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Evaluation of the Crown Witness Coordinator Program

Final report

Internal Audit and Evaluation Division

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1.0 Executive summary

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Public Prosecution Service of Canada's (PPSC) Crown Witness Coordinator (CWC) Program operating in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. The evaluation covered fiscal years (FY) 2015-16 to 2022-23. The evaluation's primary focus was to assess the program's performance, relevance, efficiency, and design.

The evaluation highlighted a clear and demonstrable need for the CWC Program. Victims of crime face numerous barriers to their participation in the criminal justice system and the program is designed to address some of these challenges. Further, the CWC Program is aligned with the priorities and objectives of the Government of Canada and of the PPSC specifically as they relate to enhancing services and supports for victims and increasing their engagement with the criminal justice process.

However, the evaluation encountered challenges in assessing the program's progress in achieving its intended outcomes. Specifically, the evaluation found discrepancies in program data collection tools and practices across the regions. Inconsistencies in timekeeping data also led to difficulties in accurately assessing CWC workloads across the regions.

Despite these limitations, the evaluation found that stakeholders generally view the CWC Program as important in supporting victims and witnesses. CWCs also play a key role in supporting Counsel and the overall conduct of prosecutions.

Overall, there are gaps and inconsistencies in data collection to measure program results and CWC workloads. Further, ongoing turnover in program personnel and the lack of a standardized onboarding and training process for CWCs present operational risks. Therefore, changes to the design and management of the program are needed to improve the PPSC's ability to monitor and report on CWC results and to ensure greater consistency in service delivery and in data collection tools and practices across the Department's northern offices.

In response to the findings, the evaluation has put forward the following four recommendations.

Issue 1: Duplication with victim services

The Program would benefit from increased coordination with victim service provider organizations that provide some of the same services to victims. While there are important distinctions in their roles and mandates, the evaluation identified duplication in the role of and the services provided by CWCs and victim service provider organizations. Further, evidence suggests that Counsel are having direct interactions with Victim Service Workers on their files.

In some instances, CWCs and Victim Service Workers may also be duplicating their efforts to connect with clients, with some victims being contacted by and receiving the same information from both a CWC and a Victim Service Worker.

Recommendation 1: The PPSC should work with victim service providers in the territories to:

- ▶ **clarify their respective roles and responsibilities in the provision of services to victims and witnesses; and**
- ▶ **identify ways to limit duplication in and enhance the coordination of services to victims and witnesses.**

Issues 2 and 3: Program data collection

There is a need to clarify data collection expectations and requirements for CWCs. Further, there is a need to review data collection tools to ensure that these reflect all *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR) rights and departmental obligations and that these are as consistent as possible across the three regions.

CVBR forms used by CWCs serve multiple purposes, including collecting data, supporting continuity on files, and ensuring the PPSC's compliance with the CVBR. However, the evaluation found inconsistencies in CVBR forms across regions both in their use and in their content. Specifically, forms are not:

- ▶ being used consistently, with many forms being empty or missing, based on a review of iCase files.¹
- ▶ all collecting the same information.

As a result, assessing program results systematically and quantitatively is not possible given the onerous nature of collecting data and the significant gaps identified in the data available.

As the PPSC is currently developing a new legal case management system (LCMS) to replace iCase, the Department should ensure that the new system will collect the data required for CWC Program oversight and reporting. Doing so will improve efficiencies and consistency in program data collection and analysis.

Recommendation 2: The PPSC should review CWC data collection practices and tools to:

- ▶ **identify the data needed to support program performance reporting;**

¹

For the purpose of this evaluation the file review was limited to what was available in iCase and not in a hardcopy file. iCase documentation practices may vary from region to region.

- ▶ **identify discrepancies in CVBR forms and, while accounting for regional differences in requirements, processes, and needs, ensure forms are consistent across regions;**
- ▶ **ensure tools are being used as intended and information is being collected; and**
- ▶ **limit duplication in data collected in CVBR forms and as part of other processes and tools.**

Recommendation 3: Given the limitations and inefficiencies with existing data collection tools and processes, the PPSC should ensure that the data needs of the program are captured by the Department's future legal case management system (LCMS).

Issue 4: Training

The CWC Program does not currently have a standardized onboarding process for new CWCs. Training for CWCs joining the PPSC mainly consists of reviewing a manual and shadowing another CWC. However, given the high turnover in program staff, there is a risk that some CWCs will be trained by colleagues with limited experience in the CWC role. Evidence suggests that there are inconsistencies in how CWCs conduct their work, particularly from a file management and timekeeping perspective. Specifically, the evaluation found discrepancies in the use of CVBR forms and in CWC timekeeping on files. Thus, new CWCs may be trained by colleagues who have adopted practices that are not aligned with the role of and expectations for the position. As a result, the PPSC should establish a framework to guide the onboarding and training process to ensure that all new CWCs obtain a similar learning experience and to promote a clear understanding of the role of and expectations for CWCs.

Recommendation 4: The PPSC should develop a CWC onboarding and training plan to ensure that there is:

- ▶ **a clear and common understanding of the role of and expectations for CWCs; and**
- ▶ **consistency in the learning experience for all new CWCs.**

2.0 Evaluation objectives and scope

Prior to this evaluation, the CWC Program had not undergone a comprehensive assessment in over 13 years.² The most recent evaluation, conducted in 2020, focused on data collection and analysis of results for five CWC Program performance indicators. [REDACTED] The intent of the evaluation was to measure the program's effectiveness by focusing mainly on its performance in [REDACTED]. The evaluation did not examine issues of program relevance or efficiency and did not consider impacts of the CVBR on the program's mandate, design, and delivery.

The previous evaluation encountered significant challenges in assessing program effectiveness due to significant limitations in the availability of data. As a result, the evaluation recommended that the PPSC develop new CWC Program indicators to track and measure program performance. In response, the Program developed performance indicators and has undertaken efforts to actively and systematically collect data for performance measurement purposes.

The Program was also the subject of an audit in 2020 assessing whether program activities and processes in place supported the PPSC in meeting its CVBR-related obligations.

The current evaluation was summative in nature, assessing the program's relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, including its design and delivery. The evaluation covered program activities since the implementation of the CVBR, from FY 2015-16 to 2022-23.

The evaluation aimed to answer the following questions:

Relevance

1. To what extent is the CWC Program responding to a demonstrable need?
2. To what extent is the CWC Program aligned with departmental and Government of Canada priorities?

Achievement of expected outcomes

3. To what extent has the CWC Program contributed to increased awareness among victims and witnesses of their role, rights, and responsibilities in the court process?
4. To what extent has the CWC Program contributed to increased awareness among stakeholders in the criminal justice system of the needs of victims and witnesses?

²

The previous evaluation conducted by Justice Canada in 2010 is available at the following link: https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/P02P01P0201_Calgary_Exh_23_Phelps.pdf

5. To what extent has the CWC Program contributed to the increased participation of victims and witnesses in the court process?
6. To what extent are victims and witnesses accessing services that meet their needs?

Efficiency

7. To what extent is the current design of the CWC Program efficient in delivering support to victims and witnesses?

Design and delivery

8. To what extent are services provided by the CWC Program responsive to the needs of victims and witnesses?
9. To what extent is there effective and responsive management of the CWC Program?

3.0 Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach which included the following lines of quantitative and qualitative evidence:

- ▶ Document and literature review
- ▶ Key informant interviews
- ▶ Jurisdictional scan
- ▶ Survey of PPSC Counsel
- ▶ Survey of Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) members
- ▶ Administrative data review, including PeopleSoft, iCase and SAP Integrated Financial Management System data; and
- ▶ File review

Additional details on the evaluation's methodology are available in [Appendix E](#).

4.0 Need for the CWC Program

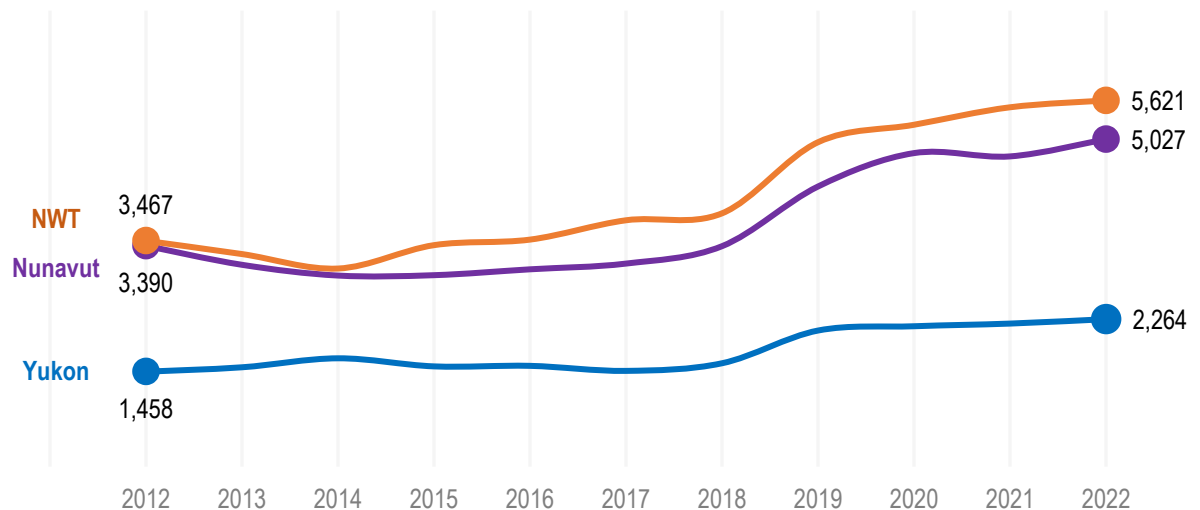
Finding 1: There is a need for the provision of services and supports to victims and witnesses of crime, including the provision of support and information during the court process.

