2023. The purpose of the PMC is to monitor and periodically report on progress in response to the MCC Final Report. The PMC plays a critical monitoring role and supports engagement and transparency as the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and others work collectively to advance this vital work.

Since its inception in September 2023, the PMC has achieved many milestones, including establishing a framework for monitoring the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP, publishing their Initial Six-Month Update, and conducting quarterly meetings to discuss and evaluate the Governments' progress to date. These are important pieces that have allowed the PMC to hold the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, along with the RCMP, accountable for their progress in addressing the important Recommendations of the MCC and ensuring transparency to the public.

In June 2024, the PMC welcomed its new Chair, the Honourable Myra Freeman, who will continue the work started by the Founding Chair for the remainder of the PMC's mandate. Following the conclusion of two family members' one-year terms, three new family members' terms started in September 2024. The transition of these new voices to the Committee will benefit the PMC in fulfilling its mandate and offer new perspectives in its monitoring activities.

The establishment of the Monitoring Plan was key, as it is the framework for which the Committee uses to monitor the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP's progress in addressing the Recommendations in the MCC Final Report. The Recommendations made by the MCC are complex and have inter-connecting themes, some of which require multiple actions or responses from across Canadian society.

As such, the PMC viewed these Recommendations in a holistic, integrated manner, and established a framework to address these complexities and inter-connectedness. In order to encourage a broad, complete and integrated approach, rather than a “box-checking” exercise, the PMC grouped the MCC Recommendations into themes and sub-themes early in its mandate.

Under the Monitoring Plan, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP report to the PMC on a quarterly basis on actions and initiatives aligned with the themes and sub-themes that they have undertaken in response to the MCC Final Report. The PMC then deliberates to determine a collective rating on the progress reported. The collective rating is reached by consensus, where every opinion matters, and all PMC members support the decision.

This thematic approach has allowed the PMC to view the Recommendations, and subsequent work by the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP through the lens of their inter-dependencies, and how the various Recommendations may impact one another. This has provided the PMC with a better understanding of where progress has been made and where improvement is still needed. This has also supported the collaboration between the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP, which is important to advancing their work to address the Recommendations of the MCC Final Report.

The Monitoring Plan uses a rating system, as follows:

- **Complete**
- **On Track**
- **Initiated**
- **No Expectation of Material Progress at this Time**

The Monitoring Plan is discussed in greater detail on [page 14](#).

Since finalizing the Monitoring Plan in May 2024, the PMC has used this approach to monitor and assess progress under three themes: Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence, Access to Firearms, and Policing Reform. A summary of progress ratings is as follows:

DATE	THEME / SUB-THEME	PRESENTER	RATING
June 11, 2024	Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence / Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention	Women and Gender Equality Canada <i>(Government of Canada)</i>	Initiated
June 11, 2024	Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence / Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention	Nova Scotia Status of Women Office <i>(Government of Nova Scotia)</i>	Initiated
September 17, 2024	Access to Firearms	Public Safety Canada <i>(Government of Canada)</i>	Solidly Initiated, with many items on track
September 17, 2024	Policing Reform / Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT)	Serious Incident Response Team <i>(Nova Scotia)</i>	Largely Complete, with a few unfinished items on track

Progress monitoring in the year since the PMC was established is discussed further on [page 17](#) of this Report. Progress under additional thematic areas will be assessed throughout the remainder of the PMC’s mandate, until August 31, 2026, and will continue to be reported publicly in subsequent Annual Reports.

Message from the Chair of the Progress Monitoring Committee

On behalf of the Progress Monitoring Committee (PMC), I am pleased to share the PMC's First Annual Report. This Report summarizes the first year of the PMC's mandate from September 2023 to September 2024.

Since my appointment as Chair in June 2024, I continue to be impressed with the expertise and dedication of this Committee. This past year has been a testament to its resilience and commitment to holding the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) accountable for responding to the Mass Casualty Commission's (MCC) Final Report – Turning the Tide Together.

While there is much to be done, I am encouraged by the continued collaboration and transparency of the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP as they work towards the transformative change called for in the MCC Final Report. Their ongoing work relating to crime prevention, justice, emergency management, and gender-based violence is crucial to advancing the MCC findings.

