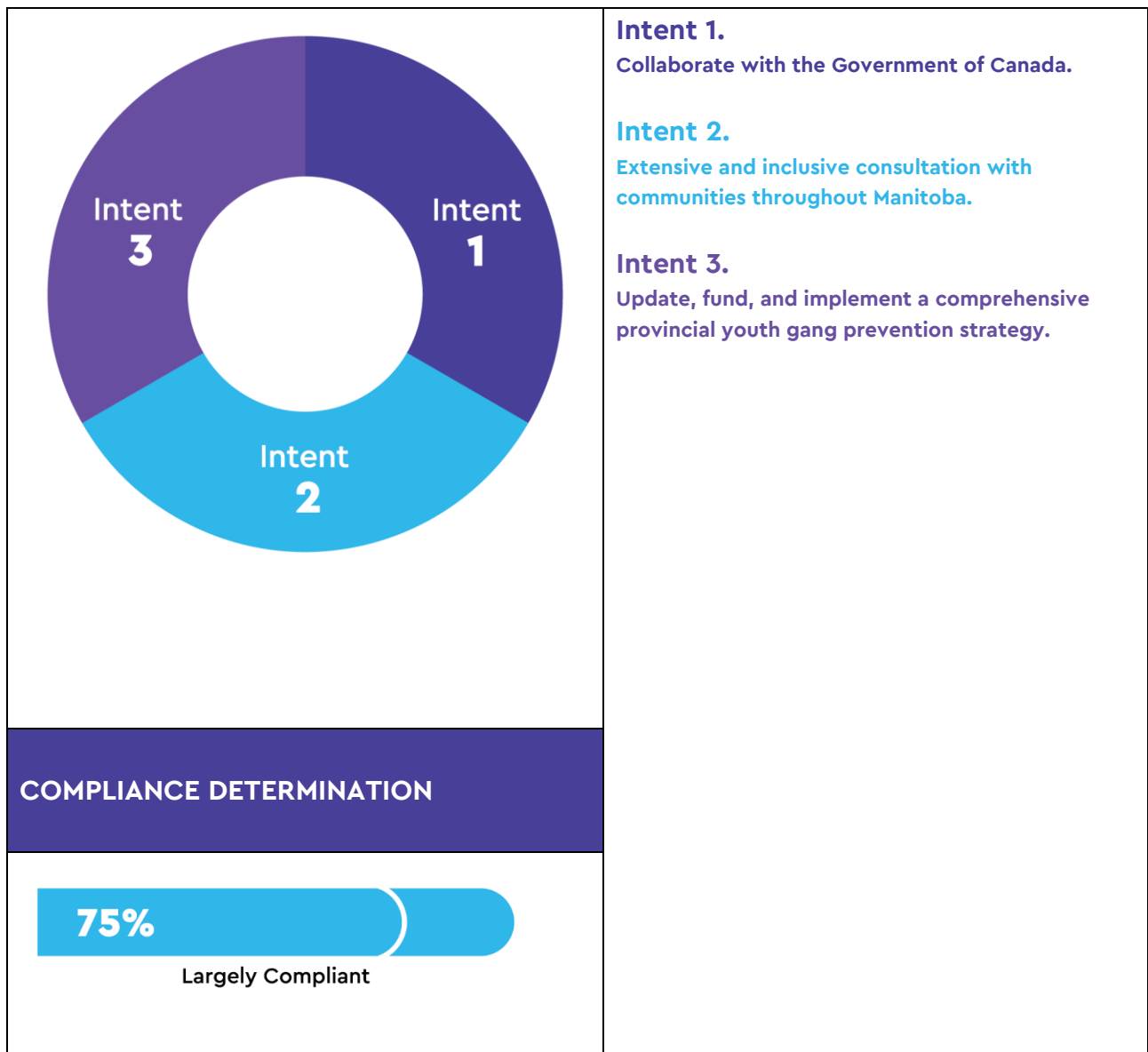


COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION

Boys Report – Recommendation 4

Recommendation Summary: Fund a comprehensive provincial youth gang prevention strategy.

