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Evaluation of the Detector Dog Service (DDS) Program: Executive summary

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Program background

The Detector Dog Services (DDS) Program mandate is to support national security priorities and facilitate the free flow of legitimate people and goods.

DDS teams assist border service officers (BSOs) in detecting three types of regulated/prohibited goods. Within each type of team, detector dogs are trained to detect odours aligned to the regulated/ prohibited goods identified as the highest priorities.

Number of active teams

Currency	4
Drugs and Firearms (D&F)	45
Food, Plant and Animal (FPA) products	39
Total active DDS teams	88
Numbers extracted on November 30, 2022 (Program data)	

Currently, there are 88 funded teams. [1]

The DDS Program is managed by the Commercial and Trade Branch (CTB) at Headquarters (HQ) and delivered across Canada by the regions.

> The Detector Dog Training Program (DDTP), under the Human Resources Branch (HRB) is a key delivery partner in the DDS Program (out of scope) .

The DDS Program's A-Base expenditures over the past 5 years were between $6 million and $7.7 million.

The total expenditures increased starting in fiscal 2018 to 2019 due to additional [redacted] (not all funding went to the DDS Program or was fully spent during the Evaluation period [2]). See Annex D for details on expenditures.

All [redacted] funding used to train and deploy new DDS teams will be rolled over into A-Base funding.

The following operational terminology is used throughout the report:

A Detector Dog Service team (DDS team)
consists of a detector dog and a handler (FB-03 on assignment)

Search
purpose-driven time to screen goods, baggage or conveyances

Indication
detector dog conveys the presence of regulated/ prohibited goods

Confirmed Indication
presence of trained odour is confirmed (usually through secondary examination)

Enforcement Action

seizure or Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Regulations (AAAMP)

Evaluation scope

Program effectiveness and performance reporting

- Achievement of intended outcomes

- Effectiveness of DDS teams as a detection tool

- Identification of gaps in performance measurement and reporting

Achievement of [redacted] deliverables

- Funds received and spent

- Progress to date in meeting the CBSA commitments

Resource utilization (Efficiency and Economy)

- Efficiency of the DDS Program

- Program resourcing model and the impact of funding on program stability

- Utilization of the DDS teams in enforcement activities

The evaluation covers the period from fiscal years 2017 to 2018 to 2021 to 2022.

Assessed outcomes

The Evaluation focused on assessing the achievement of intermediate-level Program outcomes:

- Legitimate goods cross the border in a timely fashion and are subject to minimal intervention

- Regulated and prohibited goods, including drugs, firearms, currency, and FPA products are intercepted and processed accordingly

Indicators used to assess these outcomes also covered the assessment of the immediate outcome (effective, efficient and non-intrusive screening).

Lines of evidence

Interviews, Survey, Review of Financial Data, Review of Operational Data, Case Studies, Document Review.

Evaluation approach: Attribution vs. contribution

The evaluation employed the Contribution Analysis methodology, an approach used to examine the extent of the various contributions made by the DDS Program towards the Agency's facilitation and enforcement objectives in conjunction with other internal and external factors. [3]

See Annex B for more information on the evaluation methodology and limitations.

Overall findings

The DDS Program is effectively contributing to CBSA enforcement and facilitation objectives by:

- providing efficient and non-intrusive examinations that save time

- reducing threats by effectively intercepting the regulated/prohibited goods DDS teams are trained to detect

The DDS Program is delivering value-for-money for the Agency:

- All [redacted] commitments are on track to be met by the end of 2022 to 2023, as planned

- Program results over time show positive returns from the additional funding [redacted]

There is an opportunity to review the DDS Program's resource allocation and coverage priorities to address existing gaps and maximize enforcement.

There is an opportunity for Program HQ to exercise their functional authority role to provide guidance on regional policies to ensure national consistency and program efficiencies.

No formal performance measurement framework (PMF) exists for the DDS Program.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Resource utilization and program focus

The Vice-President of Commercial and Trade Branch should conduct a review of Program priorities, performance results and current resource allocation to determine where DDS Teams could be used to maximize enforcement capacity.

Finding 4: The DDS Program's contributions to firearm interceptions were limited, presenting an opportunity to assess how D&F teams can be maximized in this area.

Finding 5: There is an opportunity to review the DDS Program focus to determine the continued need for detection of certain odours and potentially refocus on threats that are not sufficiently covered.

Finding 9: While limited program resources are generally assigned where needed, [redacted].

Recommendation 2: Program HQ role as the functional authority

With a view to improve efficiency and accountability, the Vice-President of Commercial and Trade Branch should exercise their functional management role to review regional policies/agreements (including the one-dog approach) and provide direction to all Regions to ensure consistency and efficiency of service delivery.

Finding 8: An approach adopted in two Regions, requiring the termination of a Detector Dog Handler's assignment when a detector dog retires/passes, might be creating unnecessary inefficiencies/costs for the Program.

Recommendation 3: Performance measurement and reporting

The Vice-President of Commercial and Trade Branch should formalize a performance measurement framework (PMF) for the Detector Dog Service Program, including an approach to regularly track progress against indicators and fully report on the expected results and value of the program.

Finding 1: DDS teams contribute to the Agency's facilitation objectives by saving processing time and providing efficient and non-intrusive examinations. The extent of these contributions was difficult to measure with existing data.

Finding 6: [redacted] funds were expended as planned and all commitments are on track to be met by end of 2022 to 2023. Some initial positive results were noted, but more time will be required to fully measure the impacts of these investments.

Finding 10: The Program's current performance measures and reporting only partially assess achievement of results and the value-add of the Program to the Agency.

A <u>management response and action plan (MRAP) is included in Annex A</u>.

Footnotes:

1   Not all teams from the African Swine Fever (ASF) [redacted] funding have been deployed yet, but will be by end of fiscal year 2022 to 2023. Also, due to the nature of the Program (dogs retiring or handlers moving to another position), not all funded teams are always active. Some will be in procurement/training stages.

2   Funding went to the CBSA College (HRB) for dog procurement and DDS teams training. The All-Weather Facility funding went to the Finance and Corporate Management Branch (FCMB) – both are out of scope for this evaluation.

3   The aim of Contribution Analysis is to produce a credible, evidence-based narrative of the program's contributions to the expected outcomes and reduce the need to attribute results to the DDS Program alone, when it is acknowledged that a multitude of factors are involved.

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