As we move into our second year, I look forward to supporting the PMC in fulfilling its mandate to monitor and publicly report on the initiatives that Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP are undertaking in response to the MCC Final Report.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to all PMC members, past, current, and future, for your hard work and dedication. Together, we have achieved significant milestones, and I am confident, that going forward, we will maintain our efforts as we continue to report to the public on progress made.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Myra A. Freeman, CM, ONS, MSM, CD

Introduction

This Report builds on the PMC's Initial Six-Month Update, and summarizes the first year of the Committee's mandate (September 2023 to September 2024) to monitor and periodically report on the initiatives that the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia are undertaking in response to the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC) Public Inquiry Final Report [Turning the Tide Together](#). As the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is part of the Government of Canada, the PMC also monitors and reports on the initiatives that the RCMP is taking in response to the MCC Final Report.

The PMC was jointly established in 2023 by the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia to provide a mechanism for monitoring, reporting on, creating mutual accountability, and exchanging knowledge and information.

[Membership](#) of the PMC includes representatives from:

- Those most impacted, meaning the families of the deceased and/or survivors;
- Impacted communities;
- All levels of government;
- Policing organizations;
- Gender-based violence advocacy and support sectors;
- Indigenous community organizations; and
- African Canadian community organizations.

To ensure participation of those most impacted and who expressed an interest in participating, two family members were appointed to the PMC in its first year, three family members in its second year, and two family members in the final year of its mandate. Family member appointees serve a one-year term, which begins every September.

Mass Casualty Commission Final Report Recommendations

The MCC was created to examine the events of April 18-19, 2020, in Nova Scotia that claimed the lives of 22 people and an unborn child. [Turning the Tide Together \(https://masscasualtycommission.ca/final-report/\)](https://masscasualtycommission.ca/final-report/) is the Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC Final Report). The MCC Final Report contains 130 Recommendations relating to violence, improved critical incident response, and increased community safety and well-being, that call for transformative change, to better prevent and respond to critical incidents and mass casualty events in the future, and make Canadian communities safer.

Year One: Focus and Key Activities

Below is a summary of the PMC's highlights achieved to date:

2023 Highlights

May 31, 2023: In response to Recommendation I.1 (b), [former justice, Linda Lee Oland was appointed as Founding Chair of the PMC](#) for a one-year term. Ms. Oland's work began with identifying a list of proposed PMC Members to bring forward to both governments. To aid in identifying prospective committee members, Ms. Oland had discussions with the following groups

- o Those most impacted, meaning the families of the deceased and/or survivors;
- o Impacted communities;
- o All levels of government;
- o Policing associations;
- o Gender-based violence advocacy and support sectors;
- o Indigenous community organizations;
- o African Canadian community organizations; and
- o Others implicated in the MCC Final Report.

July 31, 2023: The Founding Chair, along with the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, developed and announced the [PMC's Terms of Reference](#) (TOR) to guide the work of the Committee.

September 1, 2023: The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, the federal Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Nova Scotia Attorney General and Minister of Justice, the Honourable Brad Johns, [announced the appointments of the members of the PMC](#). Simultaneously, the PMC launched its [website](#).

September 26-27, 2023: The PMC held its inaugural meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia

December 11-12, 2023: The PMC held its second meeting in Truro, Nova Scotia.

2024 Highlights

- **March 4-5, 2024:** The PMC held its third meeting in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.
- **April 12, 2024:** The PMC published its Monitoring Plan – the framework to monitor the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP’s progress in addressing the MCC Report’s Recommendations: [PMC Monitoring Plan: A Thematic Approach](#)
- **May 1, 2024:** The PMC released its [Initial Six-Month Update](#), summarizing the first six months of the Committee’s work. In line with the PMC’s TOR, the Committee will post periodic updates to the public, no less than every six months.
- **June 1, 2024:** [The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia announced the appointment of the Honourable Myra A. Freeman, CM, ONS, MSM, CD](#) former Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia and member of the Order of Canada, as Chair of the PMC. Ms. Freeman will serve in this role until the end of the Committee’s mandate in 2026.
- **June 10-11, 2024:** The PMC held its fourth meeting in Ottawa, Ontario.
- **September 1, 2024:** Three new family member representatives began their one-year term, following the conclusion of the two, first-year family members’ terms that ended on August 31, 2024. Also, the Government of Nova Scotia replaced their representative on the PMC due to organizational changes.
- **September 16-17, 2024:** The PMC held its fifth meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

PMC Meetings

To date, the PMC has held five, two-day meetings. The initial three PMC meetings focused on developing the Committee's Monitoring Plan, the framework that the PMC uses to monitor and assess the initiatives that the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP are undertaking in response to the MCC Final Report.