Primary Public Body: Government of Manitoba



Recommendation Compliance Summary



This form details the assessment of compliance with recommendations made under Section 27 and Section 31 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. MACY assesses recommendations for compliance once a year but receives updates from the public bodies every six months.

1. Recommendation Information	
Report Name:	Finding the Way Back: An Aggregate Investigation of 45 Boys who Died by Suicide or Homicide in Manitoba
Date Released:	11/4/2021
Full Recommendation: (including details)	<p>Recommendation Four:</p> <p>The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends the Government of Manitoba, in collaboration with the Government of Canada, extensively and inclusively consult with communities throughout Manitoba to update, fund, and implement a comprehensive provincial youth gang prevention strategy.</p> <p>DETAILS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employ a community-led and informed by a whole-of-government approach, including stakeholder involvement from across the province with a particular focus on Indigenous and newcomer communities doing work related to rural, remote, and urban gang activity.• Include a provincial funding commitment for youth gang prevention initiatives on an annual basis determined by a needs-based assessment, with particular attention to Indigenous and newcomer communities.• Address gang prevention for youth through adequate supports tailored to the needs of boys from various backgrounds to help them transition to adulthood. This includes accessing basic needs and navigating through various systems such as housing, employment, and education.• Respond to the needs of gang-involved boys based on gender identity to ensure services are more welcoming and accessible to boys.• Incorporate prevention via recreation and cultural activities, including sports and art. This should include funding and supports for Elders and Knowledge Keepers in recognition of their essential and traditional role in supporting young people.• Include trauma-informed, youth-centred therapeutic interventions for boys at all stages.• Include gang prevention as a priority within the Government of Manitoba's review of the current youth

	<p>justice system in Manitoba and its connections to the child welfare system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the unique risk and protective factors for newcomer youth. 			
Intent(s) of Recommendation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with the Government of Canada. 2. Extensive and inclusive consultation with communities throughout Manitoba. 3. Update, fund, and implement a comprehensive provincial youth gang prevention strategy. 			
Issue:	Gang Prevention			
Public Body	Government of Manitoba			
Dates of Previous Official Updates from Public Body:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>May 31, 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 18, 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 30, 2022</td> </tr> </table>	May 31, 2023	August 18, 2023	June 30, 2022
May 31, 2023				
August 18, 2023				
June 30, 2022				
2. Compliance Determination				
Largely Compliant 0.75	Actions taken meet the majority of requirements for implementation, only negligible requirements remain.			
Self-Assessment	Fully Compliant			
Previous Compliance Determination	Partially Compliant			
3. Rationale for Determination				
<i>(How did you reach this compliance determination)</i>				
<p>Intent 1: Collaborate with the Government of Canada.</p> <p>2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of collaboration from 2022 remain the same, whereby the Public Safety Division collaborates with Public Safety Canada on an ongoing basis through the Guns and Gangs Suppression Strategy and the delivery of Guns and Gangs funding, including support for crime/gang prevention initiatives. The Department confirmed the aims of the strategy meetings are to collaborate and exchange information to decrease risk and opportunity for youth recruitment and/or involvement in gangs. • Regarding collaboration with Public Safety Canada for Manitoba-based applications for the Crime Prevention Action Fund and National Crime Prevention Strategy cited last year, the Department reported this funding supports multi-sectoral, community-driven, and direct intervention projects for an identified priority youth population. • The Department reports continued federal, provincial, and territorial Crime Prevention Working Group representation, and confirmed the meetings continue to occur quarterly. 				

2022

- The Government of Manitoba reported that the Public Safety Division collaborates with Public Safety Canada on an ongoing basis through the Gangs and Gangs Suppression Strategy and the delivery of Guns and Gangs funding and support for crime/gang prevention initiatives.
- The department further reported that the Policing Services and Public Safety Branch collaborates with Public Safety Canada and provides feedback and recommendations on Manitoba-based applicants for the Crime Prevention Action Fund and National Crime Prevention Strategy.
- Manitoba Justice sits on the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Crime Prevention Working Group which provides a platform to share information and align provincial and national priorities within the National Crime Prevention Strategy. These meetings take place 3-4 times annually.

