

GREG WRIGHT PRESENTATION

Good morning and welcome. It's my pleasure to be here this morning and to share the podium with my friend and colleague, Scott Anderson from B.C.

Over the next few minutes we'd like to share the federal/provincial perspectives on integrated justice information and just how this relates to the technology and terrorism agenda of this conference.

Let me begin by asking you to image a day in the not too distant future when our law enforcement officials are completely linked to all the information available across the many agencies involved in public safety. Imagine that these thousands of professionals can go online, and in real time, and access all the available information on terrorist offenders and criminals. Imagine a day when the dozens and dozens of types of business transactions that go on daily in the criminal justice system can be done electronically, without duplicate data entry, reams of paper and without delay. Imagine a network that can put this kind of information power into the hands of our professionals. Let's call this the Canada Public Safety Information Network. Well, creating the Canada Public Safety Network is part and parcel of my job and

it's why I'm here today representing the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada, the lead federal agency for this.

Knowledge and the sharing of it is the pivotal point in the effort to mount a credible defence against terrorism and, indeed, any crime. In a perfect world public safety officials would have in their hands all the information they need on prospective terrorists or criminals and ideally this information would be there to prevent a crime from actually occurring. This information could include detailed criminal histories, aliases, known associates, intelligence, biometrics and so on and so forth.

The fact that this does not already exist speaks volumes of what the complexity of the issues before us, be they organizational, geographic, technological, cultural, legislative and so on, the list goes on. The deadly attacks of September 11th have shown us that the consequences of missing information had simply become too great a risk. As an example, a customs inspector at Pearson Airport in Toronto has some thirty seconds to make a key decision. This does not leave a lot of time, a lot of margin, for an information disconnect. So, this is why we're here today. There's no more

debating the concept of integrated justice information I don't think. It's not something nice to have, it's something we must have and the sooner the better.

In Canada there are a number of initiatives underway to secure our borders, to move us towards this nirvana of interoperability and to provide the appropriate policy and legislative framework for moving forward. Colleagues elsewhere on the agenda will cover some of these themes. My focus will be to outline Canada's experience and commitment to deliver a central piece of the solution, an integrated justice information network, as a foundation for the walls of security and public safety. And in developing this network to protect Canadians, we very much see this as an opportunity to help protect our American neighbours as well.

Our information systems are becoming ever more linked because both our countries are open democracies that have traditionally welcomed immigrants. Also, a situation with that for over a hundred years we have maintained a common border that is, as U.S. Attorney General Ashcroft has said, a model of how neighbours should conduct themselves.

But, let me backtrack just a moment to make sure

we're on the same page. Let me pose the question. What is integrated justice information? Well, the textbook definition for this might suggest a unified whole. The common notion here of justice information integration refers to the capability to share critical information at key predictable points in the criminal justice system, from law enforcement to courts to corrections and so on. This involves some 200 discreet business processes and literally hundreds of partner agencies.

Integrated justice is surely about more than modernizing systems and getting partners to share. It is also an opportunity to revolutionize the way they work together. The way criminals are tracked, are handled, the way day to day decisions are made by our professionals. It's about giving the right tools, the right information, at the right time to our front line officials to fight terrorism, to keep ahead of the bad guys, and to enhance our overall capacity.

Every province in Canada, and I believe every state south of the border, is planning or pursuing integration activities. And while experiences, approaches, and solutions may vary, the issues are common. Time will not permit me to cover all of the

very initiatives underway that will move us forward to full integration. Rather, I'll focus on mapping out a vision for CPSIN, the Canada Policy Safety Information Network, and what this network could mean and will mean to all of us. But first, a small digression. For those delegates from U.S. it's important to understand that there are key differences between our respective criminal justice systems.

To highlight just a few, Canada has one national *Criminal Code* versus one in each U.S. state. Canada's national police force, the R.C.M.P., is also the provincial police force in eleven of our thirteen jurisdictions and in over two hundred municipalities. In Canada incarceration in federal correctional facilities is based exclusively on the length of sentence, also known as our two-year rule. And finally, Canada does not offer the very significant grant programs available from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics which support integration activity at the county and the state level in the States. There are many other changes, as well, and differences, but these are some of the key ones.

