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# COMMISSIONER OF FIREARMS

2012 REPORT

THE RCMP CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM  
CANADA'S AUTHORITY ON FIREARMS



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## Message from the Commissioner of Firearms



I am pleased to present the 2012 Commissioner of Firearms Report.

The Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) works diligently to combat the illicit movement and use of firearms and to provide support and information to law enforcement officers and other members of the criminal justice system. It also manages the universal licensing of firearms users, carefully screening firearms licence applicants and holders to help ensure firearms safety. CFP firearms experts are a vital resource for front-line investigators when they need help identifying a firearm, executing a search warrant or organizing firearms exhibits for court.

The CFP was presented with several challenges in 2012, including a significant change to the firearms registration regime and the required destruction of a large volume of related data. The Program met these challenges very capably while continuing to provide an exceptional level of service to all clients.

Where firearms are concerned, maintaining public safety is of the utmost importance. This report details the CFP's most recent efforts to uphold its established high standards by serving lawful and responsible firearms users while simultaneously targeting firearms use that is unsafe or criminal in nature.

Commissioner Bob Paulson  
Commissioner of Firearms  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of Report

The Commissioner of Firearms report summarizes the activities of the RCMP Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) for 2012, including relevant statistics. As required by the *Firearms Act*, the report is submitted to the Minister of Public Safety for tabling in Parliament.

### Program Overview

The Commissioner of Firearms is responsible for the administration of the *Firearms Act*. The CFP reports to the Commissioner of Firearms.

The CFP is represented by firearms experts across the country and comprises five specialized groups:

- the Chief Firearms Officer Operations (CFOO) Directorate
- the Firearms Service Delivery (FSD) Directorate
- the Firearms Investigative and Enforcement Services Directorate (FIESD)
- the Firearms Management and Strategic Services (FMSS) Directorate, and
- the Information Technology Integration and Business Improvement (ITIBI) section

The CFOO Directorate includes the CFP's Chief Firearms Officers (CFO), located across the country, and the Canadian Firearms Registry, located in Ottawa. The CFOs are responsible for all firearms licences and authorizations within their jurisdictions, and the Registry is responsible for registration of restricted and prohibited firearms.

The FSD Directorate is responsible for the CFP Central Processing Site, which includes the national contact centre in Miramichi, New Brunswick.

The CFP's main law enforcement component, FIESD, has representatives located in Ottawa or co-located with municipal and provincial police services and RCMP contract divisions across the country.

Located in RCMP National Headquarters, FMSS provides firearms-related policy advice, strategic planning, performance measurement, client outreach and other corporate management functions. ITIBI oversees the development and administration of the CFP's automated systems, databases, and web portals and manages the CFP's operational business requirements.

The Department of Justice's RCMP Legal Services Unit provides legal advice to the CFP.

## CFP Mission, Values and Priorities

The mission of the RCMP Canadian Firearms Program is to enhance public safety by helping to reduce the risk of death, injury and threat from firearms. The CFP provides Canadian and international law enforcement organizations with operational support vital to the prevention and investigation of firearms crime and misuse. It also continuously screens individual owners to confirm their eligibility to possess firearms and promotes responsible ownership, use and storage of firearms. In pursuit of its mission, the CFP:

- respects the lawful ownership and use of firearms in Canada and supports firearms clients with quality service, fair treatment and protection of confidential information;
- recognizes that the involvement of firearm owners and users, the provinces, other federal agencies, Aboriginal people, police organizations, safety instructors, verifiers, businesses and public safety groups is essential for effective program delivery and achieving success;
- commits to ongoing improvement and innovation to achieve the highest levels of service, compliance, efficiency and overall effectiveness;
- informs and engages its clients and stakeholders in reviewing and developing policy and in communicating critical information on program requirements and results;
- manages its resources prudently to provide good value for money, and clear and accurate reporting of program performance and resource management; and
- upholds the values and ethical standards of the Public Service of Canada and is committed to fair staffing, employee development and a work environment that encourages involvement and initiative.



