



STRENGTH IN PEOPLE

Integrity | Passion | Accountability | Quality | Teamwork

2021-2022 Annual Report



Spirit of
Our Youth



We saw all our employees dig deep, again, for another year and continue to provide exemplary support amid challenging conditions and times.

► **Caroline Bonesky**



The last year has not been an easy one as the lingering impact of the COVID 19 virus continues to play out across the world. Last year I ended my message on an optimistic note that the 2021 year would be easier as we saw the pandemic impacts ease. Unfortunately, my optimism was misplaced and we saw all our employees dig deep, again, for another year and continue to provide exemplary support amid challenging conditions and times. As an organization, our staff teams ensured that all services that could be delivered, were delivered, either in person or virtually. Employees covered for team members who were unable to work and ensured that the vulnerable individuals we support were kept safe.

This past year required WJS and Spirit of our Youth to pivot, respond and transform as public health orders changed, Worksafe requirements evolved and the needs of the individuals we supported changed due to the impact of COVID 19. I can honestly say that our employees were remarkable in their responsiveness,

their commitment and their willingness to go the extra mile for yet another year. We do not know what the future will hold for our communities, but I do know that WJS can rely on our employees to respond with passion, integrity and accountability to provide quality support as part of the WJS team.

We have continued our journey with Truth and Reconciliation and a reflection of our impact has been captured in a video which has had hundreds of views on our internal and external platforms. We launched our first recognition of Orange shirt day which coincided with a National recognition of the day as a statutory holiday. We continue to move forward in our journey to recognize how we can support the best possible outcomes for all the individuals and families we support in a good way.

We spent considerable time talking to our staff about the future of WJS and our next Strategic plan is now in place. We recognized that a lot has been accomplished over the past five years and we want to build on that

foundation as we focus on providing a best in class workplace so that our 700+ employees can continue to have a positive impact on the over 1600+ individuals we support annually.

As we move forward we recognize that being an employee owned B Corp brings opportunities and responsibilities and we are starting to engage our employees in efforts to learn about the impact we have on climate change and small steps we can take to make a difference. Our strategic plan focuses on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and we will learn as individuals and an organization how we can strengthen our culture so all can contribute fully.

I want to share my heartfelt gratitude to all our employees, our Board Directors and our stakeholders for working to make WJS a great place to strengthen individuals and communities.



Our senior management group continues to lead with extraordinary strength and vision.

► **Tim Beachy**



Our work and our lives this past year continued to be focused on responding to the needs of communities and clients experiencing the Covid pandemic. We have become tired and nearly exhausted from the changes in our lives and our work. Yet, we stayed on the job. Our staff, doing the frontline, indispensable and emergent work every day of the year, continued to serve. We are so proud of them. Thankful for them. Grateful to them. They are the heroes of the year.

On behalf of the WJS Board of Directors, I'd like to acknowledge staff at all levels that have been with WJS for the majority of their career – some having worked with us for decades or more, they have shown such dedication, leadership and commitment. Their focus on quality care and excellence helps distinguish our organization from others.

Our senior management group continues to lead with extraordinary strength and vision.

CEO Caroline Bonesky is a true leader, committed to client services and company improvement. We are grateful for the fine leadership of: Debbie Olinyk, Chief of Human

Resources; Monty Chew, Chief of Finances; and Carol Siziba, Chief of Services. As our National Management Team, these individuals exercise great teamwork, and express the dedication, purpose and values that make WJS unique and valued across our regions of Canada. We are very indebted to this group's commitment to our vision of "Strength in People".

Over the last year, the Board has overseen development of a renewed Strategic Plan: continuing to build essential infrastructure capacity and cohesion, to invest in growth and business development, to become more agile and resilient, and to develop and deepen relationship with communities.

Our Truth and Reconciliation efforts are having real-live impacts in many communities. We want to strengthen and extend that great work for the foreseeable future by embedding it in every aspect of the company's services and working with partners to encourage change on an even bigger scale.

In the past year we have also strengthened our B-Corp (Benefit Corporation) work into more parts of the company's sphere of activities.

In the coming years, we will continue extending our commitment to additional corporate social, economic and environmental goals and outcomes. Our B-Corp commitment will increasingly become embedded in our company culture.