4.1 Crime and victimization in the territories

The regions served by the CWC Program have the highest rates of crime and victimization in Canada. In 2021, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon had

the highest crime rates in Canada for all Criminal Code offences.³ In addition, crime rates in the territories increased between 2011 and 2021, growing by 43% in Nunavut, 13% in the Northwest Territories and 11% in the Yukon.⁴ Statistic Canada's Crime Severity Index⁵ for each of the three territories were the highest in Canada between 2011 and 2021.⁶

Figure 1: Number of police-reported violent crime incidents by calendar year



Source: Statistics Canada (2023). Table 35-10-0177-01 *Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories, Census Metropolitan Areas, and Canadian Forces Military Police*. Accessible at the following link: <https://doi.org/10.25318/3510017701-eng>

In terms of criminal victimization, the highest rates of violent victimization in Canada in 2019 (including self-reported incidents of sexual assault, robbery, and physical assault)⁷ were in Nunavut followed by the Northwest Territories.⁸

4.2 Barriers to victim and witness participation in the criminal justice system

Participation in the criminal justice system can require significant effort and resources from the victim and/or witness, including time off work, transportation, and/or childcare.⁹ An individual's socioeconomic status, as well as cultural and language barriers, can also

³ Statistics Canada (2022). Police-reported crime rate, by province and territory, 2021. Accessible at the following link: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00013/tbl/tbl14-eng.htm>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Crime Severity Index (CSI) tracks the severity of police-reported crime in Canada. The CSI takes into account the change in volume of a particular type of crime and the relative seriousness of that crime in comparison to other crimes.

⁶ Statistics Canada (2022). Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, Canada, provinces, territories, and Census Metropolitan Areas. Accessible at the following link: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510002601>

⁷ Data is collected through Statistic Canada's General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) which asks Canadians about their experiences with eight types of violent and non-violent offences, including sexual assault, robbery, physical assault, theft of personal property, break and enter, theft of motor vehicle or parts, theft of household property and vandalism.

⁸ Statistics Canada (2021). Criminal victimization in Canada, 2019. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00014-eng.htm>

⁹ Rhodes, K. V. et al. (2011). *Victim Participation in Intimate Partner Violence Prosecution: Implications for Safety*, pg. 18. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/235284.pdf>

act as barriers to participation.¹⁰ Further, victims and witnesses can experience fear, confusion and uncertainty when engaging with an unknown and highly technical system.¹¹

However, when victims do participate, there are routine failures in meeting their needs, including shortcomings in relation to authorities keeping victims informed.¹² When victims are not provided with timely and relevant information, they could miss the opportunity to:

- ▶ participate in a hearing;
- ▶ provide their perspective on a decision in their case;
- ▶ submit a victim impact statement; and/or
- ▶ share their concerns about their personal safety.¹³

Indeed, studies have shown that access to information and being kept informed are important factors in victims' satisfaction with the criminal justice process.¹⁴

4.3 Alignment with departmental and government priorities

Finding 2: The CWC Program is well aligned with the priorities and objectives of the Government of Canada and the PPSC in relation to providing enhanced supports to victims of crime and contributing to their increased participation in the criminal justice system.

Federal Victims Strategy

The Federal Victims Strategy was created in 2000 and has since been used to coordinate the Government of Canada's initiatives in support of victims of crime. The Federal Victims Strategy is led by the Department of Justice and involves multiple federal departments, including the PPSC. The objective of the Strategy is to ensure victims of crime may access justice and effectively participate in the criminal justice system.¹⁵

¹⁰ Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crimes (OFOVC) (2021). *Information as a Gateway Right: Examining Complaints related to the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*, pg. 10. <https://www.victimfirst.gc.ca/res/pub/IGR-IGR/index.html>

¹¹ Holder, R. & Englezos, E. (2023). *Victim Participation in Criminal Justice: A Quantitative Systematic and Critical Literature Review*, International Review of Victimology, 0(0), pg. 2. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02697580231151207>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights (2022). *Improving Support for Victims of Crime*, pg. 26. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/JUST/Reports/RP12132484/justrp07/justrp07-e.pdf>

¹⁴ Wedlock, E. & Tapley, J. (2016). *What Works in Supporting Victims of Crime: A Rapid Evidence Assessment*, pg. 13. https://pure.port.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/3695582/What_works_in_supporting_victims_of_crime.pdf

¹⁵ House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights (2022). *Improving Support for Victims of Crime*, pg. 6. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/JUST/Reports/RP12132484/justrp07/justrp07-e.pdf>

Canadian Victims Bill of Rights

Bill C-32, the *Victims Bill of Rights Act*, commonly referred to as the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* or CVBR, was introduced on July 23, 2015. The adoption of the CVBR established for the first-time statutory rights for victims of crime at the federal level.

The CVBR outlines rights for victims in four main areas, including:

- ▶ **right to information:** victims have the right to information about the criminal justice system, the services available to them, the investigation and proceedings, the offender and accused as well as information about filing a complaint.
- ▶ **right to protection:** victims have the right to have their security considered and to be protected from intimidation and retaliation as well as the right to privacy, identity protection and testimonial aids.
- ▶ **right to participation:** victims have the right to have their views considered as part of the criminal justice process and to present a victim impact statement.
- ▶ **right to restitution:** victims have the right to have court consider making a restitution order against the offender.

The enactment of the CVBR resulted in the creation of obligations for federal entities involved in the criminal justice system, including the PPSC, to respect the rights of victims contained in the legislation.

PPSC policy on victims of crime

The Attorney General of Canada and the PPSC has developed guidance that deals specifically with the conduct of Counsel and CWCs in relation to their interactions with victims. Chapter 5.6 of the PPSC Deskbook, a Directive issued by the Attorney General, describes the rights of victims as outlined in the CVBR and provides guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of Crown and CWCs in their work with victims. Chapter 5.5 of the Deskbook, a Guideline of the Director of the PPSC, also speaks to the role of CWCs but more specifically in cases of domestic violence.

4.4 Duplication in services to victims

Finding 3: There is duplication in the role of CWCs with that of victim service providers in the territories.

Interviews and a review of documents and online sources revealed that there is duplication in the services provided by CWCs and by Victim Services in the territories. Specifically, both provide the following services:

- ▶ information about the court process and the progress of cases;
- ▶ preparing victims for court;
- ▶ information about victims rights, including the CVBR;
- ▶ accompanying victims to court;

- ▶ referrals to services in the community; and
- ▶ information about and assistance with victim impact statements.

This duplication was also highlighted by the Government of the Northwest Territories as part of an evaluation of its Victim Services Program in 2021. The study found that there was duplication between the work of victim service providers and CWCs in the Northwest Territories Regional Office (NWTRO), noting that the “overlap in services has the potential to create confusion among clients who may be unsure as to whom to contact and can also create frustrations among service providers.”¹⁶

Not only is there a duplication in the types of services provided but key informants interviewed as part of the current evaluation noted that there is also a duplication in efforts to reach victims and that there may be a lack of coordination in some instances. For example:

- ▶ Victim Service Workers and CWCs may be trying to contact the same victim;
- ▶ Victim Service Workers may communicate directly with Counsel to obtain information on behalf of victims in some instances;
- ▶ Victims may receive updates regarding their case from both a CWC and a Victim Service Worker; and
- ▶ Victim Service Workers and CWCs may both be attending court at the same time.

Additionally, further evidence suggests that Counsel are having direct interactions with Victim Service Workers on their files. Nearly all respondents to the Counsel survey (90%) indicated that Victim Service Workers are involved on their files. Of those who reported Victim Service Worker involvement on their files, 89% indicated that they work directly¹⁷ with Victim Service Workers.

Despite this duplication, there are some important distinctions in the roles and mandates of CWCs and Victim Service Workers. For example, CWCs are better positioned to provide more accurate and timely information about court cases. However, CWC support is limited to the court process, beginning after charges are laid and ending at sentencing. On the other hand, victim service provider organizations operate along the criminal justice continuum and can provide immediate support to victims before charges are laid which continues throughout the court process and after court matters have concluded. Further, victim service providers can provide emotional supports to and advocate for their clients since, unlike CWCs, they are not bound by obligations under the duty to disclose. Key informants also noted that victim service

¹⁶ FWCO Management Consultants Ltd. (2021). *Victims Services Program Evaluation Final Report*, pg. 29.

<https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/victim-services/Victim%20Services%20Program%20Evaluation%20Final%20Report%20-%20April%2030%2C%202020.pdf>

¹⁷ Directly in this case means that Counsel have engaged with Victim Service Workers either through email, phone, or other means of communication to obtain information about a victim or to provide them with information about a case or victim, or vice versa.

programs in the territories are underfunded and under-resourced and thus CWCs play a critical role in addressing gaps in services to victims.

To address issues of overlap in the roles of Victim Service Workers and CWCs, the PPSC's Yukon Regional Office (YRO) developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2018 with the Yukon Department of Justice to:

- ▶ define the roles and responsibilities of CWCs and Victim Service Workers; and
- ▶ outline case management procedures in instances where both Victim Service Workers and CWCs are working with the same victim.

However, the interviews revealed that the procedures outlined in the MOU have not been followed consistently in recent years, with key informants citing workload demands for both partners as the primary limitation for adherence with the MOU. As a result, Victim Service Workers may not always be proactively informing CWCs that they have been in contact with a victim and vice versa, and that victims continue to receive information from both parties in some cases.

Recommendation 1: The PPSC should work with victim service providers in the territories to:

- ▶ **clarify their respective roles and responsibilities in the provision of services to victims and witnesses; and**
- ▶ **identify ways to limit duplication in and enhance the coordination of services to victims and witnesses.**

Management's response:

- Management accepts and agrees with this recommendation.
- Bearing in mind the differences between the:
 - mandate of PPSC's CWC, i.e., supporting the prosecution, and that of the territorial Victims Services, i.e., acting as advocates for victims, even in areas where there might appear to be overlaps; and
 - reality in each of the territories, notably how the level of resources available to Victims Services varies within and between territories.
- The PPSC will conduct regionally-led efforts, entailing:
 - Offering to meet with Victims Services in each territory to discuss process-related concerns and potential overlap in services (at least once in the course of FY 2024-25, with the possibility of establishing some regularity and recurrence to such meeting);
 - Working towards the establishment of a MOU with Victims Services in every northern region clarifying respective roles and responsibilities.
- Headquarters (i.e., the CWC Program Coordinator and Northern Coordinator), will support the regional efforts above on such things as reviewing draft MOUs, helping define the role and responsibility of CWC generally in a consistent manner, etc.