So, what does this mean in practical terms for a federal government that wishes to share information in

the interest of public safety? First, it means getting our own house in order. Recognizing that our involvement as a federal tier of government in a given case is very much situationally dependant. Take, for example, an individual who's accused of murder in, dare I say Whistler, hypothetical case, would be arrested by a national police force working under provincial contract and charged with a federal offence. Yet, that individual would likely be tried in a provincial court by a provincial Crown attorney before a federally appointed judge. And if the accused is found guilty and sentenced to incarceration, the sentence will be served in a federal correctional facility. So, if you're not confused about the division of labour between our jurisdictions, you're either very well informed, in which case I probably have a job for you, or you're not paying attention. So, the upshot of this is that from a federal perspective only we own part of the problem and, of course, part of the solution. Even the very best technology, policy framework and business practices that we might impose upon ourselves, will only take us so far to solve the problem without a similar engagement by our provincial and territorial partners. Fortunately, many of our provincial

counterparts, such as British Columbia, are right there standing along side us. Scott will tell you more about that in a few moments.

So, at present the value of the information we collectively hold is not optimized in its use as a tool to fight crime or terrorism. We are all aware of national or local examples on either side of the border that remind us of these shortcomings. Modernized information sharing systems with robust query and trigger type capabilities can do much to preclude or mitigate these outcomes. And crucial to all our efforts is finding the right mix of information technology and information management policy.

If I could summarize our mandate in two parts. First, to lead the modernization and enabling of the various federal partners towards information sharing. More on that later.

Second, is to foster partnerships with all jurisdictions and stakeholders so that we're all moving in the same direction while recognizing that no single government controls the entire business cycle in the criminal justice system, yet each is as interdependent as it is independent.

Fortunately, there is one great unifying factor,

the commitment to public safety, to crime prevention, to crime deterrence, apprehension of the bad guys, which brings us back to the future state, the Canada Public Safety Information Network. This is less a story about computers and bandwidth, than it is a concept. A concept that I would call a national criminal justice information sharing capability. At the root of the technology problem is our legacy systems. Stand alone systems stove-piped in such a way that information could not be readily shared. Transactions between systems and agencies were typically paper based, labour intensive, and error prone. Worse yet, there were no standards. No common rules governing how information should be shared and managed. And finally, a business culture. A culture that tended to keep information inside, where protecting one's turf was sometimes as important as protecting the information.

Combined, this culminates in an overall system that is less than a hallmark of efficiency and a system that, unfortunately, does not always work perfectly, as the occasional and well publicized court case tends to illustrate. With these vulnerabilities in mind, the Government of Canada moved decisively to set a course

which brings us to where we are today. With an approved five-year action plan and sufficient resources to achieve the first generation of the Canada Public Safety Information Network.

Let me comment on where we are today and where we expect to be by the end of our planning horizon in 2005. In one sense, the vision of CPSIN is a networks of networks. It is not a big brother database. It will mean that partners in Canada's criminal justice system will be connected in a certain way electronically and will be able to transact with each other electronically.

So, who are our partners? Our immediate partners make up a criminal justice cluster of federal agencies. These include all of the organizations that perform a significant role in Canada's criminal justice system. There are, of course, other prospective partners for the future, but given the enormity of the challenge before us and the need to manage risk, we're deliberately trying to contain and manage the scope. However, this list of partners will expand over time and perhaps soon. CPSIN will mean common policies, common tools and technology solutions in order to link and share data electronically. This will be moving us

towards entering data once and getting the right information in real time.

One of our longer term objectives is to revolutionize the push and pull of information in the criminal justice system. What I mean by push is that via CPSIN a customs officer at the border will be able to push, or submit, a case file to police, perhaps a case involving an impounded vehicle at the border. The police will be able to push their Crown brief to the Crown attorney and the courts will be able to push information, perhaps reasons for sentencing, to the correctional facility, and all of this, of course, would be electronic. But, providing information is only half of the equation. That's when the pull dynamic comes into play. For example, police will be able to determine the correctional status of any person, access a person's complete criminal history, plus an extract of the case held in other agencies across the country.

So, how do we do this? Good question. Partners need a way to query each other's systems and to do so in a manner that's fast, secure and reliable. Which brings us to the center piece of CPSIN, the National Criminal Justice Index, that was referred to a few

moments ago. This index will provide a new front door complete with lock and key through which partners will enter a new universe of information. And we have a breakout session on this this afternoon which we hope to see you there.

Part of our activity is delivering modern case management tools to all of the federal agencies in order to enable them to function in this interconnected environment. These are noted on the screen, the main ones. For example, Corrections Canada will replace its very large offender management system over the next couple of years. And even though full implementation is still a little ways away, they are already piloting information sharing by allowing other provinces and select police services direct access into their system. This is systematic. A whole new way of doing business. Things that we wouldn't have dreamt about 10 years ago. They are working towards a situation where sentenced offenders can be processed directly from the courts and, where applicable, between jurisdictions without paper. This marks quite a change from the past, and dare I say from the present. But technology solutions are only part -- are only one of the tracks of activity we are pursuing. Standards and common tools comprise a

second. We have created a core set of data exchange standards to facilitate a data sharing. Federal partners have agreed, and we hope eventually provincial partners will agree, to migrate to these standards.