The financial health of the company remains strong. Our Human Resource Department has responded strongly to the challenges of a swiftly changing employment market and supported our workforce through another very tough year, navigating the changes with clear vision and superb adaptation.

On behalf of the company, I want to thank WJS Directors for the wisdom they bring to the long-range vision of the company. Their commitment to our values creates a very congenial environment for thoughtful planning and policy making. Thanks to: Helen Ambali (Secretary), Adam Borgida (Vice Chair), Monty Chew, Arron Hashkowsky, Alex Hayer, Lisa LaForge (Treasurer) and Donna Phillips. These individuals bring a range of skills, talents and viewpoints to our decision-making. They serve the company well and diligently.

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WORKING GROUP

The Truth and Reconciliation working group continues to further the understanding of indigenous issues across our organization. The committee comprising of both indigenous and non-indigenous staff meet regularly. Here's a little of what the group has achieved and continues to refine:



WJS employee Rodney Noskiye, designed a motif that was placed onto orange shirts in response to Every Child Matters campaign and distributed to staff.



The Truth and Reconciliation Working Group developed a dedicated news and resources site on WJSource.



Smudge kits were developed for distribution across WJS with information on the proper use and storage of the ceremonial artifacts



98 % of staff when surveyed were aware and understood the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Working Group



WJS distributed a Calls to Action Booklet detailing the TRC's 10 principles of Reconciliation, the 94 calls to action published by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.



Dorene Gullion became our Indigenous Cultural Advisor and has been instrumental in leading workshops on Traditional parenting.

WJS IS A CERTIFIED B-CORP

In 2019, WJS became a certified B Corp creating the opportunity for us to be part of a global movement of using business for good.

As an employee owned company, many of the five identified strategies of B Corp have been a part of our culture since our inception.

With our Director of Quality taking the lead on our B Corp strategy, this past year has seen a focus on increasing our understanding on opportunities to engage with and further amplify activities that support the B Corp priorities.



For WJS, our B Corp certification focuses on our practices in the areas of governance, workers, community, environment and customers. Specific policy and practice reviews have included our sustainability policy, our buy local practices, our environmental impact practices as well as staff recognition activities. We have also realized that we need to tell our B Corp story both internally and externally and are beginning our work to build a strong employee engagement and communication campaign.

How did we become a B Corp?

We were evaluated by an external review of practices based on the B Corp criteria that all B Corporations must meet.

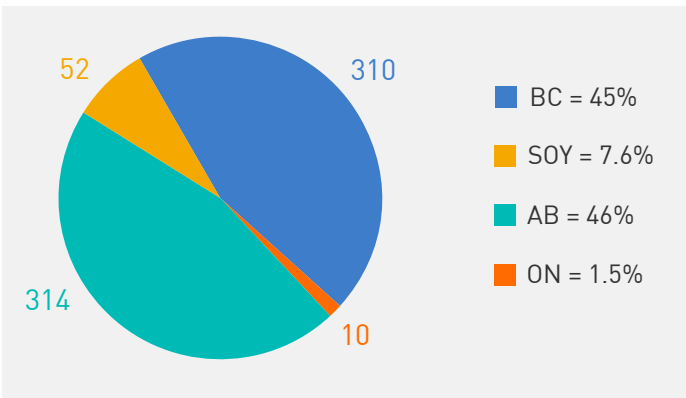
The B Corp evaluation covered :

- our service delivery performance
- organizational structure
- employee compensation, benefits and training
- supplier and community relations
- and general business practices.

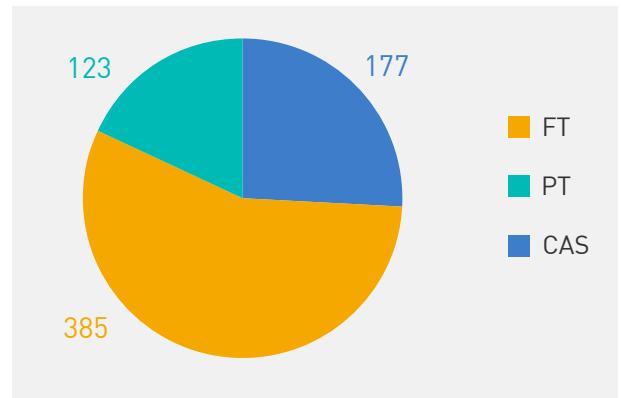
OUR PEOPLE

Our employees are the cornerstone of our organization. We saw a 5% increase in total employees from the previous year. As we align ourselves with our values, our resilience and capability grows our strength in people.

