***Board Blog***

**An Alberta Criminal Justice Association (ACJA) feature.**

Are you bored of seeing a website that does not change significantly from time to time? As a student, criminal justice practitioner, or member of an associated agency are you looking for relevant and timely information? The newly established *Board Blog* will be your one stop shop. The ACJA is launching this new communication strategy which will include, for the time being, a quarterly blog (January, May and September) and, based on your feedback, the potential for monthly updates.

We will bring you an assortment of current news items to peak your interest and act as a springboard for your personal or professional learning experience. What’s new in legislative initiatives; read on to see some of the Bills currently before Parliament. There are opportunities for self-development. We will provide you with a listing of seminars, conferences and courses as they are announced and when we become aware of them.

At ACJA our vision is to have an “Informed, Competent, and Responsive Alberta Criminal Justice System”. This blog is intended to work toward and support ACJA’s Mission that : “… provides timely and topical information to Criminal Justice and related professionals that fosters confidence, builds leaders, and promotes a humane, equitable, and respected Criminal Justice system. Have a look. Be part of an informed, competent and responsive Alberta Criminal Justice system. Tell us what you think. Provide suggestions. info@acja.ca

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**Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

Alberta has a long history with federal policing; first with the Northwest Mounted Police dating back to the late 1800’s until 1917 and later when the RCMP replaced the Alberta Provincial Police in 1932 and remains our Provincial Police (under contract) and in some locales the Municipal Police (under contract). Notwithstanding this long history, the question has again been raised at the national level: Is it time to consider a rejigging of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police?

As reported by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute (MLI) website, Christian Leuprecht, a respected thought leader on policing issues, lays out a comprehensive solution for solving the problems the RCMP is presently facing, here and elsewhere in Canada, in [a new paper for the MLI](http://macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/MLILeuprechtRCMPPaper-08-17-F_Web.pdf).

A supplementary Annex to this paper has also been published, compiling recommendations from reports made or relevant to, the RCMP over recent decades.

Read the study, be part of the conversation. (<http://macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/MLILeuprechtRCMPPaper-08-17-F_Web.pdf> )

The Government of Canada recently released the[*Corrections and Conditional Release Statistical Overview: 2016 Annual Report*.](https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/ccrso-2016/index-en.aspx) Published annually, this report provides statistical information on a broad range of topics including crime rates, criminal charges in the courts, and the description of offences in Canada’s federal correctional system. Although the Overview does not make interpretations of the statistics, it is a source of information which leads to evidence-based decision making and better policy development.

**Some Quick Facts,** regarding key statistics/trends from the *Corrections and Conditional Release Statistical Overview: 2016 Annual Report,* as provided by Public Safety Canada*.*

* The overall crime rate in Canada has decreased 34% since 1998.
* In 2015-16, there was an 18.4% decrease in the total number of admissions to administrative segregation (in Correctional Service Canada institutions).
* In 2015-16, the federal day parole and full parole grant rates increased for both Indigenous offenders and non-Indigenous offenders.
* Since 2006-07, there has been a 66.8% increase in the number of victims registered with the Correctional Service of Canada and the Parole Board of Canada combined.
* 25.7% of offenders in federal custody are Indigenous.
* Fewer Indigenous offenders benefit from supervised gradual releases than non-Indigenous offenders. 82.4% of Indigenous offenders are held until their statutory release dates compared to only 65.2% of non-Indigenous offenders.
* The number of women admitted to federal correctional centres has increased for the past four years.

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**Bill C-59**

The proposed *National Security Act* 2017 received First Reading, June 20, 2017. Bill C-59 proposes a number of measures to enhance Canada’s national security framework with a view to keeping Canadians safe and also respecting and upholding Charter-protected rights and freedoms and the values of our free and democratic society. In an introduction to the Minister’s Charter Statement, The Department of Justice states these proposals have been informed by public consultations undertaken over the past year as well as by the need to ensure Canada’s national security framework keeps pace with developments in the current threat environment. However, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) has a number of matters of serious concern with respect to specific aspects of Bill C-59.

To assist in establishing your own informed position, view the content of the CCLA letter to the Federal Ministers. (<https://ccla.org/ccla-civil-society-groups-issue-joint-letter-bill-c-59-national-security-law-canada/> ) Also review the Minister of Justice’s Charter Statement to help inform public and Parliamentary debate on a government bill. ( <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/charter-charte/ns-sn.html> )

**Bill C-46**

With July 2018 legalization of marijuana just around the corner, the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights is receiving testimony regarding the *Act to amend the Criminal Code (offences relating to conveyances) and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*.

Part 1 amends the provisions of the Criminal Code that deal with offences and procedures relating to drug-impaired driving. Among other things, the amendments

(a) enact new criminal offences for driving with a blood drug concentration that is equal to or higher than the permitted concentration;

(b) authorize the Governor in Council to establish blood drug concentrations; and

(c) authorize peace officers who suspect a driver has a drug in their body to demand that the driver provide a sample of a bodily substance for analysis by drug screening equipment that is approved by the Attorney General of Canada.

Part 2 repeals the provisions of the Criminal Code that deal with offences and procedures relating to conveyances, including those provisions enacted by Part 1, and replaces them with provisions in a new Part of the Criminal Code that, among other things,

(a) re-enact and modernize offences and procedures relating to conveyances;

(b) authorize mandatory roadside screening for alcohol;

(c) establish the requirements to prove a person’s blood alcohol concentration; and

(d) increase certain maximum penalties and certain minimum fines.

Part 3 contains coordinating amendments and the coming into force provision.

This proposed Act and Bill C-45, *An Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts* being examined by the Standing Committee on Health, are both a matter of significant debate.

Be informed, follow the testimony and review the submitted briefs. See **LEGISinfo** which is described in its publically accessible website as, an essential research tool for finding information on legislation before Parliament. This tool provides electronic access to a wide range of information about each bill, such as:

* details on the passage of the bill through the Senate and House of Commons;
* the text of the bill as introduced at First Reading and its most recent version if it is amended during the legislative process;
* votes;
* major speeches at second reading;
* coming into force data;
* legislative summaries from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament; and
* government press releases and backgrounders (for government bills).

**LEGISinfo** is a collaborative effort of the Senate, the House of Commons and the Library of Parliament. ( <http://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/AboutLegisInfo.aspx?Language=E> )

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**Canadian Criminal Justice Association**

**YOU'RE INVITED** to the Canadian Youth and Justice Congress 2017: Advancing Ideas, Evidence and Innovation to shape a Canadian perspective of youth justice! The Criminal Justice Association of Ontario in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the [Canadian Criminal Justice Association](https://www.ccja-acjp.ca/), will be hosting Congress 2017 at the **Sheraton Toronto Centre Hotel on October 25-27, 2017.**

**Alberta Restorative Justice Association**

Each year ARJA plans and hosts the Annual Restorative Justice Conference for practitioners, interested individuals and those working or interested in restorative justice. The annual conference is a great way to learn, share and network.

The **11th Annual Alberta Restorative Justice Conference** will be held November 23 – 25, 2017
The Clarion Hotels & Conference Center in Calgary, Alberta. Registration opens the first week of

September, 2017 (<http://www.arja.ca/> )[Check out our 2017 conference website here!](https://rjalberta.wixsite.com/rjconference)