5.0 Responsiveness and effectiveness of the CWC Program

Finding 4: While CWC Program data collection tools are designed to collect information on program results, inconsistencies in data collection practices and in the design of tools make it difficult to assess results systematically and quantitatively.

The evaluation encountered challenges in obtaining data on program service delivery. While an analysis of iCase revealed that CWCs may have provided services to 13,718 victims¹⁸ over the last eight years, data was not available on the number of attempts to contact and successful contacts with victims or the number and types of services provided. To supplement the analysis of iCase data, a file review was conducted to examine a sample of CVBR forms¹⁹ across the three regions and to collect information on services provided to victims.

The file review encountered challenges that were mainly due to inconsistencies in data collection practices across the regions. Specifically, discrepancies were found in the use of designated CVBR forms, including:

- ▶ forms could not be found in iCase;
- ▶ forms were empty; and
- ▶ forms were partially completed, e.g., contained CWC notes but CVBR-related checklists were not completed.

Regionally, results from the file review²⁰ are as follows:

	Nunavut		Northwest Territories		Yukon		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No form on file	100	52%	17	14%	10	16%	127	34%
Form empty	31	16%	29	28%	16	25%	76	20%
Form partially completed with CWC notes	4	2%	11	9%	18	28%	33	9%
Form completed	58	30%	63	53%	20	31%	141	37%
Total	193	100%	120	100%	64	100%	377	100%

¹⁸ This number represents the total number of victim participants identified on files in iCase that also included CWC recorded hours. It does not represent the unique number of victim participants as an individual may be the victim of a crime more than once.

¹⁹ Each of the regions has their own form. The NRO uses a form called Victim Rights Attestation (VRA), the NWTRO uses a CVBR Checklist and the YRO uses CWC File Notes. For ease of communication, these are referred to as “CVBR forms” throughout the report.

²⁰ For the purpose of this evaluation, the file review was limited to what was available in iCase and not in a hardcopy file. iCase documentation practices may vary from region to region.

As noted in the table above, 127 files did not have an associated CVBR form. However, data shows that CWCs still recorded hours to 38 of these files:

- ▶ 25 files in Nunavut Regional Office (NRO) for an average of 1.8 hours per file;
- ▶ 11 files in the NWTRO for an average of 2.5 hours per file; and
- ▶ 2 in the YRO for an average of 0.75 hours per file.

Other challenges encountered during the conduct of the file review related to the design of the CVBR forms. Specifically, the forms have undergone a number of changes in their content and format since FY 2015-16 which resulted in inconsistencies in the type of information collected.

As a result, the evaluation was not in a position to assess the program's progress in achieving client-related results.

5.1 Victim and witness awareness of their rights and responsibilities

The primary means through which the Program raises awareness of the court process and victims rights is through the CWCs use of CVBR forms and the contacting of victims after charges are laid. Beyond this, Program efforts to raise awareness of criminal justice- or victim-related issues has been limited.

In terms of promotional materials, the three regions have developed pamphlets intended for victims though there are differences in the information they contain. The three pamphlets provide a brief description of the role of CWCs, including the supports they can provide. In terms of differences:

- ▶ The pamphlets developed for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut summarize a victim's rights under the CVBR and are available in various Indigenous languages.
- ▶ The Yukon pamphlet mainly focuses on the court process and provides information on victim impact statements, testimony, conduct in court and the role of the RCMP, Counsel and CWCs. The pamphlet is available in French and English.

Interviews revealed that the pamphlets have not been widely distributed and are occasionally given by CWCs to victims and witnesses.

In the NWT, the Program contributed to the development of the Inuvik Justice Committee's Court Aftercare Manual and Court Aftercare brochures.²¹ The intent of the Court Aftercare Manual was to provide Victim Service Workers with resources to assist victims after legal matters have concluded. On the other hand, the Court Aftercare brochures are intended for the public and provide information on the court process and what to expect after the court process ends, including services that can be accessed.

²¹ The Court Aftercare manual and brochures are accessible at the following link:
https://www.inuvikjusticecommittee.com/court_aftercare_program

Overall, Program efforts to raise awareness have mostly been focused on post-charge communication with victims and witnesses. There might be opportunities to explore other ways to increase not only awareness of criminal justice- and victim-related issues but also of the CWC Program. Posters and brochures could be made available at locations visited by victims and witnesses, such as court, victim service organizations and RCMP detachments. Further, a few CWCs suggested that they could be provided with business cards that they can distribute to victims, witnesses, and victim service providers when on circuit.

Further, other federal entities²² publish information on victims' rights and resources online for assisting victims in navigating the criminal justice system. Currently, there is no dedicated page on the PPSC's website that provides information on victims' rights or the criminal justice process nor does the website provide a description the CWC Program²³.

5.2 Participation of victims and witnesses in the court process

CVBR forms in each of the regions include information on whether:

- ▶ a victim impact statement was completed and filed;
- ▶ the victim wants to present their victim impact statement in court or have a third party present it on their behalf;
- ▶ the victim requested testimonial aids; and
- ▶ the victim is requesting restitution.

The CVBR form used in the Yukon also includes information on whether victims have received trial preparation, including court orientation and testimonial preparation. Program tools are designed to collect relevant information pertaining to victim participation in the court process. However, data was not available to assess results in this area.

Anecdotally, key informants surveys generally consider CWCs as important to supporting victims and witnesses. Further, nearly all respondents to the Counsel survey (85%) agree²⁴ that CWCs play an important role in supporting victims and witnesses throughout the court process. However, Counsel from the NRO shared mixed views, with half noting that the support provided by CWCs was sufficient "to a moderate extent" and the other half indicating that the support was sufficient "to a small extent".

5.3 Access to services that meet the needs of victims and witnesses

Data was not readily available on the number and types of services provided by CWCs to victims and witnesses. Further, the evaluation did not conduct a survey of or

²² Including the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC), Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues (PCVI), Correctional Service Canada, the Parole Board of Canada, and Public Safety Canada's National Office for Victims.

²³ Information on the CWC Program is not readily available and can only be accessed by consulting the PPSC's Deskbook and annual reports.

²⁴ Respondents who answered "strongly agree" or "agree".

consultations with victims and witnesses to gather their perspectives on their experience with the services provided by CWCs. Anecdotally, representatives from territorial victim service providers all highlighted the important role CWCs play in supporting victims during the court process. Additionally, results from the Counsel survey show that nearly all respondents thought that CWCs were providing a sufficient²⁵ level of support to victims and witnesses in their region.

Part of the role of CWCs involves referring victims and witnesses to other services in the community on an as needed basis. However, data on the number of victims or witnesses referred by CWCs was not readily available nor was data available on the nature of referrals. All interviewed CWCs noted, however, that they regularly refer victims to Victim Services in their region and/or other relevant community services. This was confirmed by representatives from victim service provider organizations in the territories, noting that they often receive referrals from CWCs.

Culturally-appropriate services

The rationale for the creation of the CWC Program was to “bridge the cultural gap between the prosecutors and the victims and witnesses with whom they worked and between traditions deeply rooted in Common Law and Aboriginal and Inuit cultures.”²⁶ Statistics show that Indigenous peoples comprise the largest proportion of the population in Nunavut (86%) followed by the Northwest Territories (51%) and Yukon (23%).²⁷ As of March 31, 2023, self-identification information shows that Program resources were aligned with this reality (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of CWCs employed with the PPSC as of March 31, 2023, identifying as Indigenous²⁸

Source: PeopleSoft

[REDACTED FIGURE 2]

Additionally, most CWCs in the NRO are able to communicate with clients in Inuktitut.

5.4 Criminal justice system stakeholder awareness of victim and witness rights and needs

CWCs act as liaisons between Counsel and victims and witnesses and are responsible for collecting information pertinent to the prosecution. This includes collecting information on, for example, victim and witness availabilities for courts, safety concerns, needs of testimonial aids and desire to complete a victim impact statement. The expectation is that this information is communicated to Counsel.

²⁵ 85% of respondents noted that CWCs were providing a sufficient level of support to a “great” or “moderate” extent.

²⁶ Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) (2018). *Overview of the Public Prosecution of Canada (PPSC) Crown Witness Coordinator (CWC) Program*, p.1-2. https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/P02P01P0101_Calgary_Exh_2_Phelps.pdf

²⁷ Indigenous Services Canada (2020). *Annual Report to Parliament 2020*. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1602010609492/1602010631711>

²⁸ The PeopleSoft system currently uses the term “aboriginal” and that category was used for this figure

From the perspective of prosecutors, results from the Counsel survey suggest that they generally have positive views on CWCs provision of information on the needs of victims and witnesses. Specifically, results from the survey indicate nearly all respondents (85%) felt that:

- ▶ when working with CWCs, they have an adequate level of awareness²⁹ of the needs of victims and witnesses on their files; and
- ▶ CWCs were providing them with sufficient information³⁰ in relation to the needs of victims and witnesses.

In addition, as part of their role, CWCs often liaise with the RCMP to obtain victim and witness contact information. In the YRO, a few CWCs noted that, in some cases, they will conduct presentations to inform new incoming RCMP members in the communities of the role of CWCs. However, these presentations have not occurred since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from the RCMP survey suggest that outreach and awareness efforts targeting RCMP members may be beneficial as a few respondents noted that:

- ▶ they were not aware of the roles and responsibilities of CWCs; or
- ▶ RCMP members sometimes confuse CWCs with Victim Service Workers.