National Distribution of Employees 2021/22



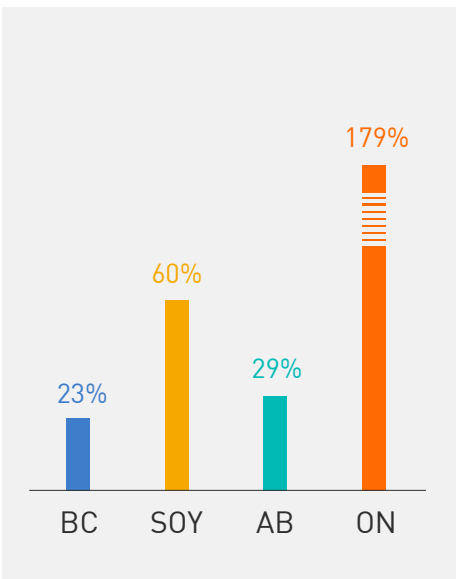
National Status of Employment 2021/22



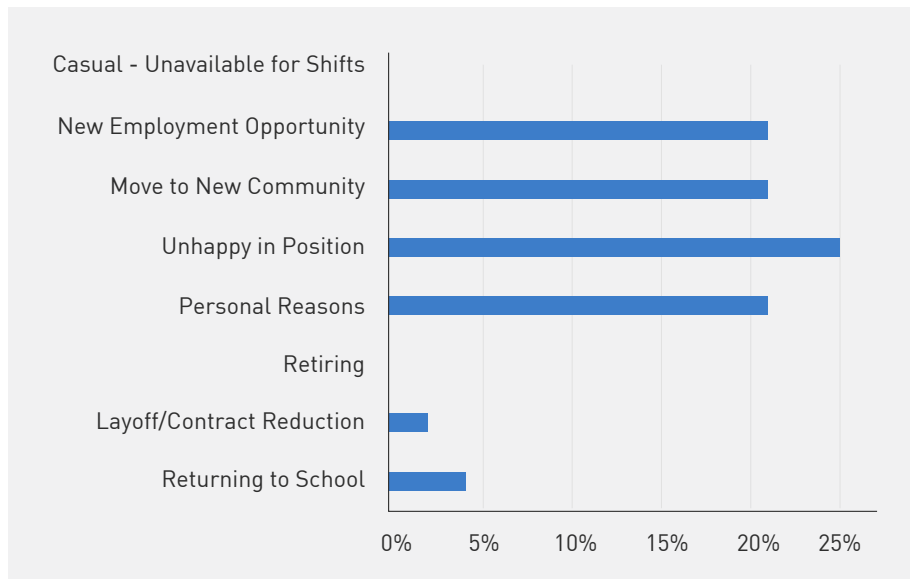
Employee Turnover

Turnover for the reporting period remains similar to that of many agencies across Canada. The recruitment & retention issues we experience are indicative of reports we are receiving from Human Resource Development Canada (Service Canada) and Canadian Conference Board of Canada. WJS is being impacted by national trends in decreased availability of qualified candidates and cuts in government spending on human services.

