

# COALITION

for Gun Control / pour le contrôle des armes

[www.guncontrol.ca](http://www.guncontrol.ca)

## Police shootings in Canada

### Officer Deaths from Firearms

Most police officers shot on duty in Canada have been shot by rifles or shotguns.

Name	Date	Department	Type of Gun	Province
Chief J.G.E. Denis Nadeau	4/28/1995	Police de Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce	Long gun	Quebec
Odette Pinard	11/27/1995	Montreal Police	Undetermined	Quebec
André Lalonde	4/29/1996	Montreal Police	Undetermined	Quebec
Derek Cameron Burkholder	6/14/1996	RCMP, Lunenburg	Long gun	Nova Scotia
Thomas P. Coffin	5/31/1997	OPP, Midland	Handgun	Ontario
Jurgen S. Seewald	05/03/2001	RCMP	Long gun	Nunavut
Dennis D. Strongquill	12/21/2001	RCMP	Long gun(s)	Manitoba
Benoit L'Écuyer	2/28/2002	Montreal Police	Handgun	Quebec
James W. G. Galloway	2/28/2004	RCMP Edmonton	Long gun	Alberta
Peter Christopher Schiemann	03/03/2005	RCMP	Long gun	Alberta
Lionide (Leo) Nicholas Johnston	03/03/2005	RCMP	Long gun	Alberta
Anthony Fitzgerald Orion Gordon	03/03/2005	RCMP	Long gun	Alberta
Brock Warren Myrol	03/03/2005	RCMP	Long gun	Alberta
Valerie Gignac	12/14/2005	Laval Police	Long gun	Quebec
John Charles Atkinson	05/05/2006	Windsor Police	Handgun	Ontario
Robin Cameron	07/16/2006	RCMP	Long gun	Sask.
Marc Bourdages	07/16/2006	RCMP	Long gun	Sask.
Daniel Tessier	03/02/2007	Laval Police	Handgun	Quebec
Christopher John Worden	10/07/2007	RCMP	Handgun	Northwest Territories
Douglas Scott	11/05/2007	RCMP	Long gun	Nunavut
Vu Pham	03/08/2010	OPP Huron County	Long gun	Ontario

### Police Support for Gun Control

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Police Association and the Canadian Association of Police Boards, along with major safety and health groups from across the country have reiterated their support for the system.

- Police officers access the gun registry 11,085 times a day, both during investigations and to take preventative action.
- The registry has been used to remove guns from dangerous people (including a potential copy cat shortly after the Dawson College shooting).
- Many high-profile crimes have been solved thanks to Canada's gun law. For example, a registered rifle left at the scene of the Mayerthorpe murders of 4 RCMP officers was traced back to an individual using the long-gun registry, and this information then allowed police to establish an operation which eventually led to the conviction of 2 people as accessories to these murders.<sup>1</sup>

## Gun Control: Improving Police Officer Safety

- Across Canada, police officers are able to check for the presence of firearms when responding to calls. Marty Cheliak, Director General of the RCMP Canadian Firearms program, was quoted as saying that the gun registry is a crucial policing tool, "*particularly in the North, where there are limited police resources over a vast area*"<sup>2</sup>
- Data on crime guns in major urban centers reveals that a substantial proportion of these are committed with unrestricted rifles and shotguns and, of course, every sawed-off shotgun was at some point an unrestricted firearm.
- While handguns make up the majority of firearms used in homicides - in part because of the decline in murders with long-guns- rifles and shotguns are still stockpiled by criminals.
- In smaller communities such as Surrey, York Region and Ottawa long guns outnumber handguns 2 to 1 in firearms recovered in crime.
- Rifles and shotguns are the firearms most often used in domestic violence situations, suicides and in the murders of police officers, particularly in rural areas.
- Across Canada, the majority of guns recovered by police or seized in crimes are non-restricted long-guns. The RCMP reported that in the Prairies, the Atlantic Provinces, and the Northern territories, long guns are preferred by the criminal element. In Quebec they are most commonly seized, and in Ontario, they are often found along with handguns throughout the province. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba, cut down/sawed-off long guns are commonly used in crime.<sup>3</sup>

## Gun Control: Improving Public Safety

- The evidence shows that stronger gun control legislation helps reduce gun related death, injury, violence and suicide.
- When controls on rifles and shotguns were strengthened in 1991, 1441 Canadians were killed with guns; in 2005, the number was 818.
- Murders with rifles and shotguns have decreased dramatically, from 107 in 1991, to 32 in 2008, in part because of the stronger controls on firearms.
- The number of women murdered with firearms decreased from 85 in 1991 to 32 in 2005. In contrast, murders of women without firearms declined only slightly during the same period.
- The homicide rate with handguns has remained constant over the past decade, as many of the guns used are smuggled into the country.

## Gun Law Threatened

In November 2009, the House of Commons passed the second reading of Private Member's Bill C-391, which proposes to abolish the requirement to register rifles and shotguns. Members of the NDP, the Liberal Party, and one Independent MP cast their votes with the government. The bill is now under review by a Parliamentary Committee. Firearm registration is a one-time only procedure (one form to fill out) that:

- In conjunction with screening and licensing procedures, reduces the risk that dangerous people will have access to weapons and is essential to enforcing the licensing provisions of the law.
- Holds gun owners accountable for their firearms and reduces the chances that legally owned guns will be diverted to unlicensed owners.
- Assists police in removing guns from dangerous people, and in enforcing prohibition orders.
- Has aided police investigations. Two men were identified and convicted as accessories to the murder of 4 RCMP officers in Mayerthorpe, Alberta, in part because a registered gun was left at the scene of the crime.
- Is essential to preventing diversion and choking off the illegal supply. All illegal firearms begin as legal firearms.

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<sup>1</sup> RCMP, "Mayerthorpe Criminal Proceedings: Sentencing," January 30, 2009. <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/news-nouvelles/2009/2009-01-30-mayerthorpe-eng.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth McMillian, "Unregistered guns part of life in NWT," Northern News Service, October 5, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> RCMP. Current Trends in Firearms Trafficking and Smuggling in Canada. November 23, 2007. <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ci-rc/reports-rapports/traf/traf-eng.pdf>