5.5 Support to the conduct of prosecutions

The support provided by CWCs to Counsel and to the overall conduct of prosecutions was viewed as important by interviewees and by respondents to the Counsel survey. In the absence of the CWC Program, interviewees noted that communication with victims and witnesses, including locating and maintaining regular contact, organizing meetings, and collecting information relevant to the prosecution, would fall on Counsel who are already responsible for managing large caseloads.

In addition, 80% of respondents to the Counsel survey reported that the support provided by CWCs was meeting their needs as prosecutors.³¹ [REDACTED] Counsel noted the following shortcomings and challenges:

- ▶ there are inconsistencies in the performance of CWCs;
- ▶ CWCs do not receive enough training, especially during the onboarding process; and
- ▶ there are not enough CWCs to support workload demands.

²⁹ Respondents who answered that they have an adequate level of awareness to a “great” or “moderate” extent.

³⁰ Respondents who answered that the information provided by CWCs was sufficient to a “great” or “moderate” extent.

³¹ Respondents who answered that the support provided by CWCs met their needs to a “great” or “moderate” extent.

6.0 Management of the CWC Program

The evaluation examined various aspects of the administration of the CWC Program, including:

- ▶ human resources, including leave used by Program staff;
- ▶ CWC workloads and timekeeping;
- ▶ data collection tools and practices; and
- ▶ training.

6.1 Data collection and reporting

Finding 5: Inconsistencies in the design of data collection tools contribute to challenges in assessing and reporting on CWC Program results.

The previous evaluation of the CWC Program, conducted in 2020, encountered challenges in assessing program effectiveness due to significant limitations in the availability of data. As a result, the evaluation recommended that the PPSC develop indicators to track and measure the performance of the CWC Program. In response, the Program developed performance indicators and had begun undertaking efforts to actively and systematically collect data for performance measurement and reporting purposes. However, consultations revealed that program data collection and reporting have recently ended because:

- ▶ the data collection was onerous and had to be done manually; and
- ▶ data was not being used in program decision-making.

As part of this evaluation, data collection practices and tools were examined to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

CVBR forms

Each of the three regions have developed their own unique forms which act as the primary information collection tool used by CWCs in their interactions with victims. While there are differences in the structure and format of the forms, they collect similar information, most of which relates to information about rights contained in the CVBR and other information to be collected from victims that is pertinent to the prosecution.

The use of the CVBR forms serves two purposes:

- ▶ **accountability:** the forms can be used to demonstrate that the PPSC has fulfilled its obligations under the CVBR; and
- ▶ **continuity:** when filled out properly, the forms provide information regarding what has or has not been discussed with a victim or witness thus maintaining a certain level of continuity if a file moves from one CWC to another.

However, the evaluation found a lack of uniformity in the forms used across regions. For example, CVBR forms are not capturing all the rights victims should be made aware of. The forms used by the NRO and the YRO do not have a checkbox for CWCs to indicate whether a victim was informed of their right to make a complaint, a gap that was also noted as part of the previous audit of the CWC Program in 2020. Other discrepancies were observed, including:

- ▶ The forms used by the NRO and NWTRO have a checkbox for CWCs to indicate whether a victim was referred to victim services.
- ▶ The form used by the YRO has checkboxes pertaining to trial preparation, including providing the victim with a copy of their statement, court orientation and testimonial preparation.
- ▶ The form used by the NRO has a section prompting CWCs to inform victims of the result of the case and whether they were informed of the Parole Board.
- ▶ The form used by NWTRO includes dates of when information was communicated with a victim.
- ▶ The form used by NWTRO includes a section that allows victims to self-identify as a vulnerable person³².

As noted in section 5, the evaluation encountered challenges in collecting and analyzing data on clients served and services provided by the Program, in part due to inconsistencies described above. Further, forms have been used inconsistently. For example, one in five forms examined as part of the iCase file review was empty. Forms may be left empty by CWCs for several reasons. For example, CWCs regularly encounter challenges in contacting victims and witnesses, often failing in their efforts to do so. Further, victims may not be cooperative with the prosecution, refusing to communicate with CWCs and/or requesting that charges be withdrawn.

Duplication in data collection

A review of program data collection tools and interviews with CWCs revealed that there is duplication in the information contained in CVBR forms and pre-circuit prep sheets used by CWCs in the NRO and NWTRO. Further, the issue of duplication was also identified by the previous audit of the CWC Program, conducted in 2020, and recommended that the CVBR forms used in each region be reviewed to determine whether they duplicate the information collected as part of other processes and forms.

³² Victims can self-identify as a vulnerable person based on their personal circumstances, including their gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ethnicity, economic status, and/or mental or physical disability.

Recommendation 2: The PPSC should review CWC data collection practices and tools to:

- ▶ identify the data needed to support program performance reporting;
- ▶ identify discrepancies in CVBR forms and, while accounting for regional differences in requirements, processes, and needs, ensure forms are consistent across regions;
- ▶ ensure tools are being used as intended and information is being collected; and
- ▶ limit duplication in data collected in CVBR forms and as part of other processes and tools.

Management's response:

- Management accepts and agrees with this recommendation.
- Acknowledging that there are legitimate regional differences and that there is no centralized repository for CVBR data (and that there likely will not be one in the near future, i.e., within the next 2 FY), the PPSC will take steps to ensure that, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, CVBR data is collected:
 - consistently between regions,
 - regularly,
 - systematically, and
 - efficiently.

To that end, Headquarters, in concert with the regions and with all the necessary support from them, will in the course of FY 2024-25:

- identify what data needs to be collected, based on requirements and usage,
- receive full access to regional CVBR data and to the forms and tools used for collection, and
- propose ways to collect data regionally.

Recommendation 3: Given the limitations and inefficiencies with existing data collection tools and processes, the PPSC should ensure that the data needs of the program are captured by the Department's future legal case management system (LCMS).

Management's response:

The present evaluation report will be provided to the new Legal Case Management System (LCMS) project's:

- Product Advisory Board,
- Project Team, and
- Steering Committee

to ensure that the CVBR data requirements are considered as part of the pre-definition phase of the new LCMS project. The LCMS project team will be updated with the results of the work from recommendation 2.

6.2 Workload

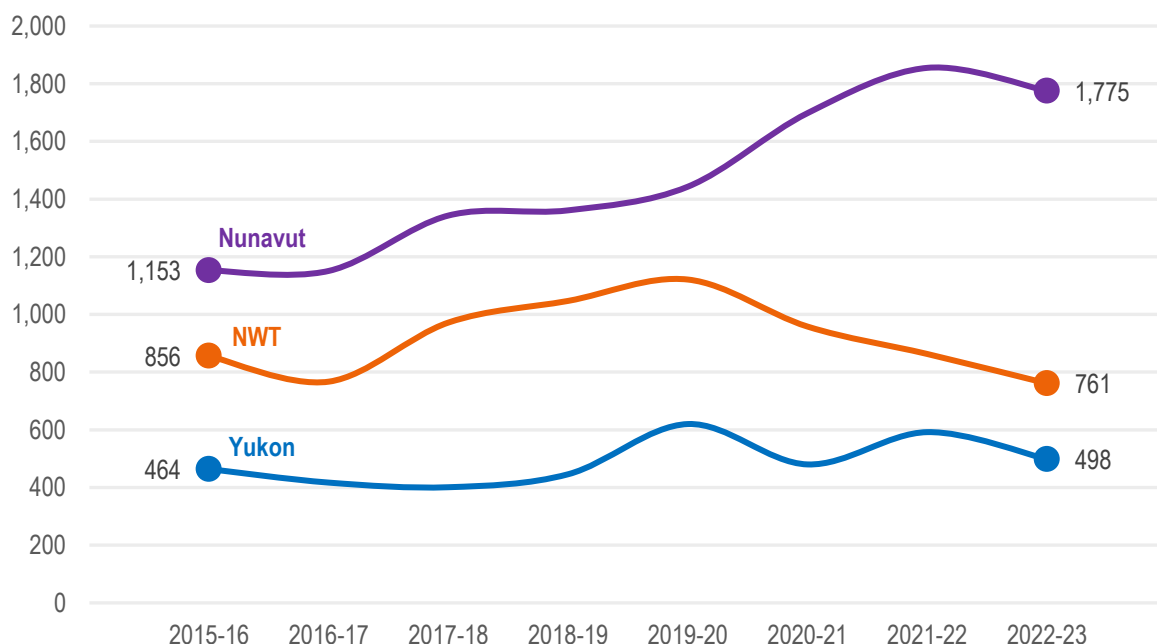
Finding 6: Discrepancies in CWC timekeeping practices across the regions make it difficult to accurately assess CWC workloads.