Turnover Rates



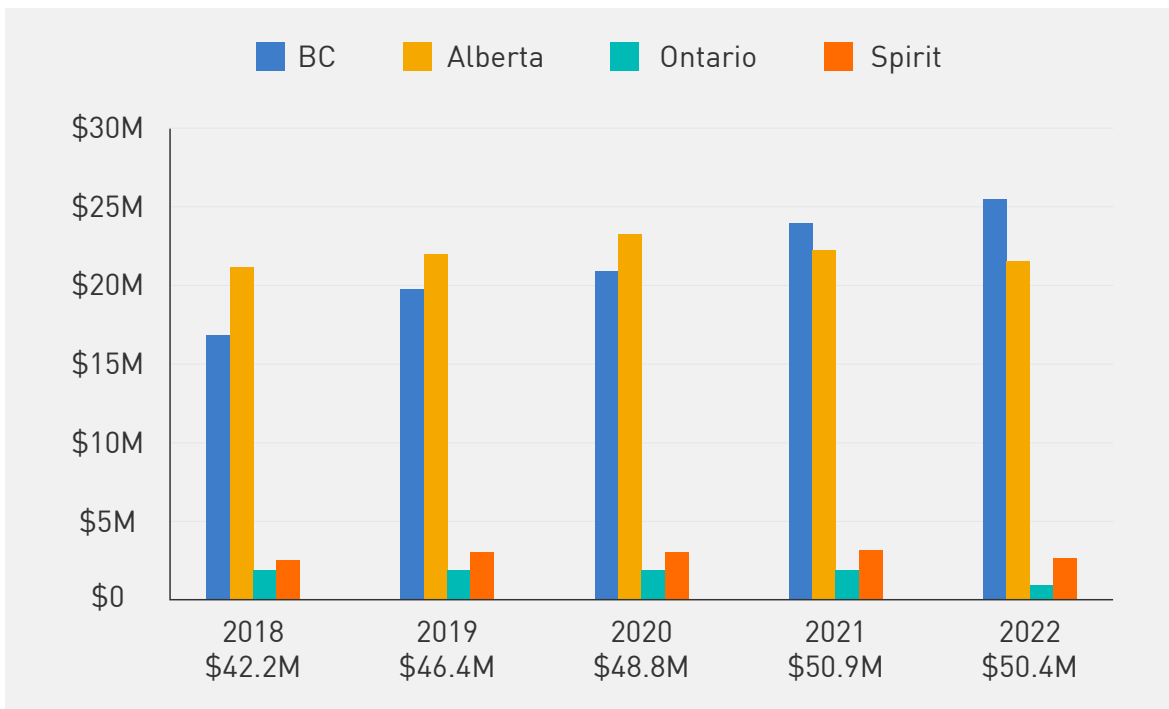
Reasons for Leaving



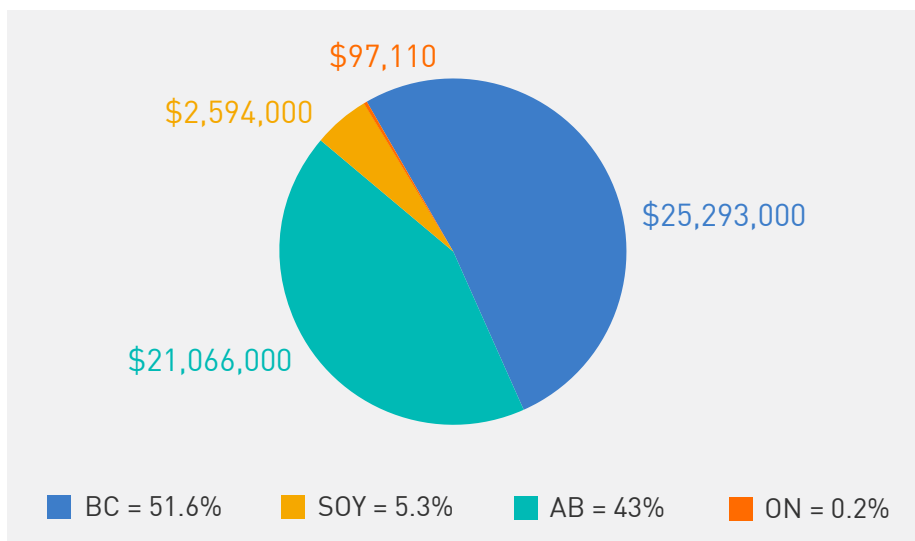
REVENUE & FINANCE

Over the last 5 years, WJS revenue has risen from \$42,000,000 (2018) to more than \$50,000,000 in 2022.