The only presentations provided at the inaugural September 2023 meeting were the general updates from the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP. The remainder of that meeting was spent on the PMC Monitoring Plan and the role of the PMC.

During the December 2023 and March 2024 meetings, the PMC received presentations about several important initiatives in response to the MCC Final Report's Recommendations from the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP.

However, since these presentations were given prior to the PMC's finalized Monitoring Plan, the progress was not assessed or rated at that time. The PMC looks forward to revisiting these themes and assessing progress now that the Monitoring Plan has been established.

Summaries of these presentations are below, with more detailed overviews within the Meeting Summaries available on the PMC Website.

Policing and Emergency Management during an Emergency Situation: Public Safety Canada presented the work of the federal government relating to policing and emergency management. Both are shared areas of responsibility and interest for federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) governments.

Nova Scotia's Department of Justice and Emergency Management Office described how policing is organized within the Province of Nova Scotia and outlined agencies and programs that work together in critical incident or emergency situations, including 911 public safety answering points, call-taking and dispatch.

Grief, Bereavement and Mental Wellness: The Public Health Agency of Canada provided an overview on the role of the Government of Canada in supporting health and wellbeing through leadership, collaboration, funding, support and awareness.

Nova Scotia's Office of Addictions and Mental Health provided an overview of Nova Scotia's work under the sub-theme of Grief, Bereavement and Mental Wellness, on actions taken to improve access to healthcare including mental health and wellbeing.

Alert Ready: The RCMP presented on public alerting in the RCMP, including how they have improved public alerting to date, what they are working towards, and the challenges of a national public alerting system.

RCMP Recruitment: The RCMP presented on current recruitment strategies, how changes in policing are impacting the RCMP's target candidates and their national recruitment process, as well as targeted initiatives to increase the diversity of officers to better reflect the communities they serve.

With its Monitoring Plan in place, the PMC was able to shift the focus of its next two meetings to begin the important work of monitoring and reporting on the progress of initiatives by the Government of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, to respond to the MCC Final Report Recommendations.

Meeting Structure

In their **general updates** to the PMC, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, report broadly on actions and initiatives to respond to the MCC Final Report. These general updates are not for assessment or rating. These presentations are accompanied by documents that provide detailed information about implementation efforts. Much of this information is publicly available through the following resources:

- The Government of Canada's [Response to the Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission](#) outlines the work that has been done where the federal government can lead or act, as well as the work the Government of Canada will be undertaking in the months and years ahead.
- [Nova Scotia's Commitment to Action](#): a webpage where the Government of Nova Scotia shares information on implementation efforts within the Province.
- [The RCMP Progress Hub](#): a dedicated page where the RCMP publish a broad range of context related to their implementation efforts publicly, including tracking progress on action items and position papers.

During the **Monitoring and Assessment Sessions**, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, report on progress under one of the PMC's Monitoring Plan Thematic Areas. Themes and Presenters are determined in advance by the PMC's Chair with input from PMC Members and the progress reported is for assessment and rating. Where appropriate, and based on the complexities and interjurisdictional nature of certain themes, the PMC may request a joint presentation either by two levels of Government, or one Government and the RCMP. Throughout, members are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification through a two-way dialogue. Following the detailed presentation, PMC members discuss the progress reported. Based on this, the PMC deliberates and determines a collective rating. The collective rating is reached by consensus, where every opinion matters, and all PMC members support the decision.

Some meetings have also included detailed presentations on specific topics intended for information only. While not for assessment or rating, these presentations have provided important context in support of the Committee's mandate. Executive summaries of all previous meetings and Committee membership can be found [online](#).

Government Support

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia cost share the administration of the PMC, including coordination and support delivered by a joint Secretariat. Additionally, as part of its [Response to the MCC Final Report](#), the Government of Canada is providing \$3.5 million over three years to support the work of the PMC.