Files with victim participants

As part of the evaluation, iCase data was analyzed to provide a snapshot of CWC workloads in each of the regions. For the Program as a whole, there were a total of 23,042 files with victim participants. Regionally, the number of files with victim participants was highest in the NRO. The region also saw a steady increase in the number of files over the last eight years (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Number of files with victim participants by file open date and region

Source: iCase



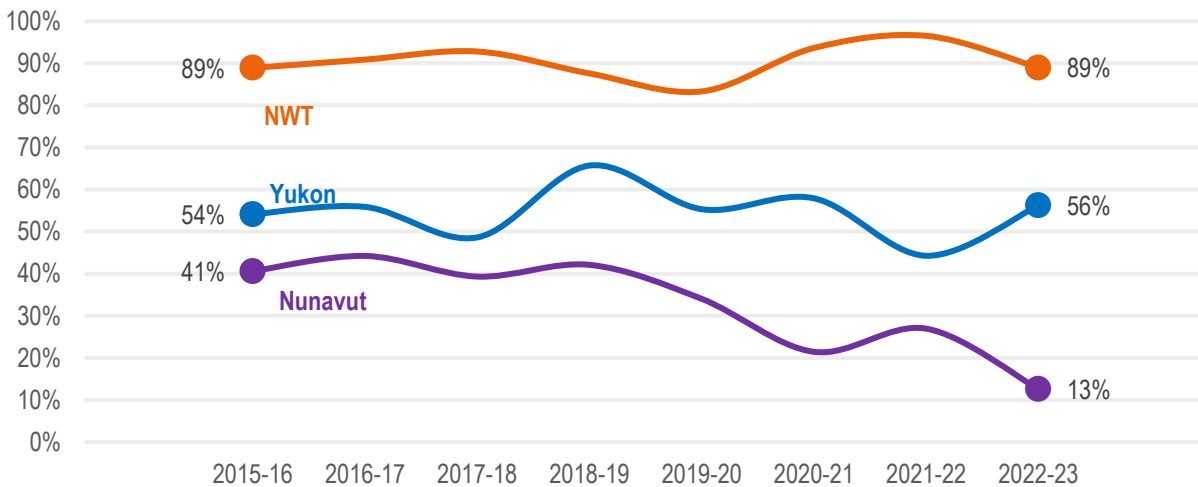
Timekeeping on files with victim participants

As a part of the evaluation, iCase data was analyzed to examine trends in CWC timekeeping. Overall, CWCs recorded time on approximately 54% of files with victim participants. When comparing timekeeping practices across regions, the analysis found notable discrepancies. CWCs in the NWTRO recorded time on 90% of files with victim participants. Timekeeping on victim files was inconsistent in the other two regions, particularly in the NRO which has seen a steady decline in CWC timekeeping over the last eight years (

Figure 4).

Figure 4: Proportion of files with victim participants that included CWC timekeeping by file open date and region

Source: iCase



The analysis also examined the number of hours CWCs were recording on files with victim participants. Overall, CWCs were recording an average of 4.6 hours per file. Regionally, the average hours recorded per file was as follows:

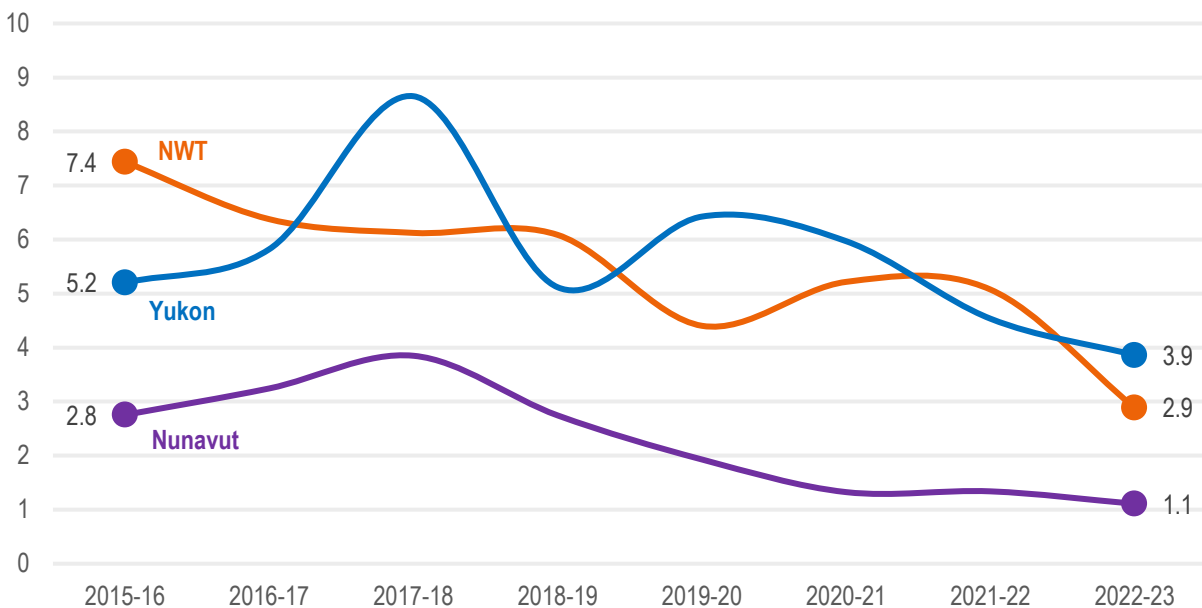
- ▶ 5.6 hours in the YRO;
- ▶ 5.5 hours in the NWTRO; and
- ▶ 2.4 hours in the NRO.

However, data shows a downward trend in the average number of hours recorded per file since FY 2015-16. For the Program overall, the average number of CWC hours per file was 5.6 in 2015-16 and gradually dropping to 2.8 in FY 2022-23. This trend was observed across the three regions (

Figure **5**).

Figure 5: Average number of CWC hours recorded on files with victim participants by file open date and region

Source: iCase



The review of iCase data also examined the number of CWC timekeepers per file, i.e., the number of CWCs recording time to each file. The analysis shows that an average of three CWCs were recording time on files in the NWTRO compared to an average of one in both the NRO and YRO. Further, nearly one-third of files in the NWTRO included four or more CWC timekeepers. This variance may be the result of:

- ▶ turnover, with files being transferred from one CWC to another; and/or
- ▶ inconsistencies in timekeeping practices across the regions, with CWCs recording time in iCase for different reasons.

Additional information regarding timekeeping can be found in [Appendix D](#).

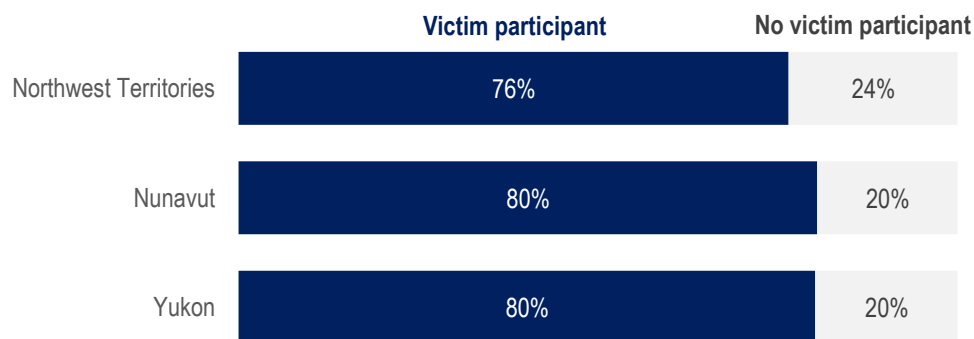
Other files

The review of iCase data revealed that CWCs recorded hours to a large number of files that did not have a victim participant identified. Overall, 22% of CWC hours were recorded to these files. Regionally, 24% of CWC hours in the NWTRO were recorded to these files, compared to 20% CWC hours in the NRO and YRO (

Figure **6**).

Figure 6: Proportion of CWC hours recorded to files with and without victim participants

Source: iCase



These results suggest that there may be discrepancies in iCase data entry practices in the regions as many of the files dealt with offences that likely would have involved a victim. However, there is also a possibility that CWCs have recorded hours to files that did not involve victims or witnesses and thus their engagement on these files may not have been necessary or appropriate.

File management

Information collected from interviews suggests that there is lack of processes and tools to support CWCs in managing their files and ensuring proper oversight of CWC work. For example:

- ▶ a few CWCs noted that members of their teams have adopted different ways of managing their files and conducting their work.
- ▶ in the NRO and NWTRO, CWCs complete a document prior to travel for circuits, allowing them to organize files, ensure documentation has been completed and note the availability of and status of communications with victims. A few CWCs in the NRO noted that circuit prep sheets are prepared one to two weeks prior to their circuits. Two respondents to the RCMP survey, one from the NRO and the other from the NWTRO, felt that CWC requests for victim contact information were not being submitted in a timely way and, as a result, contact with victims was delayed until only a few weeks prior to scheduled court.

From the perspective of prosecutors, a few respondents to the Counsel survey noted that there is currently no standardized processes or tools to monitor the workload of CWCs or to track requests and tasks assigned to CWCs. Concerns were raised noting a lack of systematic management of CWC workloads and an absence of mechanisms or tools to ensure that follow-ups with victims are done routinely and in a timely manner.

Communication with victims and witnesses

All CWCs noted that communication with victims and witnesses is done primarily via phone and in some cases email. However, CWCs also noted significant challenges in initiating contact with clients. For example, clients may not own a cellphone or often run out of cellphone minutes. Further, CWCs mentioned that it is common for individuals to own a cellphone but only to access the Internet. As a result, social media, specifically Facebook, was cited as one of the most effective ways to communicate with victims and witnesses.

In 2020, the PPSC launched a pilot project by creating a Departmental Facebook account to be used by CWCs to communicate with victims. However, the pilot project was not successful as the account did not provide the functionality required to meet the Program's needs.³³

[REDACTED] The region has also added a section to the CVBR for recording Facebook contact information.

The PPSC also issued guidance forbidding the use of personal Facebook accounts to contact clients.

6.3 Human resources

Finding 7: The CWC Program has encountered human resource challenges over the last eight years, including a high rate of turnover among staff, presenting operational risks in terms of consistency in service delivery and capacity to deliver services.

Turnover

Perspectives shared during interviews generally noted that the Program has historically encountered challenges in recruiting and retaining CWCs. Administrative data shows that there has generally been consistent turnover in Program staff across the three regions since FY 2015-16. On average, the Program hired approximately six CWCs and saw five departures each year (

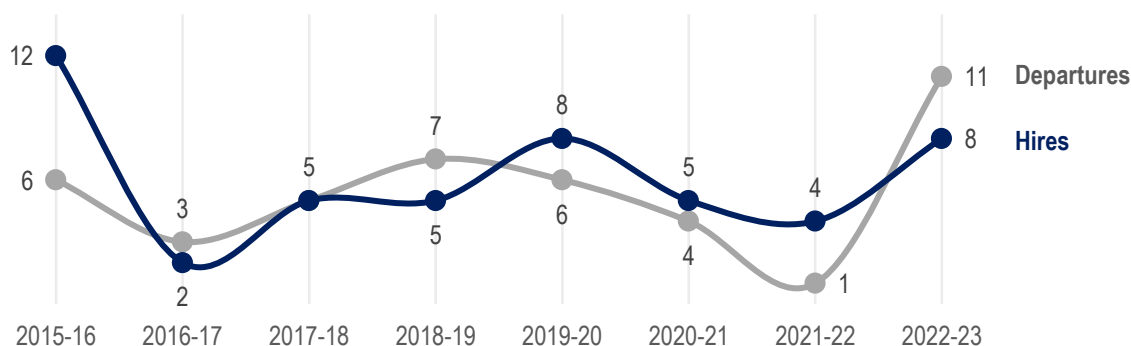
³³

As the PPSC Facebook page was a business account, it did not allow CWCs to proactively contact clients.