5 Year Revenue Trend



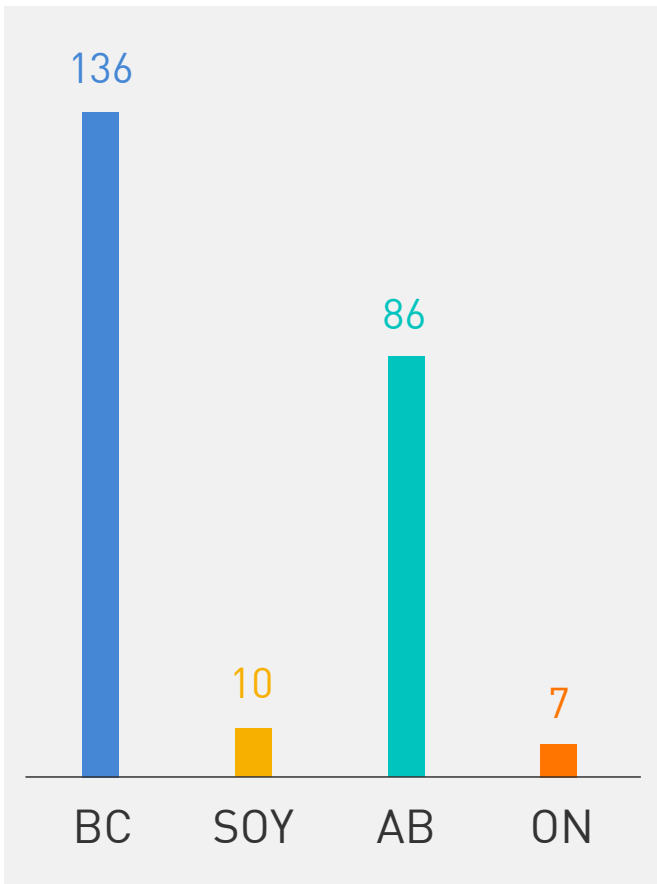
Revenue Distribution, 2021/22



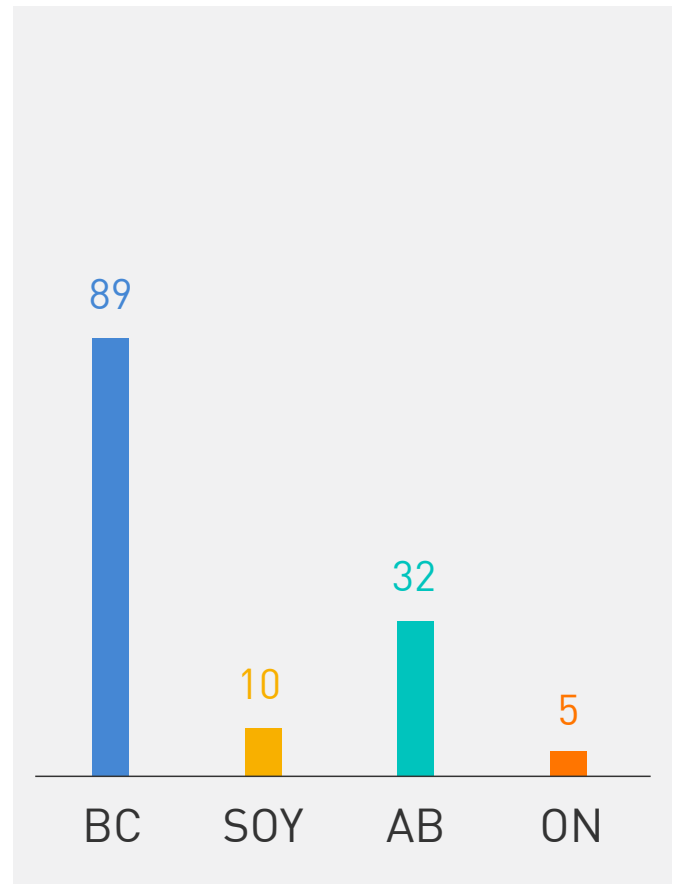
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In order to provide clearer reporting, we're presenting Program Growth in two ways. In prior reports, we have based program counts on program type and their code. This reflects lower numbers than the true program count, because there may be many programs under the same contract.

True Count of Individual Programs Across Canada



Prior Method of Reporting Program Count by Contract



A Snapshot of Our Year

We began 2022 thinking that the pandemic would soon be over but ended our year still battling, having yet more impact on individuals served and WJS communities. The ability for our teams to continue to provide passionate support is a testament to their dedication but also their true desire for individuals to have the best life possible. As we move forward and assess the ongoing impact of COVID 19 we are cognizant that the mental health of all Canadians has been greatly impacted by years of Pandemic.