## CFP Strategic Priorities

Aligned with both the Government of Canada's and the RCMP's commitment to *A Safe and Secure Canada*, the CFP's goal is to protect and enhance public safety. The CFP is committed to the following RCMP strategic priorities:

- **Serious and Organized Crime:** CFP firearms investigators work collaboratively with Canadian and international law enforcement partners to dismantle organized criminal groups who traffic firearms, using CFP firearms-focused analytical data. This information helps disrupt organized crime by allowing investigators to observe illicit firearms patterns within a community, a region or across the country.
- **National Security:** The CFP is actively involved in addressing firearms-related smuggling and cross-border issues, recognizing illegally obtained firearms as a potential tool for terrorists. Key international commitments include information sharing with U.S. firearms enforcement, contributions to Canada's efforts at the United Nations and work with INTERPOL to combat the trafficking of illicit firearms.
- **Youth:** While individuals younger than 18 are not permitted to own firearms, they may obtain a minor's firearm licence which allows them to possess non-restricted firearms for purposes such as hunting and target shooting. The CFP promotes the safe handling, use and storage of firearms for all owners and users and provides firearms safety training and information for youth.
- **Aboriginal Communities:** Committed to engaging and supporting Aboriginal communities on firearms safety-related projects at national, regional and local levels, the CFP enhances both individual and community safety by providing firearms safety education and training, as well as verification, licensing and registration assistance. Through research and the pursuit of new safety and training initiatives, the CFP continues to strengthen its partnership with Canada's Aboriginal communities.





## CFP Partnerships

The CFP works with a variety of partner agencies.

### *Canadian law enforcement agencies*

Working with and providing firearm-related services and information to domestic law enforcement groups, the CFP helps investigators and prosecutors address the illegal movement and criminal use of firearms. They can verify whether someone who is considered a security threat has firearms, help to prepare and execute search warrants, provide firearms tracing, identification and disposal services and offer hands-on firearms training to law enforcement officials.

### *International law enforcement*

The CFP works with law enforcement agencies from the United States and other countries to prevent the illegal movement of firearms across borders and has established a quick and accurate electronic exchange of firearms trace information with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The CFP also hosts an annual international firearms trafficking conference and has on many occasions had representatives travel to other countries in order to provide expert firearms-related training to other law enforcement groups.



**International Participants at the CFP-hosted International Firearms Trafficking School**

### ***Public Safety Canada***

The Commissioner of Firearms reports to the Minister of Public Safety and relies on Canadian Firearms Program staff to provide accurate and up-to-date firearms-related policy advice and information, which is then passed on to the Minister and other senior government officials to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities.

### ***Canada Border Services Agency***

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) assesses and confirms Non-resident Firearms Declarations (which serve as temporary licences and, for restricted firearms, as registration certificates) for firearms being imported into Canada, processes commercial firearm imports and inspects firearm shipments to confirm admissibility. They collect any applicable fees and confirm the firearms' destinations, the purpose for importation and the eligibility of the importer. The CBSA also ensures firearms crossing the border are being transported safely and in accordance with Canadian law.

### ***Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade***

The CFP works with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to ensure Canada's international commitments regarding firearms reflect the country's priorities, as well as its capacity to implement them. DFAIT issues the permits required to export and import firearms.

### ***Department of Justice***

The Minister of Justice is responsible for the *Criminal Code of Canada*, including Part III (Firearms and Other Weapons). Policy development on criminal law related to firearms requires close cooperation between the CFP and the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice's RCMP Legal Services Unit also provides legal advice and services to the CFP.

## ***Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada***

The CFP works with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and advises them on firearms legislation and related issues.



**CFP Chief Firearms Officer visits northern community  
to provide firearm-related assistance**

## ***Provinces and Territories***

Firearms licensing and authorizations in every province and territory are managed by CFOs. The provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia have appointed their own CFOs under the *Firearms Act* and have entered into contribution agreements for operational funding from the Government of Canada. The CFOs responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, are appointed federally and are employees of the RCMP CFP.

Responsible for issuing firearms licences to businesses and individuals, CFOs must assess the risk associated with possession of firearms by every one of the more than 1.9 million Canadian firearms licence holders. The *Firearms Act* and associated regulations authorize CFOs to refuse to issue a licence or to revoke a licence if a public-safety risk is identified. Within their jurisdictions, CFOs also oversee the delivery of safety training, approve shooting ranges and clubs, approve firearm transfers and issue authorizations to transport and carry restricted and prohibited firearms, and conduct inspections to ensure firearms are being used, transported and stored safely.

All regions of Canada are further supported by police officers who work for the CFP Firearms Investigative and Enforcement Services Directorate (FIESD) National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST). These officers are members of, or seconded to, the RCMP and provide firearms enforcement support and services to all law enforcement groups who investigate firearms crimes and misuse.