PMC’s Monitoring Plan: A Thematic Approach

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP have committed to transparency and accountability in addressing the MCC Report’s Recommendations. The PMC Monitoring Plan is the framework that the PMC uses to monitor the progress of the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP on initiatives they are undertaking in response to the MCC Final Report’s Recommendations.

In accordance with its [Terms of Reference](#), the PMC has:

1. Shared the PMC Monitoring Plan, before its completion, with Canada and Nova Scotia officials for consultation;
2. Submitted the Plan to the federal Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs and Nova Scotia’s Attorney General and Minister of Justice for their awareness; and
3. Posted the Plan, progress and updates to the PMC website.

PMC Monitoring Approach

The MCC Final Report Recommendations, findings and implementation suggestions are cross-cutting, including various jurisdictions and mandates. With this in mind, rather than monitoring progress by individual Recommendations, the PMC has adopted a thematic approach. Related MCC Recommendations are grouped under each theme.

The table below outlines the thematic areas of the PMC Monitoring Plan.

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Well-Being • Emergency Management Readiness
PUBLIC HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim Supports • Grief, Bereavement and Mental Wellness • Professional Regulatory Oversight
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-Based Violence Response • Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention
ACCESS TO FIREARMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sub-theme

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
POLICING REFORM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Royal Canadian Mounted Police Governance • Provincial Policing • Serious Incident Response Team • Interoperability and Critical Incident Response • Broader Policing Reform

Additional Considerations

In monitoring the progress of the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, the PMC will also consider the following in their assessment and rating, as relevant:

1. Engagement;
2. Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) engagement and coordination;
3. Collaboration and coordinated approaches to implementation; and
4. Trauma-informed approaches, as appropriate, including being inclusive of the perspectives and needs of diverse, disadvantaged, and marginalized communities.

Timelines

The PMC recognizes that implementing the MCC’s vision for society-wide systemic changes will require leadership, collaboration, and partnership across various levels of Government, between Government departments, service providers, policing agencies, and community-based organizations, and that implementation will take time to complete.

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP will share timelines of their initiatives and actions for additional context, so that the PMC has a full understanding of progress and complexity. Timelines are described below:

- 1. Immediate:** underway or near completion
- 2. Short-term:** target completion by March 2025
- 3. Medium-term:** target completion by March 2027
- 4. Long-term:** target completion by April 2027+

Rating Outline

The PMC provides a collective rating on progress made by the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, based on the options described below:

RATING	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Completed	Action/initiative has been completed and meets the spirit and intent of MCC Report's recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation or regulations are in force. • A policy/ operational change has been demonstrably implemented. • Programming has rolled out and is being accessed by community members. • Training has been completed. • Awareness campaigns have concluded.
On Track	Progress continues to be made and is having measurable impact. Action/initiative meets the spirit and intent of MCC Report's recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation/ regulations have been prepared and are in the process of being made law. • A new/ changed policy is being implemented. • Operational change is underway • Funding or programming has been disbursed to service providers. • Comprehensive community engagement is underway on an issue/ recommendation. • A social media campaign or other type of awareness activity is underway • Training has become available to service providers or other stakeholders.
Initiated	The first steps towards implementation have been taken. The impact of actions taken is not yet quantifiable/ measurable. Requires further attention to meet the spirit and intent of the MCC Report's recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government has identified/ is assessing options for a new policy or program. • Funding has been announced but is not disbursed yet. • Engagement planning is underway - stakeholders have been identified. • Procurement is underway or a contractor has been retained. • A plan for implementation has been made.
No expectation of material progress at this time	Rationale to be provided by the reporting party for this decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant barrier to implementation has been identified. • Implementation is very complex and/ or involves multiple parties, which is causing delays in progress.

Year One: Monitoring Progress

The PMC's assessments of progress reflect the moment in time when initiatives were reported to the Committee. It is important to remember that the point in time assessments cannot speak to work that may have continued since the meeting, or further progress which may have been made since the meeting occurred.

The PMC wishes to emphasize that even where measurable progress may take time, the Committee has seen and understands that work is underway. Some of the longer-term Recommendations and initiatives, including systemic changes, will likely not be complete until after the PMC's mandate is over. Furthermore, many of the Recommendations are ambitious and interrelated, with complex jurisdictional challenges. Overall, the PMC is encouraged about the ongoing progress.