In British Columbia, we met the challenges of supporting young people with complex needs in both staffed residential resources as well as caregiver homes. Working in partnership with our government colleagues was at times challenging as well as very productive. Labor shortages were being felt in all parts of the contracted service sector and the pressures felt by government staff were often reflected

We began the work of expanding our clinical supports so both our individuals served and our team members can be supported to have the best possible outcomes.

in requests for extraordinary efforts on our behalf. Our commitment to do what is in the best interests of the people we support has continued to be our guiding light in these complex situations. Even with the staff shortages and challenging partnerships, we have continued to see



referrals that have led to growth within our CIC services, and a transformation of our Emergency Resource program to a child specific resource

Still in BC, our supports to people with diverse abilities were significantly challenged by COVID restrictions. Changes to support hours, changes to people's daily life activities affected both our residential services as well as our community inclusion services. In Prince George, we saw a continued request to partner with CLBC to provide innovative supports to individuals with complex needs who also experience mental health and addiction issues. This has required supreme effort on our team members to ensure that they can remain housed and fed, as their lifestyle often precludes maintaining any stability in their housing situation.

The pandemic brought similar challenges to Alberta, where staff shortages were compounded by outbreaks across teams and communities. This was especially prevalent in the services that support persons with Diverse Abilities. Despite these challenges, all clients continued to be supported, often because of herculean effort by our team members.

In our Edmonton programs, the teams supported a variety of clients in their homes, despite in some cases safety issues posed by their living

arrangements. WJS has recognized that in order to minimize risk to staff, we have adjusted services to be available only during parts of the day.

Our Support to Families programs in Alberta were part of a total restructuring of services by government which presented as a termination of all contracts effective March 31, 2022, and the requirement to respond to a request for proposals to provide services in the new model. While WJS was successful in maintaining a significant portion of services previously offered, we were not able to remain in all the communities we had historically served. As a result, we had to say goodbye to twenty-five great employees in Athabasca, High Level and Peace River while we recruited for new employees to join the new Fort MacMurray team. This restructure has also brought to WJS the opportunity to work in Metis settlements across northern Alberta.

Our Spirit of our Youth teams have been busy this past year. They have focused on revisiting the best match of qualifications for the youth being referred and hiring specifically to meet those increasingly complex needs. They have assessed the match of the residences for the youth needs and closed two homes, while searching out locations for new ones. They have done all this work while undertaking the necessary preparations for another

WJS AND SPIRIT STAFF

are to be commended for **ongoing commitment** to doing what is best for the individuals we support across more than **60 LOCATIONS IN CANADA.**

accreditation visit in the fall of 2022. Their work continues to focus on providing vital links to cultural practices for all the children and youth they support.

This past year considerable efforts were undertaken by the team that provides Behavioural Supports to both WJS and other agencies in northern Alberta to align their supports more closely with needs identified by the teams they support. This focus on being more available, providing more timely and concise support plans has resulted in a decrease in critical incidents and an improvement in the quality of life for the individuals that are supported by this team.

The addition of training specialists to our talent development team has led to the enhancement of our training both in person and virtually. This is a key component in our commitment to strengthen our ability to respond to the complex needs of individuals being referred to our services.

Upon the retirement of long-term psychologist, we took that opportunity to further assess the clinical support needed and began the work of expanding our clinical supports so both our individuals served and our team members can be supported to have the best possible outcomes.

After the resignation of our long-term Program Director in Ontario as well as most of the team as a result of the closure of the custody center in April 2021, a new team has come on board and has continued to provide services both through our youth justice programs as well our employment supports through our partnership with CBI. We have reached out to a number of indigenous partners in the area to determine the best use of our Muriel

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Lake facility and while we have had many engaging discussions, we are not yet at the point of putting a new service into place.

This year saw us make the difficult decision to close our programs in Cranbrook. This decision came after exhausting all strategies for expanding our services. The needs within the community shifted such that we could not effectively meet the new demands. We were able to transition the youths successfully to other services within the community.

All of this work was done within the context of continuing to implement our Clients Services Delivery Model, continuing our Truth and Reconciliation Journey, assessing the requirements for the transformation of our Client Information Management system and engaging staff from across WJS and Spirit of our Youth in our new Strategic Plan.

WJS and Spirit staff are to be commended for ongoing commitment to doing what is best for the individuals we support across more than 60 locations in Canada.