Why are standards important? Let me give you a simple example. I have asked Alistair Rondeau, where are you Alistair, hold up your hand so I can embarrass you. There he is. Alistair is the manager of our Data Standards Secretariat. So, I asked him to pull out his wallet and check all the plastic cards he has in there and to note how his name is captured on each card. Now, understand that each card represents the information in a different computer system and that each could equally be a police incident reporting system in a different jurisdiction somewhere in Canada. Hopefully not in this specific case. An urgent request comes across the wire, CPIC let's say. Have you had any contact with Alistair Rondeau? Well, through the magic of CPSIN each system, as it currently exists, is searched using a sophisticated name search engine. Even without standards this request might still be handled, but the likelihood of hits varies substantially. In the case at hand, it turns out that the citizenship system has the highest probability of a

good hit. But, from his Petro Points' application, which is sort of like an Airmiles card for gas, it would answer using A. Rondo and thus bringing up each name with each case where the first name starts with the letter A. So, you can imagine the complexity. Imagine what the results would be if the surname were Smith or a much complex name which we can deal with these days. So, with partners agreeing to record complete information in the same format, such as this very simple example, surname, given name, middle name and so on, the accuracy of data can be maintained and positive identification is reinforced.

We are now moving to develop a common offence library and information exchange architectural model and other elements and exchange and document standards, such as XML, which we believe over time will make the operation of the criminal justice system more efficient and effective.

A parallel track is policy. We need to ensure that we have the right public policy in place to support information while respecting privacy requirements. This includes efforts to encourage change in the business culture, to gauging the need for new legislation, to standards associated with

information management, and performance measurement, all very difficult areas.

Without question privacy and security are paramount concerns within CPSIN and with all of the systems operated by partners. This is why our policy track will make sure that appropriate safeguards are being built in to the respective systems. Who gets in will be determined by role based access.

Our next track is partnerships. CPSIN has many partners, many stakeholders. They are the glue that will hold it all together and serve as the representation of its common will. We're working with provinces to find the best way to make our systems interconnect and there will be international efforts as well in due course. At present we have a CPSIN Charter signed by the Deputy Ministers of the nine federal agencies around the table. This attests persuasively to their commitment. Over time we hope to broaden the reach of this Charter to become something national. Quite frankly, achieving integrated justice is a journey, not a destination. The challenges can be daunting, made even more so by the continuing evolution of the environment in which we function.

Let's look at just a few of these challenges. We

have multiple user organizations, different legislative frameworks, various user perspectives, differing resource capabilities, varying privacy rules, multiple legacy systems, different technological environments, and inherently, complex IT systems. We've heard several times that the CPIC system, for example, is apparently one of the most complex IT undertakings in North America at this time. Other systems, such as the Offender Management System, the Global Case Management System at the CIC are also very, very large and complex IT projects. So, we have this environment and most importantly, all without a central point of command and control. All the more reason for us to focus on consensus building and developing partnerships.

I'm sure we all want to transform the way that agencies and partners work with each other. This is not something that will happen overnight. It will require a long-term investment plan and commitment by all parties if we are to succeed. We can't just expect our computers to be linked up and hope the problems go away overnight. We need to look at ways that we can effect changes within the culture, to build a sharing culture. I'm reminded by a comment by Coronel Michael Robinson who is the Director of the Michigan Department

of State Police, who said, "A top down mandate wasn't enough to change the way tight-lipped cops have worked for decades. The best way to get them to loosen up is to lead by example". Canadian visionary, Marshall McLuhan, once said that, "Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which they communicate than by the content of the communication." And certainly this statement rings true when you think of how the legacy systems have seeped into the way that we work with each other over time. Our challenge, as leaders, is to turn that thought on its ear.

Let's build a sharing culture that is a reflection of this rich new data that we will be unlocking with CSPIN and the NCJI. As part of the comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism and other crime, integrated justice information is undeniably a central part of the solution. And, if I may borrow liberally from the search organization out of Sacramento, success for integrated justice information requires something called CFA squared. C as in commitment and collaboration, F as in focus and funding, A as in action and accountability. And I've taken the liberty of adding the two T's, time and tenacity. Time in the sense that integration will not happen overnight. As I

said, that this will require long-term attention. And tenacity, well, there are days when the challenges do appear insurmountable. And although integrated justice as a concept has been around for a few years now, if I had to synthesize my message down to just a few words, it would be this, integrated justice now more than ever.