Furthermore, a current lack of assessment and rating does not mean that significant efforts are not underway, or that progress has not been made. Unassessed progress, including work underway by the RCMP, will be the subject of monitoring sessions at future meetings.


Efforts to Date

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, have undertaken a considerable amount of work to respond to the MCC Final Report since the Report's release and since the establishment of the PMC. For a detailed overview of progress for the time period of September 2023 to March 2024, please refer to the PMC's [Initial Six-Month Update](#).

Since the release of the Initial Six-Month Update, the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, have continued to lead a collaborative effort in coordinating actions that respond to the MCC Final Report.

The Government of Canada

The Government of Canada provides national leadership and is committed to better preventing and responding to critical incidents and mass casualty events to make Canadian communities safer. As such, it has established a robust governance structure to facilitate collaboration and information-sharing between federal, provincial, territorial governments and other partners to support the implementation of a whole-of-society approach for responding to the MCC Final Report. Public Safety Canada is leading federal coordination by bringing together key federal partners who are working toward the transformative change called for in the MCC Final Report. Senior federal officials meet regularly to ensure ongoing federal coordination and continued provincial and territorial engagement.



The Government of Canada's Response to the Final Report of the MCC outlines the work that has been done where the federal government can lead or act, as well as work that will be undertaken in the months and years ahead. It includes new investments totaling \$76.7 million over the next five years, as well as \$10.2 million annually thereafter to support community safety and policing. The Government of Canada will take every available opportunity to engage with Canadians on these issues, consistent with the MCC's calls for transparency and accountability.

The Government of Nova Scotia

The Government of Nova Scotia continues to work collaboratively to respond to the MCC Final Report, including regular meetings of senior leadership from across Government. The Province has reported publicly and to the PMC that implementation is moving forward across all themes, with a focus on: community safety and well-being, including Victim Services for those impacted; grief, bereavement and wellness resources; policing operations, including launching a comprehensive review of the policing structure in Nova Scotia; and Gender-Based Violence prevention.

The Province has worked with local partners and residents to ensure the community's interests are represented, from planning and development to implementation and evaluation. The lived experience of families and community members and their ongoing feedback continues to inform the Government of Nova Scotia's actions and approach.

The RCMP

The RCMP has continued to make progress beyond the updates provided in the six-month update report, including but not limited to: the national roll out of Alert Ready online training available to all RCMP personnel; the drafting of a new Intimate Partner Violence Policy that specifically references trauma-informed approaches and defines coercive control; and improvements to its Operational Communication Centres (OCC) to include new playback software for each OCC operator.

The RCMP has also made advancements in its overall transparency effort by launching a public facing Progress Hub, where it is publishing all information related to MCC implementation, from a tracking site that allows the public to follow progress on specific actions, to detailed position notes that details the RCMP's stance and approach to specific recommendations.

Progress Monitoring Sessions

Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence

Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) and Nova Scotia’s Status of Women Office provided a joint presentation on progress under the theme of Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. Actions associated with each presenter were assessed and rated separately as outlined below.

First Assessment: National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence

Theme	Sub-theme	Related MCC Recommendations
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE	Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention	V.7 - Countering victim blaming and hyper-responsibilization of Women survivors V.8 - Women-centric risk assessments V.9 - Creating safe spaces to report violence V.10 - Replacement of mandatory arrest and prosecutorial discretion to lay criminal charges V.11 - External accountability mechanism for policing responses to intimate partner violence V.12 - Effective approaches to addressing coercive control as a form of gender-based intimate partner and family violence V.13 - Epidemic-level funding for GBV prevention and interventions V.14 - Mobilizing a society-wide response V.15 - Women-centered strategies and actions V.16 - Putting Women’s safety first C.32 - Promoting and supporting healthy masculinities

Presenters: Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), Government of Canada

Rating: The PMC has rated the overall progress of initiatives and actions by WAGE on the National Action Plan as **initiated**.

Presentation Summary: On June 11, 2024, the PMC heard from WAGE regarding the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. The presentation described progress under the sub-theme of Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention, within the Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence theme.