## 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

### Bill C-19 Changes Firearms Legislation

Bill C-19, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act*, also referred to as the *Ending the Long Gun Registry Act*, received Royal Assent on April 5, 2012. Bill C-19:

- Removed the legislative requirement for individuals and businesses to register non-restricted firearms\*,
- Retained the existing legislative framework for the registration and transfer of restricted and prohibited firearms,
- Required the deletion of all data\* held by the RCMP and provincial CFOs associated with the non-restricted firearms registration records collected since the coming into force of the *Firearms Act* on December 1, 1998, and
- Created the authority for the CFP to provide transferors of non-restricted firearms with confirmation of the validity of transferees' firearms licences prior to transfers being finalized, on request of the transferor.

*\*At the time this report was prepared, a Quebec Superior Court order is in force. Pursuant to the order, the CFP Registrar of Firearms continues to register non-restricted firearms and to maintain non-restricted firearm registration records for Quebec residents and businesses.*

In October 2012, the RCMP deleted all (except those of Quebec) electronic records identified as being related to the registration of non-restricted firearms in the Canadian Firearms Information System.

### Compliance Incentives

In May 2012, the Minister of Public Safety announced the extension of firearms licensing compliance incentives:

- A fee waiver for firearms licence renewals or upgrades from one type of licence to another;
- An amnesty that allows individuals who have expired firearms licences the opportunity to come into compliance without risk of prosecution, providing they are attempting to come back into compliance; and
- The opportunity for eligible holders of expired Possession Only Licences (POL) to apply for a new POL.

The amnesty and new POL incentives were extended until May 16, 2013, as was the fee waiver for licences with **non-restricted firearms privileges ONLY**. However, fees for licences with **restricted or prohibited firearms privileges** were reinstated on September 18, 2012.



## Firearms Internet Investigations Support

Located in Ottawa, the CFP's Firearms Internet Investigations Support Unit conducts open-source reviews and analysis, provides investigative support to police and Chief Firearms Officers upon request and plays a key role in the enhanced screening of firearms licence applicants. On several occasions, this group has discovered online information containing potentially criminal firearms activities, which it provided to the police (nationally and internationally) of jurisdiction for further investigation. This CFP unit has been credited with helping to prevent a number of tragedies involving firearms.

**While performing routine verifications of various open-source school-shooting dedication web pages, a member of the Firearms Internet Investigations Support Unit read some entries that piqued her interest. An individual had posted some comments on the Columbine site, claiming they would "beat the Virginia tech killer's high score". This warning led the CFP employee to review other websites the same individual had posted messages to, and it was noted that several of their Facebook status updates conveyed dissatisfaction with their personal life and school experience, sounding a stronger alarm.**

**Using available online information, the employee was able to determine the name and U.S. location of the school, prepare a report of the findings and submit it to the police of jurisdiction. The school was notified, and the school safety officer met with the individual after reviewing the report. The individual was apologetic and tried to play down the situation, stating that their posted comments were meant only as a joke. However, two days later, one of the investigating police officers called the CFP with an update. The individual had approached a teacher, talked about suicide, asked if the teacher "remembered Columbine" and said they were going to shoot the school principal. Police took action and the CFP employee was credited with helping to avert a tragedy.**

The CFP Firearms Internet Investigations Support Unit continues to comb open sources on the Internet for warning signs of firearms crime and misuse, supporting investigations that may prevent shooting tragedies.



## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual International Firearms Trafficking School

The 10<sup>th</sup> annual International Firearms Trafficking School, a week-long forum dedicated to sharing firearms-related investigative information with law enforcement participants, was co-hosted by the CFP in Ottawa in September 2012. Presentation topics included firearms identification, tracing and ballistics, online trafficking, and emerging firearms technologies and trends. Among the participating agencies were the Canada Border Services Agency, Department of Justice, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Public Safety Canada, as well as various RCMP and provincial police groups, and several Canadian “Guns and Gangs” Units. The event was co-hosted by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). International participants included law enforcement investigators from Guatemala, Jamaica, the Bahamas, Austria, Switzerland, France and the United Kingdom.

## Investments to Combat the Criminal Use of Firearms

The Investments to Combat the Criminal Use of Firearms (ICCUF), formed in 2004, comprises a partnership between the RCMP Canadian Firearms Program, RCMP Criminal Intelligence, Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, Public Safety Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency. The goal of ICCUF is to improve the national collection, analysis and sharing of firearm-related intelligence and information in order to help identify trends and threats. This directly supports the Government of Canada's objective to tackle violent crime, including firearm-related violence and trafficking.



