

# RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Evaluation of Parks Canada's Compliance Program



## Evaluation Objective and Scope

Consistent with the requirements of the Treasury Board Policy on Results (2016) and the associated Directive on Results and Standards on Evaluation, which requires Parks Canada to periodically evaluate the performance of all programs and spending.

The evaluation was formative in scope and focussed on evaluating the design and delivery of the Compliance Guidelines in order to identify lessons learned to assist the implementation process moving forward. Although the Guidelines were published in March 2018, work started on the compliance planning process in 2017. As such, the evaluation covered a two-year period between March 2017 and March 2019.

The evaluation explored questions related to:

- **Effectiveness:** extent to which activities and outputs were being implemented as planned, monitoring, stakeholder satisfaction, and early progress towards achieving its immediate outcomes.
- **Efficiency:** extent to which resources are used, such that output is increased or the same level is reached, with the same degree of input or less.

## Findings

### Effectiveness

#### **Program Implementation**

The Agency has seen an increase in prevention and response strategies since the introduction of the Guidelines. Barriers to communication within the program, however, have led to some potential gaps in the provision of appropriate guidance to field units. This has caused issues in distributing compliance-related material consistently across the Agency, difficulties in communicating with the full complement of compliance staff, and a lack of awareness of the online tools and templates available for use by program staff.

#### **Resources**

Evidence shows that many field units have reported challenges in dedicating the staff time and resources required to fully implement the program. For instance, a small number of field units have a dedicated Prevention/Compliance Coordinator. In addition, competing priorities sometimes leave insufficient time to manage the compliance program or to focus on those compliance issues that could help minimize the risk to public safety, loss of life or damage to property and/or natural or cultural resources (i.e., human-wildlife conflict, vandalism, etc.).

#### **Alignment of Planning Processes**

There is evidence that the compliance planning process has helped align and create efficiencies between the planning processes of the field units and the Law Enforcement Branch (LEB). There is high satisfaction in regards to the sharing of reliable information between the field units and the LEB, which has reduced duplication of efforts and promoted continual dialogue and understanding of key concerns.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Compliance Guidelines, approved in March 2018, are the foundation of the Compliance Program. The Guidelines support the development of prevention (i.e., increased signage) and response strategies (i.e., ticketing for) that aim to protect cultural and natural resources and contribute towards safe and high-quality site user services.

The specific objectives of the Compliance Program, are to:

- encourage visitors to use Parks Canada's protected areas in ways to leave them unimpaired for present and future generations through the promotion of best behaviours;
- facilitate safe, peaceful, enjoyable and untroubled visitor experiences at sites protected by Parks Canada;
- encourage visitors and stakeholders to become active stewards of their heritage areas by fostering a culture of conservation and respect for protected heritage places; and
- prevent undesired incidents from occurring and solve problems before they escalate and require law enforcement measures.

#### **Monitoring and Tracking**

The Mobile Compliance Reporting application presents an opportunity to consistently track prevention and response actions associated with the Compliance Program across the Agency. The application has the potential to coordinate the efforts of Compliance Program staff with the Law Enforcement Branch staff, who will use a similar application (in development).

#### **Efficiency**

##### **Accountabilities**

It was found that the Compliance Guidelines clearly outline program accountabilities. Challenges with the governance structure were noted where accountabilities do not align between compliance and law enforcement. There are areas of concern in regards to the accountability structure and that it does not adequately support field units in delivering and implementing of the compliance program. This was largely related to the splitting of accountabilities for delivery of the Compliance Program between with the field unit superintendents and the LEB.

##### **Roles and Responsibilities**

There is opportunity to improve the identification of and communication of the functional manager responsible for the Compliance Program within field units. The clarity and awareness of roles and responsibilities of staff supporting the Compliance Program was also identified as an area for potential improvement, particularly around the role of the Compliance Leads. There did not always exist a clear Compliance Lead, making it more difficult to implement the issues identified in the compliance plans. Furthermore, it was found that the Compliance Program was more effective when it was promoted and advocated for at the field unit superintendent and manager level.



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## Recommendations

### **Recommendation 1: Roles and Responsibilities**

The Senior Vice-President, Operations, should ensure that each field unit superintendent designates a lead manager for the compliance planning process and shares this list with the External Relations and Visitor Experience Directorate (ERVE) and the Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation Directorate (PAEC).



### **Management Response:**

**Agree.** The Senior Vice-President, Operations, will ensure that each field unit has a designated lead manager for the compliance planning process and will share a list of designated leads with the External Relations and Visitor Experience Directorate and the Protected Areas and Conservation Directorate.

### **Recommendation 2: Roles and Responsibilities**

The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, should clearly define roles and responsibilities for the manager responsible for leading the Compliance Program within each field unit.



### **Management Response:**

**Agree.** The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will clearly define roles and responsibilities for the manager responsible for leading the Compliance Program within each field unit.

### **Recommendation 3: Program Implementation**

The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, in collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations, should facilitate regular communication and information sharing with the field units.



### **Management Response:**

**Agree.** The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, in collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations, will facilitate regular communication and information sharing with the field units.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Establishing regular National Office-led direct communication with all managers responsible for leading the Compliance Program; and
- Encouraging the use and sharing of information on the Compliance Program (i.e., Confluence, Sharepoint).

### **Recommendation 4: Monitoring & Tracking**

The Senior Vice-President, Operations, in collaboration with the Vice-President, Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation and the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, should encourage field units to standardize monitoring and tracking systems.



### **Management Response:**

**Agree.** The Senior Vice-President, Operations, in collaboration with the Vice-President, Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation, and the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will explore tools available to support standardized monitoring and tracking systems.

Consideration should be given to:

- The use of the Mobile Compliance Reporting application as a standard compliance reporting tool for all field units; and
- Working with the Law Enforcement Branch to enable effective communication between the upcoming Mobile Law Enforcement application and the Mobile Compliance Reporting application.

