

## **QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE FIREARMS PROGRAM: THE SYSTEM IS WORKING**

Claims that the system is without value are simply untrue. The police have said time and time again that the Firearms Act, and the system, provides valuable tools for keeping Canada safe. In spite of the virulent opposition, over 90% of gun owners have been licensed and 90% of guns have been registered. As of 2009, the system is being used by police 11,085 times a day and police report many cases where it has been used to prevent tragedies or solve crimes.<sup>1</sup>

### **Most Gun Owners are Licensed. Most Guns are Registered<sup>2</sup>.**

As of December 2009, 1,843,913 valid firearms licences have been issued representing 90% of gun owners, and in 2008, a total of 389,221 licences were renewed or issued. The licensing procedure ensures all firearms users are qualified to possess or acquire a firearm.

- Over 7.3 million firearms have been registered representing 90% of guns in Canada. Gun registration is essential to making gun owners accountable, helping prevent diversion to the illegal market and assisting police in their investigations.
- 23,537 firearms licences have been refused or revoked by Chief Firearms Officers (CFO) for public safety reasons between 1999-2008.
- 7,525 gun license applications have been refused, most often because the person has received a court-ordered prohibition or probation, or poses a risk to themselves or to others. 16,012 firearms licences have been revoked, most often because of a court-ordered prohibition or probation, or because the person poses a potential risk to others. Other reasons include: a history of violence, mental illness, a history of domestic violence, unsafe firearm use and storage, drug offences and providing false information.
- According to the RCMP, as of 2008, 254,036 individuals have been prohibited from possessing firearms through prohibition orders (cumulative data).

### **Canadian Firearms Registry<sup>3</sup>**

Law enforcement officers have queried the Canadian Firearms Registry On-line over 13.3 million times since it was launched on December 1, 1998.<sup>4</sup>

- The gun registry is consulted by police in average 11,085 times a day and has helped in efforts to take preventive actions and in several investigations.
- The number of affidavits produced by CFP (Canadian Firearms Program) for legal proceedings has continued to increase over the past few years: since 2003 more than 17 900 affidavits have been provided by the CFP support the prosecution of firearms-related crime and court proceedings. The CFP produced 5,118 affidavits in 2008.
- 1,322,901 firearms have been exported, destroyed, deactivated or have been removed from the Canadian Firearms Information System since December 1, 1998.

### **The Consequences of the Conservative Registration Amnesty**

Four years ago, in 2006, the government declared an amnesty for gun owners who failed to renew their licenses or register their firearms. In May 2009, the Conservatives renewed for the third year its amnesty for gun owners who haven't bothered with the legal requirement to register their guns and renew their licenses, and enabled those with an expired licence to apply for a new one. This, even though the House of Commons passed a Bloc Quebecois resolution asking that the amnesty end on April 22, 2009.

- The amnesty prevents the prosecution of people with illegal guns. This occurred in two cases where guns were allegedly supplied to individuals who later murdered police officers.

- Every day the information in the registry becomes less reliable, putting police and the public at risk.
- The amnesty undermines respect for the law. It penalizes the law abiding gun owners who regardless of their personal views complied with the legislation in a timely fashion. It also encourages groups and individuals that publicly flout the law. In spite of Government's amnesty, more than 82% of gun owners have renewed their licenses because their license came to expiry, not because the amnesty incited them to do so. Most gun owners complied with the law and obtain a license in the first place. There is no reasonable explanation why these gun owners would not renew their license.<sup>5</sup>
- The government's decision to renew the amnesty and waive fees for the third time cost more than \$15 million in 2009 alone.<sup>6</sup>
- The Conservative government is criticizing a situation - the degradation of the data in the Firearms Registration System - that they themselves created.

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<sup>1</sup> "Facts and Figures (October-December 2009), Canadian Firearms Program". Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/index-eng.htm> . Accessed January 20, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> "Facts and Figures (October-December 2009), Canadian Firearms Program". Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/index-eng.htm> . Accessed January 20, 2010.; RCMP-GRC, Commissioner of Firearms, 2008 Report. Table 3. Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/rep-rap/2008-comm-rpt/2008-eng.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> "Facts and Figures (October-December 2009), Canadian Firearms Program". Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/index-eng.htm> . Accessed January 20, 2010.; RCMP-GRC, Commissioner of Firearms, 2008 Report. Table 3. Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/rep-rap/2008-comm-rpt/2008-eng.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> "Facts and Figures (October-December 2009), Canadian Firearms Program". Available at : <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/index-eng.htm> . Accessed January 20, 2010. and "Facts and Figures (September 30, 2003), Canadian Firearms Program". Available at : [http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/archives/monthly\\_stats/stat-2003-09-eng.htm](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cfp-pcaf/facts-faits/archives/monthly_stats/stat-2003-09-eng.htm) . Accessed January 20, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> RCMP-GRC, Commissioner of Firearms, 2006-2008 Report.

<sup>6</sup> Crawford, A. "Ottawa giving up millions in gun registry fees" October 5 2009. CBC news. Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/10/05/gun-registry-fees-government.html?ref=rss>