Figure **7**).

Figure 7: Number of CWC Program hires and departures by FY

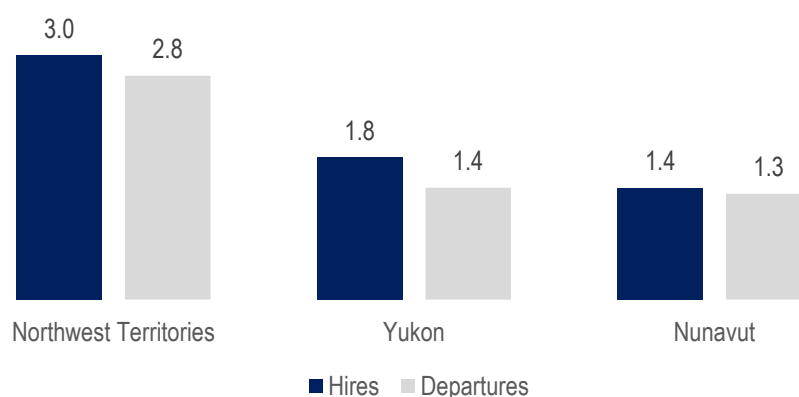
Source: PeopleSoft



Regionally, the trend shows that each region was experiencing a near 1:1 hire to departure ratio each year, though the rate of turnover was more acute in the NWTRO (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Average annual CWC Program hires and departures by region and FY

Source: PeopleSoft



Not only has turnover been recurrent across regions since FY 2015-16 but data also shows that the tenure of CWCs is relatively short. Overall, the average length of an individual's tenure as a CWC was close to 3 years. In the regions, the tenure of former CWCs was, on average, shortest in the YRO at just under 2 years while the average was 3 years in NWTRO and nearly 4 years in the NRO. Additional data on turnover in each of the regions is provided in [Appendix A](#) (Figure 14).

The impact of turnover can be seen in the number of junior CWCs across the regions. For individuals who were employed as CWCs as of March 31, 2023, administrative data shows that nearly one third (6 of 19) had less than 1 year of experience in their role. Regionally, 2 of 5 CWCs in the NRO and 3 of 8 in the NWTRO were in their role for less than 12 months.

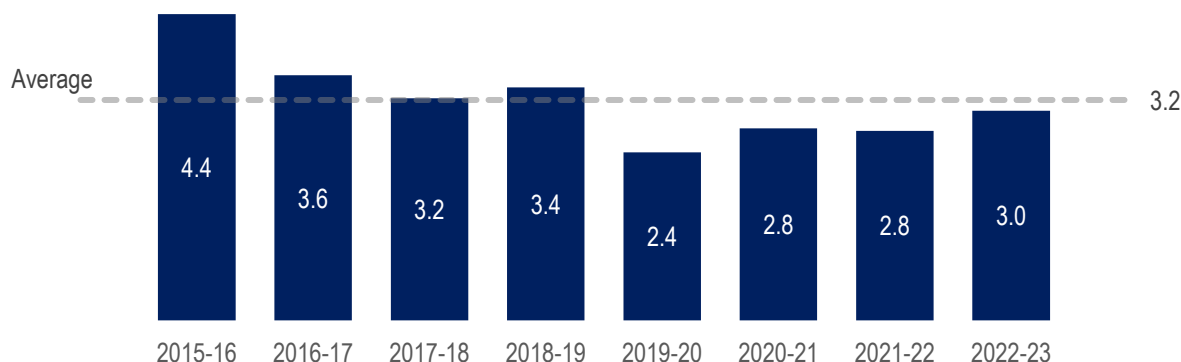
Additional data on the average and median years of experience of individuals who were employed as CWCs as of March 31, 2023, is available in [Appendix B](#) (Figure 15).

Leave

The evaluation also analyzed PeopleSoft data related to leave used by CWCs since FY 2015-16. For the analysis, the evaluation estimated that an employee has 1,950 available work hours per year if they are working fulltime, which corresponds to 260 working days.

Figure 9: Total leave used by CWC Program staff as expressed in FTEs by FY

Source: PeopleSoft



[REDACTED]

Figure 10: Average leave used collectively each year by CWC Program staff as expressed in FTEs by region

Source: PeopleSoft

[REDACTED FIGURE 10]

Additional data on leave used by CWC Program staff for each region can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Challenges

A few key informants expressed concerns regarding the turnover and the amount of leave taken by CWCs, indicating that this poses a risk to the Program's capacity to deliver services. However, in their view, the nature of the work and the demanding workload for CWCs are the main factors that have contributed to increased absences, burnout, and turnover.

The high rate of turnover combined with the loss of resources due to leave pose a risk of operational impacts in relation to the following:

- ▶ insufficient number of employees to cover workload demands;
- ▶ loss of productivity due to continuous recruitment and training of new CWCs; and
- ▶ lack of consistency for clients.

The number of CWCs recording time per file may be an indicator of how HR challenges may be impacting CWC workload and service delivery, particularly in the NWTRO who

encountered a greater level of turnover than the other regions. As noted in sub-section 6.2, the average number of CWCs recording time per file in the NWTRO was triple that of the NRO and YRO (3 to 1). Interviews revealed that files in the NWTRO involving serious offences, including sexual and other violent offences, are typically assigned. However, iCase data shows that 89% of sexual offence files with victim participants had two or more different CWC timekeepers, including 52% that had four or more.

6.4 Training

Finding 8: Limited training opportunities and the lack of a standardized onboarding process for CWCs may be contributing to inconsistencies in service delivery and administrative practices across the regions.

Currently there is no standardized onboarding or training process for new CWCs joining the PPSC. CWCs consulted as part of the interviews noted that their initial training mainly consisted of:

- ▶ reviewing the CWC Manual, which includes a series of modules dealing with various topics relevant to the CWC role; and
- ▶ job shadowing, which is led by another CWC.

Given the high turnover in Program staff, some CWCs may be trained by colleagues with limited experience in the CWC role. Further, relying primarily on job shadowing as the method through which CWCs receive the bulk of their training may have resulted in a lack of uniformity in file management and other administrative practices, such as timekeeping and data entry in iCase. Indeed, as noted in sub-section 6.2, information collected from interviews suggest that CWCs may have adopted different approaches to managing and conducting their work.

CWCs also noted that there has been a lack of training opportunities in recent years. Training was also highlighted as an area for improvement in the Counsel survey with one-quarter of respondents noting that there was a need to provide more opportunities for CWCs. CWCs and Counsel provided suggestions for training that could benefit CWCs:

- ▶ notetaking;
- ▶ interviewing and communicating with vulnerable victims and witnesses;
- ▶ managing vicarious trauma; and
- ▶ trauma-informed approaches to dealing with clients.

Newly hired CWCs may lack experience in working directly with vulnerable populations and/or may have little to no knowledge of the law and the criminal justice system. Thus, formalizing the Program's onboarding and training process for new CWCs is crucial to ensuring some level of consistency in service delivery across regions.

Recommendation 4: The PPSC should develop a CWC onboarding and training plan to ensure that there is:

- ▶ **a clear and common understanding of the role of and expectations for CWCs; and**
- ▶ **consistency in the learning experience for all new CWCs.**

Management's response:

- Management accepts and agrees with this recommendation.
- Acknowledging ongoing efforts to establish PPSC-wide onboarding approach for all employees on common aspects of the work experience within the department and intending not to duplicate these.
- Acknowledging that regions already offer training to their CWCs locally and that there are legitimate regional differences in how work is performed.
- Starting in FY 2024-25, Headquarters will work with regional CWCs to identify:
 - common required knowledge and skills amongst CWCs (including as it relates, but not limited, to common processes related to file management and other administrative practices such as timekeeping), and
 - best ways to impart them onto new CWCs, building on existing training provided in each region.
- In the course of FY 2024-25, Headquarters and regions will provide a proposal to senior management for holding a CWC national conference during which elements of training can be provided in addition to discussions on other matters of common interest.

7.0 Conclusion

Overall, the CWC Program is responding to a clear and demonstrable need. Historically, victims and witnesses face a number of significant barriers to their participation in the criminal justice system, one of which is dealing with confusion and uncertainty when engaging with an intimidating, complex and unfamiliar process. The CWC Program is meant to address these barriers by:

- ▶ keeping victims and witnesses informed of the progress of their case;
- ▶ communicating their needs to Counsel or other service provider organizations in the community; and
- ▶ clarifying the criminal justice process.

Further, CWCs play an important role in supporting Counsel and the conduct of prosecutions. In the absence of CWCs, much of the work CWCs currently do would otherwise have to be done by Counsel. This includes making initial contact and maintaining communication with victims and witnesses as well as collecting information relevant to prosecutions and informing victims and witnesses of their rights and responsibilities as part of the court process.