Intent 2: Extensive and inclusive consultation with communities throughout Manitoba.

2023

- The Government of Manitoba maintained enhancing and expanding the 14 Community Mobilization initiatives across Manitoba is ongoing. Some communities include Steinbach, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin, Selkirk, Swan River, and The Pas, with funding supporting pilot projects in six First Nations communities across Manitoba. The government cited recognizing communities are best positioned to identify their own needs and develop solutions, while offering programming in consultation with the communities delivering services to youth.
- The Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Pilot Project referenced last year continues to have a reported completion over the 2022-23 and 2023-24 fiscal years. The Department reported CSWB planning supports a collaborative approach to addressing local priority risks to safety and well-being through the implementation of programs and strategies in four planning areas: social development, prevention, risk intervention, and incident response. The Department advised that involved communities work with a consultant to assist/guide the development of a community safety plan, which identifies needs specific to each community. The multi-sectoral collaboration table then designs a plan to enhance the safety and well-being of their respective communities. The Department added the referenced multi-sectoral tables have youth, First Nations, and newcomer populations represented. The Department indicated solutions are different, community specific, and community-driven. The evaluation component will examine the process and overall project, and identify challenges the communities may have encountered during the development phase to assist with future planning.
- To highlight specific aims, Manitoba Justice advised it supported the City of Thompson to establish a multi-sectoral Public Safety Advisory Committee to complete a CSWB plan. Through this process, the community identified six priority

areas, including the Youth Involved Crime and Harm priority area which focuses on resources to develop programs and strategies to create opportunities for at-risk youth. The Department clarified these cited initiatives are focused on positively engaging youth and fostering relationships so youth have an expanded community network. Goals include connecting with family members or individuals youth have identified as significant in their lives through activities to strengthen relationships and promote/encourage healthy pathways. Some examples of engagement/activities include: paint nights/murals with an Indigenous artist, the purchase of life size games at Thompson Recreation Centre, family nights with feasts, a movie night, camping, Paint Lake trips, supporting youth attendance at Treaty Days, and bowling. The overarching goal is creating opportunities for youth to feel connected, and gain a sense of belonging within their community.

- For this intent, Manitoba Justice reported engagement and consultation with First Nations/regional Indigenous organizations. Specific to newcomer youth, Justice provides funding to the N.E.E.D.S. Program (which enhances integration of immigrant and refugee youth through social programming and life skills), as well as to the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) to empower newcomer families through housing, programs, and services.
- The Government of Manitoba indicated the 2023 budget included additional investment for several initiatives related to community safety, including an expansion of community safety and well-being planning and community mobilization. Further details on which additional communities will be supported was said to be announced in the coming months.

2022

- The Government of Manitoba reported that Manitoba's Policing and Public Safety Strategy identifies enhancing and expanding Community Mobilization as a priority area.
- Community Mobilization is a locally driven community-led, multi-sector/whole of government (approach to addressing risk and enhancing community safety and wellbeing. There are 14 community mobilization initiatives in Manitoba working to connect multi-barriered children, youth, and families to appropriate services and supports, with the aim of reducing involvement in the justice and child welfare systems. This includes working with justice-involved, youth and addressing community-level issues such as gang prevention.
- On April 29, 2022, Manitoba Justice announced the Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Pilot Project, which will include 14 communities throughout Manitoba, including rural, urban and First Nation Communities. This process will work with local government, community stakeholders, community members, law enforcement, and government departments (Justice, Health, Education, Mental Health, Families, etc.).

Intent 3: Update, fund, and implement a comprehensive provincial youth gang prevention strategy.

