

Andrejs Berzins
15 Wendover Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1S 4Z5
613-737-3298
berzinsa@yahoo.com

Education:

1968 Bachelor of Arts, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
1971 Bachelor of Laws, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada
1973 Bar Admission Course. Admitted to practice law in the Province of Ontario, Canada

Languages: Fluent in English and Latvian. Conversational level French

Pertinent Experience:

Mr. Berzins is recognized as an expert in the Canadian criminal justice system with extensive practical experience in managing one of the largest prosecutors' offices in Canada. He has been an innovator in the development of court delay reduction strategies, alternative resolution mechanisms, services for victims of crime and in the application of restorative justice principles.

As Chief Crown Attorney (prosecutor) of Ottawa for 16 years Mr. Berzins had overall responsibility for the prosecution of a large volume of criminal cases (approximately 25,000-30,000 charges each year) in all courts within his jurisdiction. He managed a staff of 30 Assistant Crown Attorneys and numerous other personnel in his office. One of the major priorities in his work was court back-log reduction and he implemented and piloted a number of effective case management strategies that were subsequently adopted elsewhere in the Province of Ontario. Mr. Berzins worked closely with other participants in the justice system, including the judiciary, defence bar, and the police, through Court Management Committees, to improve the service provided by the courts to the public. He was active in establishing and supporting services for victims and witnesses.

Mr. Berzins is regarded as an innovator in Canada in the field of restorative justice. He developed several alternative resolution programs in the Ottawa area that incorporate restorative justice principles in dealing with not only minor cases but also the most serious.

Mr. Berzins has extensive experience working on justice system reforms in developing and transitional countries as well as in the Canadian Arctic.

Knowledge of the Canadian Criminal Justice System, including Plea-bargaining: Mr. Berzins has over 33 years of experience working in the Canadian criminal justice system as a prosecutor, dealing with all types of cases. He has also been involved in developing National and Provincial policies and advising on reforms of the criminal justice system, including in the areas of court back-log reduction, case management, plea-bargaining, diversion, juvenile offenders, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, alternative sentencing, and restorative justice.

Practical Experience in Case Management: Mr. Berzins has worked closely with police agencies to co-ordinate the roles of the police and prosecutors in the initiation of criminal proceedings and their respective responsibilities while the cases are before the courts. He has worked with the defence bar to establish efficient practices for providing early disclosure and for conducting resolution discussions. He has worked in co-operation with the judiciary in establishing a system of pre-trial conferences and improved court scheduling procedures. He has developed systems for monitoring case-flow through the courts.

Restorative Justice Experience/Knowledge: Mr. Berzins played a lead role in the promotion of restorative justice in Ontario through the design and implementation of several pilot projects in Ottawa involving diversion to community programs. He designed and delivered a victim-offender mediation program in Ottawa courts with the Dispute Resolution Centre of Ottawa and worked to establish Community Justice Committees to deal with juvenile offenders. Mr. Berzins was a founder of the Collaborative Justice Project, a partnership between the Ottawa Crown Attorney's office, Department of Justice Canada, Correctional Services Canada and Church Council on Justice and Corrections, that demonstrates how a restorative approach in cases of serious crime can deliver more satisfying justice to victims, accused and the community. For his work in these areas he received the Amethyst Award from the Province of Ontario in 2000. In Latvia, he designed and implemented a pilot project establishing the first juvenile probation office and a pilot project on bail supervision for juveniles, and advised on crime prevention strategies, alternative dispute resolution methods, and diversion. In Bangladesh, he was the key advisor for juvenile diversion pilot projects. He has provided advice on restorative justice policies and programs while working on judicial reform projects in Jamaica, Bosnia, and Serbia.

