



## **BULLETIN!**

*October 30, 2009*

**FPT Meeting of Ministers  
responsible for Justice  
Fredericton, New Brunswick - October 29-30, 2009**

### **FEDERAL / PROVINCIAL / TERRITORIAL MINISTERS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING KEY JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES FACING CANADIANS**

**Fredericton, New Brunswick, October 30, 2009** – Federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) ministers responsible for justice and public safety concluded their meeting today, after in-depth discussions on key justice and public safety issues currently facing Canadians.

The meeting was co-chaired by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C., the Minister of Public Safety, Peter Van Loan, the New Brunswick Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Michael Murphy and the New Brunswick Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, John Foran.

Ministers were provided with an overview of recent federal legislative initiatives. Ministers acknowledged the progress made on combating crime, noting in particular Bills C-25 (Truth in sentencing), C-14 (Organized crime and the protection of justice system participants) and S-4 (Identity theft). FPT Ministers agreed on the need for the following priority reforms to address organized crime: bail reform; wire tap reform; drug trafficking; and the pre-trial process.

FPT Ministers also acknowledged the seriousness of major economic crime and the impacts on victims. Ministers agreed on the need to work together and support coordinated actions.

Ministers discussed challenges related to addressing victimization of Aboriginal people, and a range of family law issues. Ministers continued discussion on access to justice for people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

In recognition of the importance of access for children to both parents, FPT Ministers indicated their support for releasing *Facilitating Access: Report of the Family Justice Working Group on Parenting and Contact Enforcement and Jurisdiction*.

Ministers discussed the sentencing of repeat impaired driving offenders and acknowledged the seriousness of this issue. Ministers also discussed justice effectiveness issues such as jury reform, self-represented accused, electronic disclosure, a report related to self-defence and changes to simplify the search warrant application process.

Ministers also discussed the development of national guidelines for conducted energy weapons.

### **Changing Face of Corrections**

Ministers discussed the need to continue addressing the changing face of corrections in Canada. They acknowledged that progress has been made, specifically the passage of Bill C-25 which limits credit for time served in remand.

All jurisdictions agreed to continue joint FPT work on the sharing of best practices through Heads of Corrections across Canada.

### **Mental Health and Justice**

Ministers acknowledged the need to address the increasing challenges related to mental health issues in the criminal justice system. They recognized that consultation with their respective health and social services ministries is critical. Ministers agreed this topic would be a standing agenda item for their future meetings, and called on officials to begin discussions when they next meet in January 2010.

### **RCMP Modernization**

Ministers were provided with an update on the ongoing efforts to modernize the RCMP, where governance and accountability continue to be at the forefront. The most recent report from the RCMP Reform Implementation Council was noted, including its positive assessment of the reform to date. PT Ministers reiterated the importance of continuing discussions on the RCMP review and complaints body, and the creation of any future Board of Management.

### **First Nations Policing Program**

Ministers were provided with an update on the First Nations Policing Program, and the current comprehensive review of the program.

PT Ministers unanimously endorsed a resolution which asks the federal government to reaffirm its commitment to the First Nations Policing Program. All jurisdictions agreed to support the work of the comprehensive review.

PT Ministers acknowledged the special circumstances of policing in the North, and the need to develop a unique Northern policing framework.

### **Police Officers Recruitment Fund**

PT Ministers reiterated their position for permanent federal funding for the Police Officers Recruitment Fund. The federal Minister of Public Safety indicated that the federal government had delivered on its commitment to provide a one-time allocation to assist the provinces and territories in a manner that respects their responsibility for the

administration of policing. It was agreed that this item will be on the agenda for the next Ministerial meeting.

### **Legal Aid**

FPT Ministers agreed to extend the criminal legal aid contribution agreements for another year, to 2010-2011 and to prepare a FPT business case on criminal legal aid in the fall of 2010 for presentation to Ministers.

PT Ministers expressed their perception that there is a lack of federal funding for civil legal aid and about the immediate need for additional immigration and refugee legal aid funding. The federal Minister of Justice reiterated his position that funds for civil legal aid are part of the Canada Social Transfer, and that the federal government is examining the request for increased funding for immigration and refugee legal aid.

PT Ministers indicated that they would continue to work on the business case for civil legal aid, for presentation to Ministers next fall.

### **Missing Persons**

Ministers acknowledged the seriousness of the issue of missing persons—particularly Aboriginal women and girls— and the efforts of those who reach out to victims. Ministers directed officials to report back on efforts to create a national information database of missing persons.