WAGE discussed the intersectionality of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and its significant cost, both economically and personally to women and girls. The Presenter shared information about the actions completed and underway relating to the relevant MCC Recommendations, including:

- Federal, Provincial, Territorial involvement in developing the National Action Plan and ensuring it be flexible enough to incorporate regional differences and priorities;
- The National Action Plan's rigorous reporting requirements and efforts to secure funding through bilateral agreements – a crucial first step that involved FPT collaboration and commitment to ending Gender-Based Violence;
- The complexities and intersectionality of Gender-Based Violence and a national summary of data relating to Gender-Based Violence in Canada;
- The Five Pillars of the National Action Plan, noting the use of trauma-informed approaches and the three areas of the plan's budget (prevention approaches, under-served populations, and stabilizing the Gender-Based Violence sector to ensure they can deliver the supports); and
- A table of federal senior officials that meets monthly to discuss and advance implementation of the National Action Plan.

Discussion Summary: The PMC appreciates the work that has been done regarding the National Action Plan. The PMC feels that overall, steps have been taken to begin the important work of addressing the changes called for in the related recommendations, but that more work needs to be done to have a significant impact in communities.

PMC members were pleased with the extensive Federal-Provincial-Territorial engagement and coordination led by WAGE occurring across the country. Members value the foundational work completed to develop the action plan, however, feel that additional and ongoing financial investments are needed by the Government of Canada before the impact of actions is seen in communities, especially in rural areas. For example, funding for community programs is needed to create positive change in the field.

Members discussed a gap of understanding between the federal government's roles and levers (making laws and policies, and funding initiatives) and provincial governments' roles and levers (as the primary implementation entities). The PMC felt that it needed to hear more detailed information regarding the actions taken to address the MCC recommendations.

Second Assessment: Additional Actions Taken by the Province of Nova Scotia

Theme	Sub-theme	MCC Recommendations
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE	Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention	V.7 - Countering victim blaming and hyper-responsibilisation of Women survivors V.8 - Women-centric risk assessments V.9 - Creating safe spaces to report violence V.10 - Replacement of mandatory arrest and prosecutorial discretion to lay criminal charges V.11 - External accountability mechanism for policing responses to intimate partner violence V.12 - Effective approaches to addressing coercive control as a form of gender-based intimate partner and family violence V.13 - Epidemic-level funding for GBV prevention and interventions V.14 - Mobilizing a society-wide response V.15 - Women-centered strategies and actions V.16 - Putting Women’s safety first C.32 - Promoting and supporting healthy masculinities

Presenters: Nova Scotia Status of Women Office, Government of Nova Scotia

Rating: The PMC rated the overall progress of actions by the Nova Scotia Status of Women Office as **initiated**.

Presentation Summary: On June 11, 2024, the Nova Scotia Status of Women Office presented additional provincial actions relating to the theme of Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. The presentation described progress to under the sub-theme of Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention, within the Gender-Based Violence theme.

Nova Scotia Status of Women Office discussed actions completed and underway relating to the MCC Recommendations, including:

- Whole-of-society and women-centred approaches to Gender-Based Violence that are trauma-led and in communities;
- The Province’s work to stabilize the sector, such as investments for transition houses and women’s centres, funding for micro-grants and outreach in rural areas, Indigenous and other funding streams in rural communities, and improved access to legal advice;
- The Province’s work to support healthy masculinities with programs like the school-based [GuysWork](#);
- How the Province has aligned its approach with [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), the MCC Final Report, and other Inquiry Recommendations;

- Provincial work to shift to a more responsive justice system, including policy frameworks and directives, interdepartmental efforts, and training available for front-line workers;
- Issues relating to women in rural and remote regions;
- Actions to respond to violence such as improving cell coverage and internet connectivity; and
- The Nova Scotia Status of Women Office's approach to Year 1 reporting on the National Action Plan to further address issues.

Discussion Summary: The PMC was pleased to hear about the work done by the Province of Nova Scotia to implement the MCC Recommendations under the sub-theme of Gender-Based Violence Services and Prevention. The PMC feels that overall, steps have been taken to begin the important work of addressing the changes called for in the MCC Final Report.

In general, while PMC members were pleased with the actions completed and underway and feel that a good foundation has been laid, more work is needed. For example, members felt the level of engagement conducted was good, however, more engagement is necessary, particularly in rural areas. The PMC also felt that there was a lack of detail relating to trauma-informed approaches, and more work needs to be done to create safe spaces to report in communities. Members reiterated the considerable time it will take for societal shifts to happen.