Providing Advisory Services for Legislative & Policy Development: Mr. Berzins has been a member of many advisory committees addressing policy reform in the criminal justice system, such as Prosecutor-Police Chief's Committee; Court Liaison Committee; Criminal Justice Policy Committee of the Canadian Criminal Justice Association (co-chair in 1992-1993); consultation group on legal issues for the Special Advisor, Child Sexual Abuse, Health and Welfare Canada. As legal advisor to the Legal Reform Capacity Program in Latvia, he provided advice on law reform issues to the President, Minister of Justice, Prosecutor General, and Commissioner of Corrections of Latvia and in 2000 he worked six months as an advisor in a prosecutor's office. His recommendations have assisted in the development of Latvian legislation, including Juvenile Offender's Act, Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Probation Act. Mr. Berzins provided advice to the Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS, an independent policy institute in Latvia, in promoting alternative sentencing. In Bangladesh, he advised a local committee of justice officials dedicated to the rehabilitation of young offenders, as well as advising the Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Social Services, courts and legal aid. In Jamaica, he participated in a comprehensive review of the justice system leading to numerous recommendations for reform. In Bosnia and Serbia he is providing information and advice to justice system officials at the local and national levels on strategies to improve public access to justice and to increase the efficiency of the criminal justice process without compromising the rights of accused persons.

Design and Delivery of Capacity Development: Mr. Berzins has designed and delivered training programs for judges, prosecutors, police officers, prison officials, and probation officers in Latvia. In Latvia he worked in conjunction with the National Judicial Training Center to develop and deliver trainings, thereby increased the capacity of the Training Center itself. In Bangladesh, he

assisted in the training and development of practice manuals that are being provided to lawyers, judges, magistrates, police, probation and correctional officers on the rights of children and on appropriate handling of children in the legal system. In Jamaica, he assisted Ministry of Justice staff to acquire the skills necessary to implement reforms of the justice system. In Bosnia and Serbia he is working in conjunction with the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centers to provide skills training in new procedures including plea bargaining and the use of alternative resolution mechanisms. Mr Berzins has extensive experience in teaching and training in Canada on criminal matters with the Law Society of Upper Canada, University of Ottawa Faculty of Common Law, University of Victoria Faculty of Law Akitsiraq Law School, Carleton University Department of Law, Royal Canadian Mounted Police National Police College, Ontario Provincial Police College, Ontario Crown Attorneys' Association School, Algonquin College, and other educational institutions. He has also taught at the University of Latvia.

Project Management: Mr. Berzins has 15 years of international project management experience on legal reform projects, primarily in Eastern Europe. He has been integral in the design and implementation of several of these projects. He has been responsible for the design, delivery and management of numerous pilot projects, specifically dealing with, court delay reduction, juvenile justice, diversion and restorative justice both in Canada and internationally. He is thoroughly familiar with results based management. In addition, he has significant management experience as Chief Crown Attorney, Ottawa-Carleton, and Northern Director, Akitsiraq Law School, Iqaluit, Nunavut.

Organizing and Chairing Conferences and Forums: Mr. Berzins has experience organizing and chairing conferences and forums dealing with legal issues. In June 2007 he was involved in planning and facilitating at the National Summit on Justice System Reform in Jamaica. In December 2007 he planned and chaired a Forum for Prosecutors from across Canada to review Organized Crime legislation. He is currently planning and will be chairing a Bilateral Roundtable on Plea-bargaining to be held at the end of March 2008 in Sarajevo, Bosnia, for judges, prosecutors, defence lawyers and NGO representatives from Bosnia and Serbia.

History of Employment and Assignments:

- October 2007-Present: Conducting a review of the Canadian Military Prosecution Service and making recommendations about ways of reducing trial delays,
- September 2006-June 2007: Senior Advisor, Jamaican Justice System Reform project conducted by the Canadian Bar Association,
- May 2005-September 2007: Juvenile Justice Advisor, Canadian Bar Association, CIDA funded Bangladesh Legal Reform Project,
- 2002-Present: Part-time Prosecutor, Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario and Public Prosecution Service of Canada,
- September 2005-Present: Judicial Administration Advisor, Genivar and University of Ottawa, CIDA funded Canada-Balkans Judicial Reform Project in Bosnia and Serbia,