2023

- The Government of Manitoba reiterated that its findings from consultations and engagement with community stakeholders and former gang-involved individuals, indicate there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to support gang-involved or at-risk individuals. Programs and initiatives which are supported to address youth gang prevention/intervention were cited, repeating some of those presented in 2022 (e.g., Lighthouse, Turnabout, community mobilization, and The Link). Manitoba Justice further advised it can share statistics and demographic information on the youth/families served by Lighthouse and Turnabout with MACY once made available.
- The Department continues to support restorative justice and diversion programs to support youth before they enter, or become entrenched in, the Criminal Justice System. Manitoba Justice indicated the number of young people going through diversion is growing. To demonstrate, it advised 286 youth were diverted through community-based restorative justice centres during the 2021-22 fiscal year.
- The Government of Manitoba also reported supporting Indigenous policing initiatives in 18 First Nations communities for the delivery of effective and culturally sensitive policing.
- The Department cited the Block by Block Community Safety and Wellbeing initiative (aka Thunderwing), a provincially-led initiative that draws on the expertise of various partner agencies and provides a platform to address systemic barriers. Thunderwing aims to increase community safety and improve individual/family well-being in the North End of Winnipeg. Increasing community safety, enhancing well-being of families through belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity, improving relationships between families and service providers, and improving coordination of services are the initiative's aims. Manitoba Justice advised of an evaluation which occurred between 2014-2017, and cited the following participant outcomes: 39 of 67 participants had reduced calls for police service; 95% of participants agreed that due to their involvement with a Thunderwing Support Team, they had improved relationships with the agencies involved in their lives; and 18 of 159 children were returned to parental care. Additional investments were announced in May of 2023 to enhance the project, which has been transitioned to Mount Carmel Clinic to administer.
- Manitoba Justice advised of their partnership with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) for the creation and operation of a youth Healing Lodge in Thompson intended to provide culturally-led justice resources in the north, reduce youth recidivism rates, and decrease the use of Thompson's RCMP cells for youth detained under *The Intoxicated Persons Detention Act* (IPDA). The first phase will provide open-custody correctional services closer to home for northern youth, while phases two and three will see an expansion to include a healing lodge,

enhanced mental health and addiction supports, employment/skills training, and community justice resources. Manitoba Justice confirmed Elders and Knowledge Keepers will be staffed in the Healing Lodge.

- The Department also cited the Reducing Youth Justice Social Impact Bond, delivered in partnership with MKO, which provides culturally safe, wraparound programming for youth involved in the justice system with the goal of reducing their number of days in custody. This program is in both Winnipeg and Thompson. Manitoba Justice noted this initiative blends Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, and healing practices together with western treatment modalities to support a child centred, individual, and holistic approach to wellness and healing.

2022

- The Government of Manitoba reported that the Crime Prevention Branch continues to explore how to better meet the needs of the community and implement evidence-based programming to help prevent individuals from being victimized or coming into contact with the law as offenders.
- It further reported certain crime prevention programs and initiatives as part of a comprehensive approach to address youth gang prevention and intervention. They include Turnabout, Lighthouses, community mobilization, mentorship programs such as Kistesimaw (Ka Ni Kanichihk), Ototema, Big Brothers Big Sisters Winnipeg, the Crime Prevention Branch, Community Alternatives to Detention, and SOURCE (Supporting Opportunities for youth Utilizing Recreation, Community and Education) through Broadway Neighborhood Centre.
- While these programs and initiatives point to positive steps taken towards crime and gang prevention, there is no indication of a comprehensive provincial strategy being developed or adopted.
- No report was given on efforts to fund a comprehensive prevention strategy.

Analysis Summary: There is evidence of collaboration with the Government of Canada on gang prevention. The Government of Manitoba reported a number of efforts to consult and collaborate with communities throughout the province. Community mobilization initiatives cited reflect recognition that communities themselves are best suited to identify and address their own unique needs. Strides have been made to increase programming availability and culturally appropriate services in line with the Department's assertion there is not a singular approach to gang prevention, and cited resources have been expanded to include rural and northern locations. Although there is no formal gang prevention strategy per se, there is demonstrated recognition that each child has unique needs and requires tailored interventions – a reality MACY recognizes considering the diverse reasons youth become involved with gangs in the first place. The cited interventions, programs, and different types of mediations presented can help mitigate the risks of becoming involved or entrenched in street gangs. The aims taken by the Government of Manitoba and ongoing actions of Manitoba Justice cited herein, with the anticipated opening of the Thompson Youth Healing Lodge, increase and will continue to

expand resourcing which may aid in youth gang prevention. As such, this recommendation is now considered Largely Compliant.