Access to Firearms

Theme	Sub-theme	MCC Recommendations
ACCESS TO FIREARMS	No sub-theme	<p>C.21 - Reducing Gun Lethality</p> <p>C.22 - Revocation of Firearms Licenses for Conviction of Gender-based, Intimate Partner, or Family Violence</p> <p>C.24 - Interoperability of Law Enforcement Agencies Engaged in Firearms Control at the Canada-United States Border</p> <p>C.25 - Effective, Consistent, and Accountable Enforcement of Firearms Regulations</p> <p>C.26 - Public Health Approach to Gun Safety</p>

Presenter: Public Safety Canada, Government of Canada

Ratings: The PMC has rated the overall progress of actions by Public Safety Canada, Government of Canada as **solidly initiated, with many items on track**.

Presentation Summary: On, September 17, 2024, the PMC heard a presentation from Public Safety Canada on progress under the theme of Access to Firearms. The Presenter noted that some actions began prior to the MCC Final Report release, but are responsive to the Recommendations, while others are ongoing or upcoming.

Public Safety Canada shared detailed information on various actions completed and underway, including:

- The passage of Bill C-21 (*An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments*) in December 2023, along with amendments to the *Firearms Act* and *Criminal Code*;
- New licence requirements for firearms owners;
- Prohibition of certain new firearms (for example, assault-style firearms which were prohibited in May 2020 following the mass casualty event);
- Enhancement of law enforcement investigative authorities;
- Increased penalties for firearms smuggling and trafficking; and
- Harm reduction measures, including “Red Flag” laws, which bring forth new licence revocation provisions and eligibility requirements.

The presentation noted that a trauma-informed approach informed the work with regards to firearms.

Public Safety Canada discussed:

- Canada's prohibition of approximately 2,000 models and variants of assault-style firearms;
- The development of the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program (a buyback program to compensate those eligible in possession of prohibited firearms);
- Investments in Border and Law Enforcement and the Canadian Firearms Program to bolster the capacity of the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to prevent firearms from entering the illicit market (intelligence, procurement of equipment and infrastructure, development and training).

The Presenter highlighted the considerable federal funding to support actions to address the MCC Recommendations, including:

- Investments to launch a national public awareness campaign to enhance data collection and reporting, to foster a greater understanding of firearm laws, regulations, policies, and realities of firearm-related harm;
- Further investments mentioned include \$390M in funding through the Initiative to Take Action Against Gun and Gang Violence until 2027-28, with
 - \$8.3M in ongoing funding for the RCMP
 - \$7.5M in ongoing funding for CBSA (2025-2026 onwards)
- \$7.5M in funding to modernize the RCMP's telephone/case management systems; and
- \$250M in funding through the Building Safer Communities Fund.

Specific funding provided to Nova Scotia was also detailed in the presentation, including:

- \$4.7M as part of the Gun and Gang Violence Action Fund through the Initiative To Take Action Against Gun and Gang Violence, which the province used to develop a strategy to address gun and gang violence, involving:
 - a focus on prevention and intervention initiatives
 - increasing law enforcement capacity and prosecution activities
 - intelligence-gathering and sharing
 - specialized training programs for law enforcement and
 - developing and enhancing data systems to collect and report on results)
- A total of \$13.5M was provided to Nova Scotia between 2018 and 2028 to support law enforcement and organizations; and

- Approximately \$3.3 million through the Building Safer Communities Fund to the Halifax Regional Municipality for 2023 to 2026.

The presentation highlighted stakeholder engagement (past and future plans), to inform the implementation of former Bill C-21, to increase awareness and to foster collaboration. The Presenter also spoke to extensive Federal-Provincial-Territorial engagement and coordination, through various FPT Working Groups and Tables, as well as international cooperation between Canada and the United States of America.

Discussion Summary: PMC members felt that a large amount of work under the Access to Firearms theme is underway and that a good foundation has been established. Members felt that progress is being made and were encouraged to see the direction where things are moving. The PMC noted that the recommendations concerning access to firearms are complex, systemic and challenging. It takes time to see the impact of the actions described in this presentation and in the case of this theme there is significant disagreement within larger society about the best way forward.