- 1995-2004: Legal Expert and Technical Advisor, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, CIDA funded Legal Reform Capacity Program in Latvia.
- October 2004 to May 2005: Chair, Board of Inquiry, established by Correctional Services of Canada and National Parole Board, to investigate the murder of a parole officer in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories,
- 2004: Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria, at Akitsirak Law School, Iqaluit, Nunavut,
- 2002: Consultant, Open Society Institute, design of criminal justice reform programs for Croatia, Bulgaria, and Latvia,
- 2000-2001: Northern Director, Akitsiraq Law School (University of Victoria), Iqaluit, Nunavut. Mr. Berzins directed the establishment of the law school in collaboration with the University of Victoria, the territorial and federal governments, Inuit organisations, and the local law school committee. He was responsible for the overall management and administration of the school and program development.
- 2000-2001: Policy Counsel, Department of Justice of Nunavut,
- 1984-2001: Chief Crown Attorney, Region of Ottawa-Carleton, Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario. In addition to conducting prosecutions, Mr. Berzins administered the Ottawa Crown Attorney's office, supervising approximately 50 staff members including 30 Assistant Crown Attorneys.
- 1992-2000: Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Common Law, University of Ottawa
- 1973-1984: Assistant Crown Counsel, Region of Ottawa-Carleton
- 1980-1981: Crown Counsel, Attorney General's Chambers, Bermuda
- 1973: Associate Lawyer, Tascona and Menzies Law Firm, Barrie, Ontario

Service in and Knowledge of Developing Countries: Mr. Berzins has extensive experience working on legal reform projects in Latvia, Bosnia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Bangladesh, and Jamaica. He is familiar with the justice systems and law reform issues in Croatia and Bulgaria as a result of assisting in the development of criminal justice reform program proposals. Mr. Berzins has shared his knowledge and expertise in topics such as plea-bargaining, juvenile justice, alternative resolution mechanisms, and crime prevention with numerous foreign delegations, including from Russia, China, Hungary, various African and Latin American countries.

Supportive Experience: Mr. Berzins is a director of Christie Lake Kids, an NGO that provides recreational programs for children at risk in Ottawa and of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ottawa Branch. He is a former director of the Dispute Resolution Center of Ottawa and former Chairman of the Crime Prevention Council of Ottawa.

Recent Presentations

- “A comparison of the features of the Canadian criminal justice system with the Serbian system, and court delay reduction strategies including the concept of plea-bargaining.” Information and discussion sessions with judges, prosecutors, and defence lawyers in Zrenjanin, Serbia, November 2007 and Kraljevo, Serbia, February 2008.
- “The Criminal Organization provisions in the Criminal Code of Canada”. Chaired a conference for prosecutors from across Canada on the provisions relating to Organized Crime in the Criminal Code, December 2007.
- “A Crown’s Perspective on Restorative Justice”, Conference of Judges, Crown Attorneys, and Lawyers, and at a Public Forum, Kitchener-Waterloo Restorative Justice Committee, November, 2005.
- “How to work with the media to promote restorative justice”, symposium held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to mark “Restorative Justice Week”, November, 2005.

Membership in Associations: International Prosecutor's Association; Law Society of Upper Canada; Law Society of Nunuvut; Latvian Bar Association; Ontario Crown Attorneys' Association; Canadian Criminal Justice Association.

References:

Ms. Robin Sully
Director, International Development
Canadian Bar Association
865 Carling Ave. Suite 500
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1S 5S8
Tel: 613 237 2925
robins@cba.org

Mr. Georges Proulx
Country Director, Canada-Serbia Judicial Reform Project
Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 43/5
Belgrade 11000, Serbia
Tel: 3811 3034 859

Mr. Ted Hill
Country Director, Canada-Bosnia and Herzegovina Judicial Reform Project
Obala Kulina Bana 12/1
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Tel: 387 33 554 235
ted.hill@genivar.com