**In collaboration with RCMP investigators, CFP National Weapons Enforcement Support Team members assisted in the execution of a search warrant at a rural home and found drugs being cultivated and manufactured on behalf of an organized crime group. Approximately 80 firearms of various classes were also seized from the residence – including a 50-calibre Browning machine gun. NWEST members collected, identified and catalogued the firearms, and recommended applicable charges.**

## Canada Safety Council Partnership

2012 was the fourth year the CFP contributed to a Canada Safety Council (CSC) public awareness campaign focused on firearms safety. Public Service Announcements (PSA), a news release and printed information were distributed. The CFP turned to the sharing of good news stories to bolster public awareness and this past year shared a story of firearms safety training in a northern Ontario town and the positive impact that it had on the community. "Training Makes Communities Safer" incorporated valuable safety tips and emphasized that, as more communities offer firearms safety training, safe storage and handling practices become the norm.

### ***Canadian Firearms Program Contributes to Canada Safety Council Public Awareness Campaign***

Firearms safety awareness campaign activities completed in 2012:

#### **Public Service Announcements**

Thirty-second PSAs for television and radio outlets across Canada resulted in 506 contacts (118 television stations; and 318 radio stations). Links to these PSAs were also provided in news releases.

#### **News Media**

Four news releases were distributed to more than 2,100 contacts in print, television and radio news media, and posted on the CSC's website.

#### **Print Information**

The CSC quarterly magazine, *Living Safety*, which featured an article on firearms safety training, was distributed to more than 21,000 households and businesses. Posters and pamphlets focused on hunting and farming communities were also distributed. In 2012, these items were also sent to 351 English and 165 French libraries across the country.

#### **Information on the Web**

The CSC featured the campaign online and continues to offer the media releases on their website.

#### **SUMMARY**

The CSC estimates that the reach of the campaign more than doubled from the previous year. The general nature of the messaging gives it longevity with the PSAs and news releases appearing on TV, radio, print and online into 2013.



## CFP LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

The CFP supports the investigation and prosecution of persons involved in the illegal movement and criminal use of firearms. The Firearms Investigative & Enforcement Services Directorate (FIESD) was established to support this mandate.

### National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST)

The National Weapons Enforcement Support Team provides support, services and information to front-line police officers who combat the illegal movement of firearms into and within Canada and their subsequent criminal use. Assistance from NWEST is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and includes the following services:

- Firearms information, guidance and investigative advice
- Urgent and immediate hands-on firearms assistance
- Firearms identification and tracing
- Assistance with firearms serial number recovery
- Assistance with development and execution of firearms-related search warrants
- Assistance with firearm seizures and exhibit organization
- Assistance in determining firearm-related charges
- Firearms case law information and advice
- Firearm-related court preparation
- Assistance with affidavit preparation
- Expert witness services
- Firearm-related training
- Assistance with firearm amnesties and turn-in programs
- Destruction and disposal of firearms and ammunition



Members of the CFP's National Weapons Enforcement Support Team and Specialized Firearms Support Services group provided technical assistance critical to an RCMP Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit Firearms Team investigation where illicit firearms were seized. The NWEST members explained the importation and conversion processes, test fired seized firearms and provided investigators with guidance in preparing the necessary documentation. This investigation resulted in the loss of a firearms business licence, the seizure of approximately 100 firearms and a large quantity of ammunition, as well as several arrests, charges and guilty pleas.

*The following cases illustrate how the CFP National Weapons Enforcement Support Team provides police investigators with valuable information and guidance, which assists in the successful investigation and prosecution of firearms-related offences.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The CFP National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST) was contacted by a regional police service after a sawed-off shotgun was seized during the execution of a search warrant. While investigators and an Emergency Response Team were evacuating an adjacent area, they heard a shotgun being racked inside the target apartment, and two males who exited the apartment were immediately arrested. One of the males was carrying a grocery bag containing 20-gauge shotgun ammunition and a bullet-proof vest. When searched, he was also found to have a concealed sawed-off shotgun tucked inside his pants.

NWEST personnel examined and verified the firearm, which had been modified by cutting the barrel and butt stock and therefore met the definition of a Prohibited Firearm as per Section 84 of the *Criminal Code* (CC). They checked the RCMP Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) and discovered the firearm had been stolen. They then queried the CFP Canadian Firearms Registry Online (CFRO) to determine the registered owner of the firearm. The owner had a firearms licence and eleven registered firearms, three of which had been reported stolen. Neither of the two males in question was licensed.

NWEST members recommended numerous firearm-related charges including: Careless Use/Handling of a Firearm; Unsafe Storage contrary to regulations; Possession of a Weapon for a Dangerous Purpose; Carrying a Concealed Weapon; Possession of a Firearm knowing it is Unauthorized; Possession of a Prohibited Firearm with Ammunition; and Possession of a Weapon Obtained by the Commission of an Offence.