Policing Reform

Theme	Sub-theme	MCC Recommendations
POLICING REFORM	Serious Incident Response Team	<p>P.27 - Serious Incident Response Team Investigators and Specialized Services</p> <p>P.28 - Serious Incident Response Team Control of Crime Scenes and Evidence</p> <p>P.30 - Providing Support to Serious Incident Response Team Witnesses</p> <p>P.31 - RCMP Liaison with the Serious Incident Response Team</p> <p>P.32 - Serious Incident Response Team Protocol for Information Exchange with Police Agencies</p> <p>P.33 - Expert Witness Retained by The Serious Incident Response Team</p> <p>P.34 - Serious Incident Response Team Resources</p> <p>P.35 - Serious Incident Response Team Reports</p>

Presenter: Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT), Nova Scotia

Rating: The PMC has rated the overall progress of actions by the SiRT as **largely complete, with a few unfinished items well on track**. The recommendations under this sub-theme are, for the most part, operational in nature. Most unfinished items that are on track are the responsibility of groups outside of the SiRT.

Presentation Summary: On September 17, 2024, the PMC heard from the SiRT on progress under the SiRT sub-theme, within the Policing Reform theme. For some of these Recommendations, not all the subclauses are directed at the SiRT.

The SiRT described several actions that have been taken that relate to these Recommendations. In many cases, existing protocols and practices were formalized as policy or by updating Memoranda of Understanding with police agencies. This formed part of the SiRT's response to Recommendations relating to:

- The SiRT investigators and specialized services;
- Control of crime scenes and evidence;
- RCMP liaison with the SiRT
- Protocols for information exchange with police agencies and expert witnesses.

Additionally, the SiRT has created an inventory of specialized services (e.g. police dogs, forensic identification services, tech crime) so the team can access this when in the field.

The *Serious Incident Response Team Regulations* have been amended, new practices have been adopted to provide support to the SiRT witnesses and a new policy has been developed and formalized for the identification and retention of expert witnesses.

The SiRT has undertaken this work in collaboration with police agencies and the provincial government. The SiRT has also been in conversation with other police oversight agencies across Canada. The Presenter described efforts to take a trauma-informed approach. Although the SiRT considered most of the Recommendations within their scope to be complete, next steps have been identified for continuing to make positive change.

Discussion Summary: The PMC recognizes that the SiRT is a very small organization with a significant mandate. The PMC is impressed by the significant progress made by such a small team. While the SiRT is an independent body, the presentation described good collaboration with Victim Services at the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as the Government of Nova Scotia's Office of Addictions and Mental Health.

The PMC was pleased to hear about efforts to engage the community, including reconvening the Community Liaison Committee and the hiring of a new position within the SiRT dedicated to public communications. After receiving this presentation, PMC members felt that change is happening and will be positive. The PMC noted that one unfinished Recommendation under this sub-theme is P.34 (a review of SiRT resources). The PMC expects the SiRT could make an even larger impact if its resources were increased.

Conclusion and Future Plans

The PMC's sixth meeting will take place on December 9-10, 2024, in Millbrook First Nation, Nova Scotia, where it will continue to receive and discuss reports from the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, and the RCMP, and monitor and assess progress of initiatives related to the PMC's themes.

In the past year, the PMC has reflected on the complexity and interrelated nature of many of the MCC Recommendations. In many cases, large societal shifts in attitude and behaviour are necessary. Therefore, under some themes, progress will be gradual and may take place over many years. Whereas under others, progress is already concrete and measurable. The PMC looks forward to hearing more about work being carried out under these themes and will report on further progress in due course.

At future meetings, the PMC will monitor progress under themes and subthemes not assessed to date and provide ratings on the progress completed by the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP.

The PMC is committed to holding the Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia and the RCMP accountable to meeting the spirit and intent of the MCC Final Report and will continue to provide public updates on these efforts.

Resources

- [Mass Casualty Commission Final Report](#)
- [Progress Monitoring Committee - Turning the Tide Together - Terms of Reference](#)
- [Progress Monitoring Committee - Initial Six-Month Update](#)
- [Progress Monitoring Committee Monitoring Plan: A Thematic Approach](#)