However, the Program has encountered important challenges that have persisted for several years, which this evaluation contends should be dealt with moving forward. One of the biggest challenges facing the Program is its ability to demonstrate quantifiable results. Data collection for the Program, specifically through the use of CVBR forms, has been inconsistent across regions. The forms used do not all collect the same information and are not being consistently used across the regions. Further, timekeeping practices were also found to be inconsistent across the three offices making it challenging to accurately measure CWC workloads. Establishing clear expectations for and ensuring consistency in data collection will allow the PPSC to better track its services to victims and witnesses, identify areas for improvement and measure program impacts. Further, integrating the CWC Program's data requirements into the PPSC's future LCMS will help address the limitations and inefficiencies with the Program's existing data collection tools. This will also allow the Department to demonstrate its compliance with CVBR obligations.

Another challenge relates to maintaining consistency in and sufficient resource levels for program operations. Consistent turnover and the lack of a standardized onboarding and training process for new CWCs present risks of operational impacts such as the loss of productivity, insufficient resources to handle workloads, and a lack of consistency in services for victims and witnesses. Further, the Program's current staffing complement contains a fairly large number of fairly junior CWCs, some of whom have limited or no experience in a legal setting and/or in working with vulnerable populations. CWCs receive a similar learning and training experience to ensure a clear and common understanding of the role and expectations.

The recommendations put forward in this report are meant to inform the PPSC's path forward in addressing these issues.

Appendix A – Turnover in CWC Program staff

Figure 11: Number of CWC Program hires and departures in the NRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

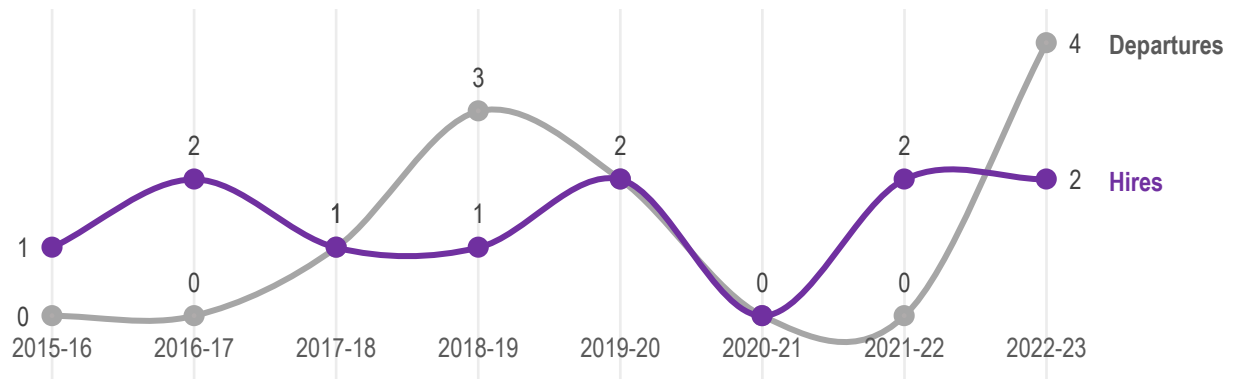


Figure 12: Number of CWC Program hires and departures in the NWTRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

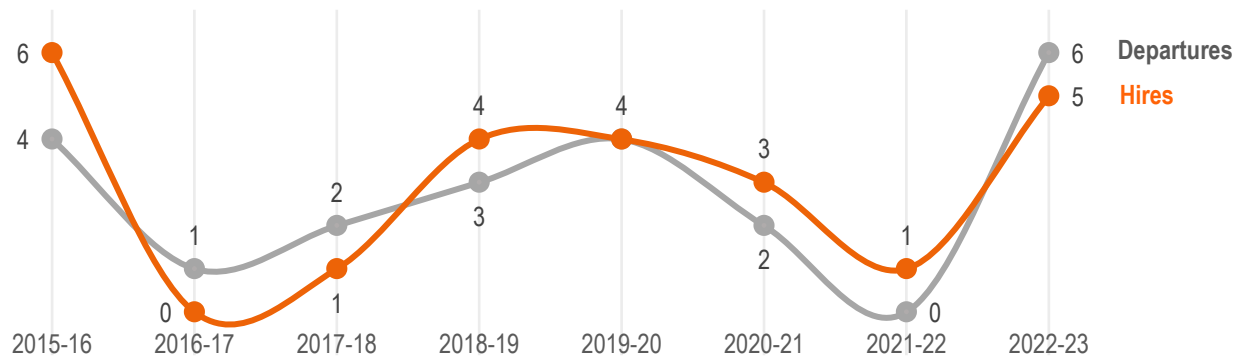


Figure 13: Number of CWC Program hires and departures in the YRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

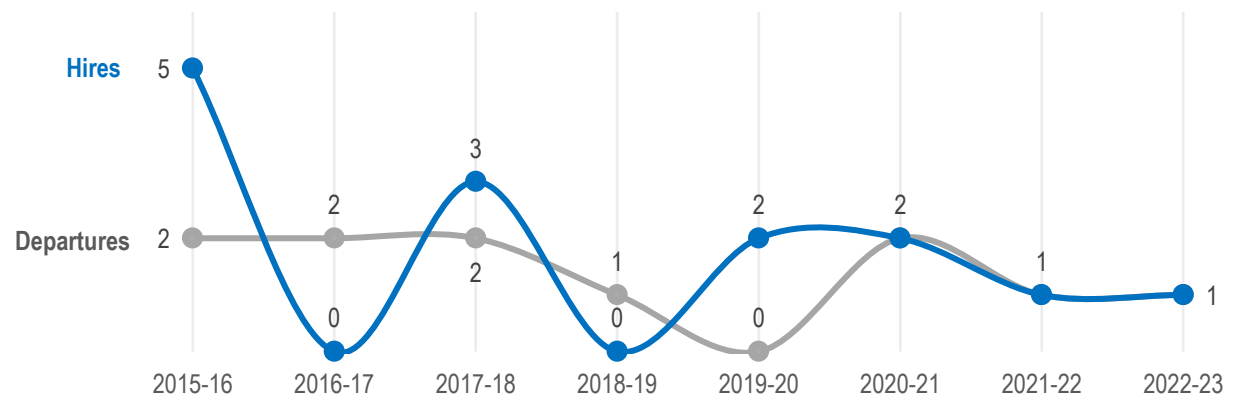
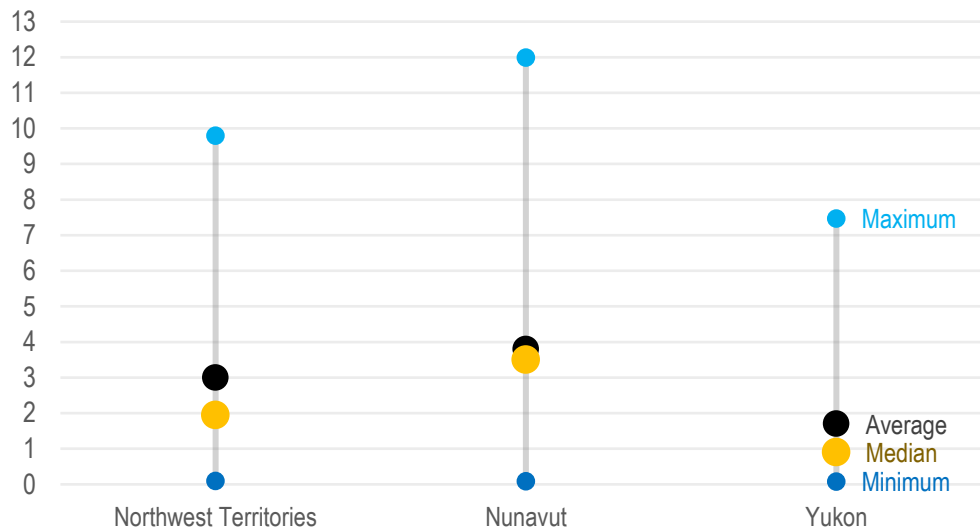


Figure 14: Average, median, minimum, and maximum length of the tenure of former CWC Program staff in number of years by region

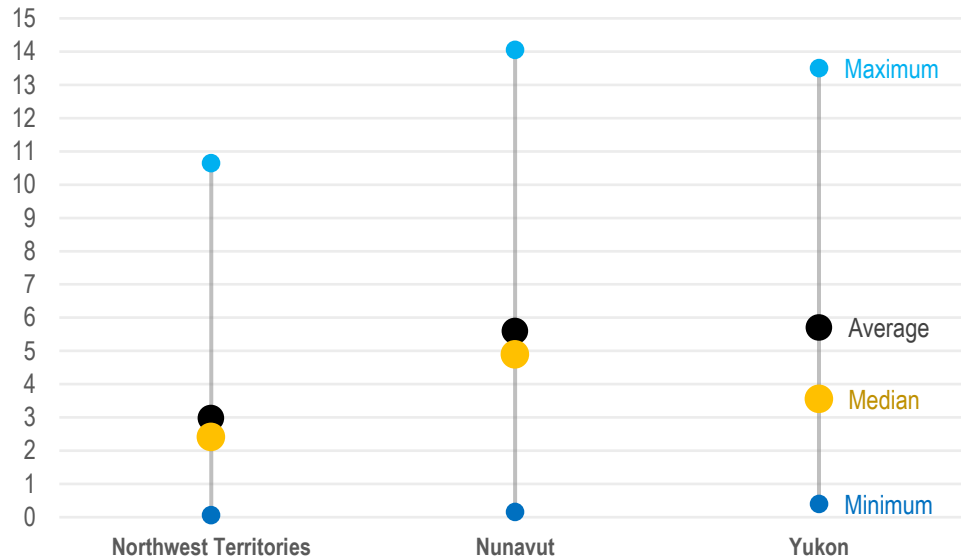
Source: PeopleSoft



Appendix B – Years of experience of CWC Program staff

Figure 15: Average, median, minimum, and maximum years of experience for CWC Program staff as of March 31, 2023, by region

Source: PeopleSoft



Appendix C – Leave used by CWC Program staff

Figure 16: Average number of leave days used per CWC in the NRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

[REDACTED FIGURE 16]

Figure 17: Average number of leave days used per CWC in the NWTRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

[REDACTED FIGURE 17]

