

20.8.1 Criminal injuries compensation

Criminal injuries compensation is related to two major areas of activity, the administration of justice and social security. From a justice perspective, it represents development in recent efforts to improve the criminal justice system by compensating innocent victims of crime. From a social security point of view, it forms part of a large network of programs to ensure Canadian residents of income security and necessary social services regardless of socioeconomic status.

In each province and territory except Prince Edward Island, there is a program to compensate for injury or death as a result of: some specified or defined crime committed by another person; an effort to prevent crime; or an effort to arrest an offender or suspected offender. Criminal injuries compensation legislation has been in effect in Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta from the late 1960s, and in other provinces from the early 1970s. Yukon and Northwest Territories have had legislation from the mid-1970s. Nova Scotia also had legislation from that time, but it went into force in May 1981. The federal Department of Justice started sharing costs of criminal injuries compensation programs in 1973.

Administration of criminal injuries compensation programs differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. For example, while all programs cover compensation for certain offences specified in the federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement, such as homicide, assault and robbery, a jurisdiction may also compensate for other offences, such as abduction, and impaired or dangerous driving.

Compensation may be in lump-sum awards, periodic awards or a combination of both. There are variations in the maximum amounts payable. As a general rule, no compensation is paid for property damage. Table 20.11 shows the number of applications received, their disposition, and the amount of compensation paid.

20.9 Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics is the focal point of a federal-provincial initiative dedicated to national statistics and information on the justice system in Canada. Established in Statistics Canada in 1981, the centre is responsible for producing information on the extent and nature of reported crime and the adminis-

tration of criminal, civil and administrative justice in Canada.

This information is designed to serve governments in the development, operation and evaluation of justice policies and programs, as well as to contribute to public understanding of how the justice system operates and of its cost. The centre also provides assistance to federal and provincial agencies in developing information systems that can serve both local and national needs.

Reflecting these two responsibilities, the centre has two main operational arms, one dedicated to the development and operation of statistical programs, the other designed to provide technical assistance to individual jurisdictions.

The centre operates under the responsibility and authority of Statistics Canada, but its programs and priorities are established in conjunction with federal, provincial and territorial departments and agencies responsible for the administration of justice, represented through a number of formal committees.

20.9.1 Statistics and information programs

The centre's statistical programs provide information on the number and nature of cases dealt with by each major sector of the justice system: law enforcement, legal aid, courts and correctional services, as well as on resources, expenditures and personnel in each sector. Descriptive information is available on the structure, legislative authority and programs of each sector.

Ongoing data collection programs provide time series information and in-depth studies to provide information on high priority national justice issues.

Law enforcement. This program produces statistics on criminal incidents reported to the police, how they are dealt with, and police administration in Canada. Information is provided by accredited police and other law enforcement agencies. In-depth information on homicide incidents is also produced, covering such areas as the characteristics of offenders and victims, and means of committing the offence.

Legal aid. This program produces statistical and descriptive information on such legal aid activities as the provision of legal advice, counsel representation, and other legal services in criminal and civil cases.

Courts. A courts program provides information on courts and court services. Data include information on court resources, expenditures and