Figure 18: Average number of leave days used per CWC in the YRO by FY

Source: PeopleSoft

[REDACTED FIGURE 18]

Appendix D – CWC timekeeping

Figure 19: Average number of CWC hours on sexual offence files with victim participants by file open date and region

Source: iCase

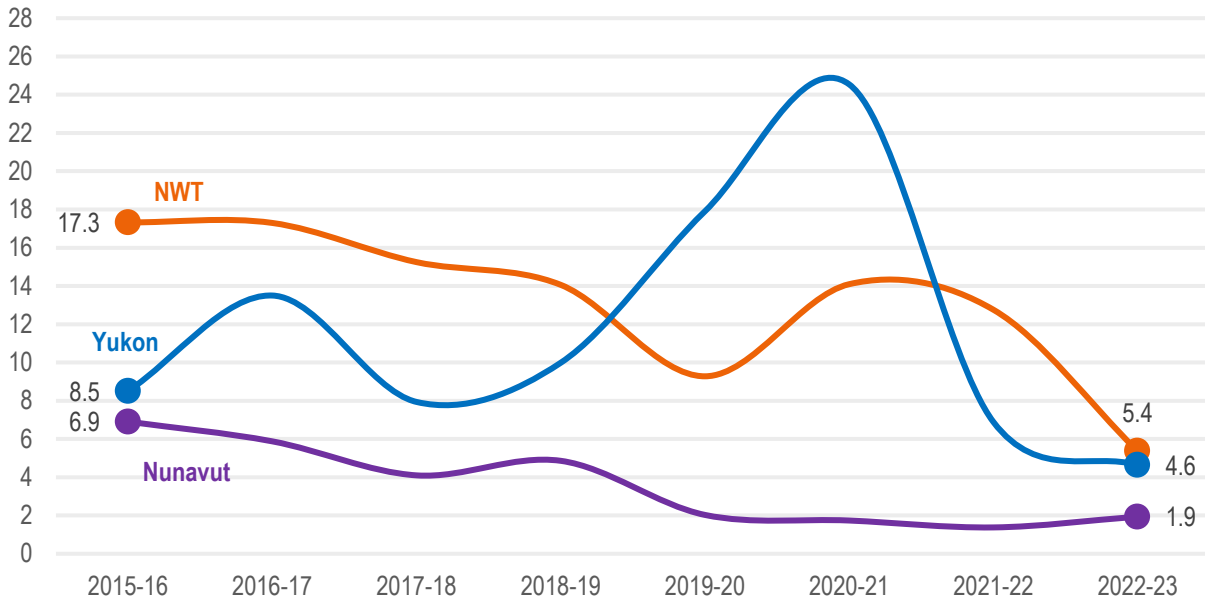


Figure 20: Proportion of files with victim participants by number of CWC timekeepers and region

Source: iCase

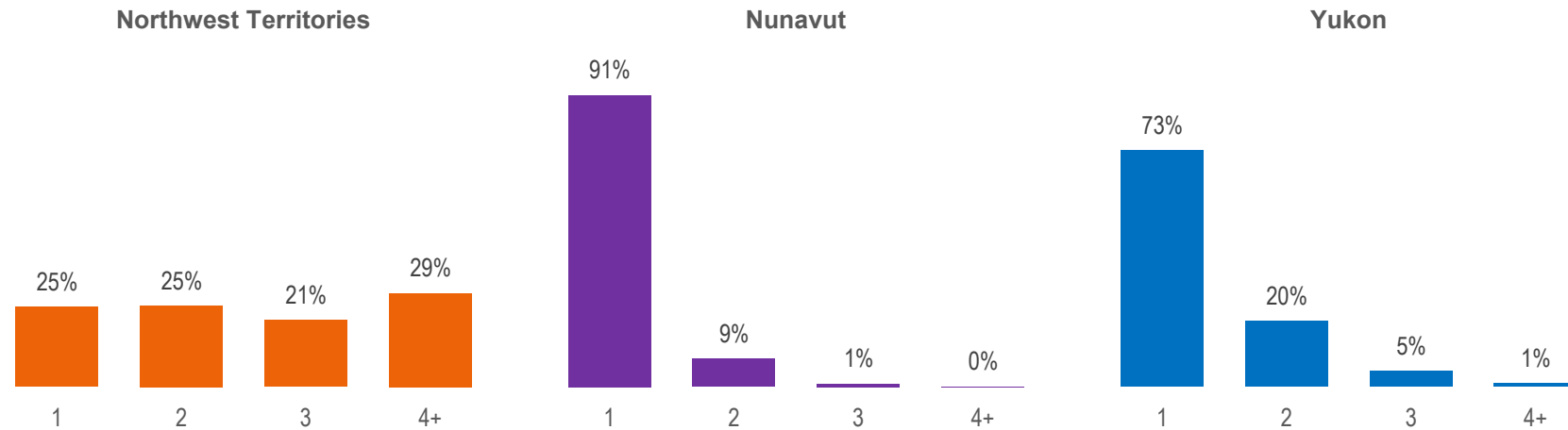
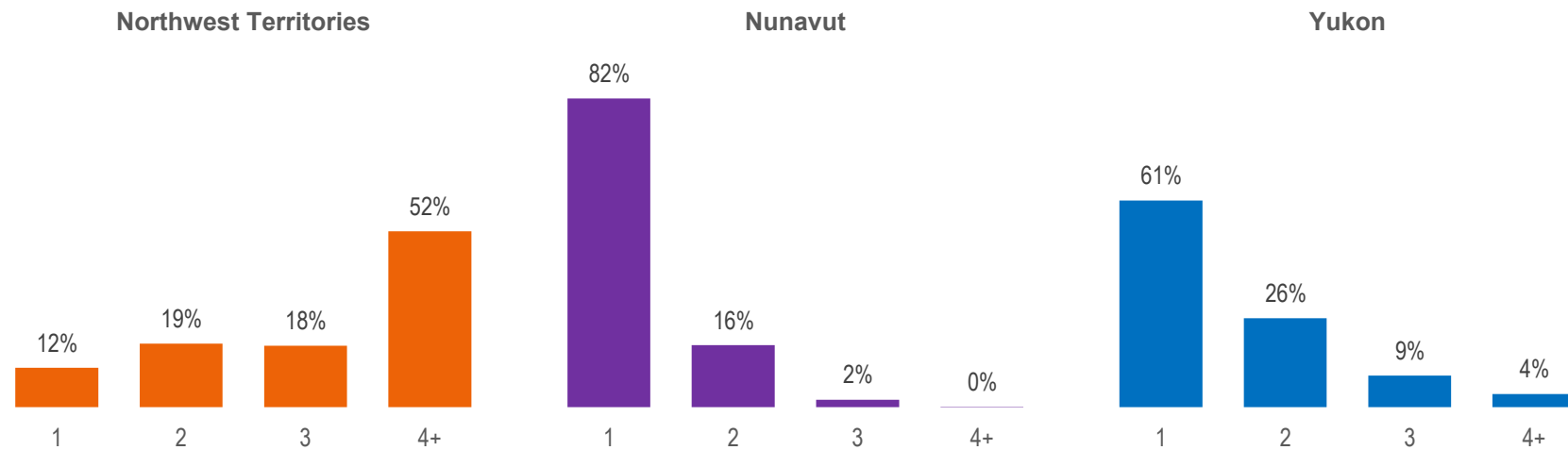


Figure 21: Proportion of sexual offence files with victim participants by number of CWC timekeepers and region

Source: iCase



Appendix E – Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach which included the following lines of evidence:

- ▶ **Document and literature review:** relevant documents were reviewed to gather background information and context on the CWC Program, including program foundational documents, manuals, and previous evaluations. The review also included studies and statistics on crime and victimization.
- ▶ **Key informant interviews:** a total of 24 interviews were conducted with the following stakeholder groups:
 - CFPs (n=3)
 - CWCs (n=11)
 - CWC Supervisors (n=2)
 - CWC Program Coordinator (n=1)
 - Territorial victim service providers (n=7)
- ▶ **Jurisdictional scan:** victim service programs administered by territorial governments were examined to develop a comprehensive profile of services and supports provided, compare their design and delivery, identify best practices and lessons learned and to identify any complementarity and/or duplication with services provided by the CWC Program.
- ▶ **Survey of PPSC Counsel:** an online survey intended for Counsel in the PPSC's territorial regional offices was conducted to get their views on their experience in working with CWCs and on the impacts of the CWC Program. The survey was sent to 56 Counsel. A total of 20 individuals completed the survey, for a response rate of 36%. Regionally, 11 individuals from the NWTRO completed the survey while 6 completed the survey from the NRO and 3 from the YRO.
- ▶ **Survey of RCMP members:** an online survey targeting RCMP members in the territories was conducted to gauge their level of awareness of the CWC Program and to gather their perspectives on their experience in working with CWCs. Representatives from the RCMP in each of the regions disseminated the survey to RCMP members on the evaluation team's behalf. As a result, the number of RCMP members who may have received the survey is not known. A total of 40 individuals completed the survey, including 17 from the Yukon, 12 from the Northwest Territories and 11 from Nunavut.
- ▶ **Administrative data review:** data was reviewed from the following sources:
 - **PeopleSoft:** data was analyzed to develop a profile of program human resources in each of the regions, including trends in leave used, hiring and turnover.
 - **iCase:** case management data was examined to collect information on CWC files and timekeeping.
 - **SAP Integrated Financial Management System:** financial data on program salary and O&M spending was analyzed.

- ▶ **File review:** a review of files with victim participants was conducted to examine CVBR forms. The goal was to collect data on services provided to victims and on compliance with CVBR-related obligations. The review identified a total of 23,044 files with victim participants in iCase, from which a sample of 377 files was randomly selected. The number of files selected for each office is as follows: 193 for the NRO, 120 for the NWTRO and 64 for the YRO. The file review was limited to what was available in iCase and not in a hardcopy file.