\* \* \* \* \*

The CFP NWEST was contacted by police who had seized two firearms from a vehicle in a mall parking lot. The male in care of the vehicle was attempting to sell the guns from his vehicle, and he was subsequently arrested. NWEST members verified the makes and models of the firearms.

While only one of the firearms had a serial number, a CPIC query confirmed it as stolen and further queries of CFRO revealed the registered owner. Although impossible to query ownership of the second firearm without a serial number, it was believed that the second seized firearm was part of the same theft as one of which had been reported to have no serial number.

The male found in possession of the firearms was unlicensed, and NWEST recommended the following charges: Possession of a Weapon for a Dangerous Purpose; Possession of a Firearm knowing it is Unauthorized; Unauthorized Possession in a Motor Vehicle; Possession of a Weapon Obtained by the Commission of an Offence; and Possession of Firearms for the Purpose of Trafficking.

## **Canadian National Firearms Tracing Centre (CNFTC)**

The origin and history of a firearm can be discovered through the tracing process. Since the firearm itself is a critical piece of physical evidence in a gun crime, tracing the firearm to a source individual or criminal organization can strengthen the case for the Crown and open up new leads to other criminal activity. The CFP CNFTC provides this service to Canadian and international law enforcement agency investigators. They can also exchange trace information electronically with U.S. investigators, enabling a quick and accurate exchange of information.

In 2012, the CNFTC received and processed 2,635 firearms tracing requests and performed 1,146 indices checks on behalf of Canadian police agencies and INTERPOL. These requests from other police agencies are often in the form of lists of stolen, missing, seized or crime-related firearms which require indices checks for relevant information.

## Specialized Firearms Support Services (SFSS)

The CFP's Specialized Firearms Support Services section includes the Firearms Reference Table (FRT), a comprehensive and user-friendly computer-based tool, developed and maintained by the CFP. With 146,017 firearms records, it provides law enforcement users with a systematic and standardized method of identifying and describing firearms, and improves accuracy in import-export controls and international communications involving transnational firearms crime. It also assists in firearms tracing, record keeping and determining the class of a firearm, as outlined under the applicable *Criminal Code* definitions. The FRT database is available to all police and regulatory agencies through a variety of technologies, and the FRT group is recognized as the centre of expertise in the identification of firearms. The members of SFSS provide daily support to federal, provincial and municipal police, specialized gun and gang units, as well as government agencies such as the Canada Border Services Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.



### 2012 Firearms Reference Table Facts

**January 2012: FRT-Network release to police agencies and firearms businesses**

**February/March 2012: FRT-DVD release**

- Canadian edition – 146,017 records; 40,874 images
- International edition – 124,774 records; 38,711 images
- A total of 3,781 Canadian DVDs and 1,584 International DVDs were distributed to law enforcement agencies, government departments, forensic examiners and INTERPOL
- 57 countries receive and use the FRT, including six newly added in 2012
- Access to FRT-WEB was granted to 506 users

Another component of SFSS is the Mobile Service Delivery Vehicle (MSDV) program. Here, trained RCMP firearms personnel, equipped with specially outfitted vehicles, stationed or travelling across the country, provide various firearms-focused services to law enforcement groups.

## **Firearms Operations and Enforcement Support (FOES)**

The CFP FOES unit receives and analyzes information on Canadian firearms trends and patterns. This information is then shared with law enforcement agencies to help combat illicit firearms and the impact these firearms have on public and police officer safety. FOES can provide law enforcement partners with assistance during investigations and prosecutions.

NWEST, CNFTC and FOES are also integral components of the Investment to Combat the Criminal Use of Firearms, as described in the RCMP Departmental Performance Report.

## **Firearms Internet Investigations Support Unit**

The Firearms Internet Investigations Support (FIIS) Unit provides a range of Internet support services, both in the firearm applicant screening process and directly to front-line police officers. The CFP FIIS gathers information from a variety of open sources and, when potentially criminal activities involving firearms are detected, the information is forwarded to the police of jurisdiction for further investigation.

**In 2012, the CFP FIIS unit screened 2,793 firearms licence applicants and forwarded 55 follow-up reports, regarding high-risk applicants, to CFOs.**

**In addition, the FIIS unit generated a number of files for police investigation and identified potential school firearm threats within Canada and within the United States.**

## ***Public Agents Firearms Regulations (PAFR)***

The *Public Agents Firearms Regulations*, in effect since 2008, require certain public sector agencies, including police forces, to report all agency (owned by the agency) and protected (seized, turned in or found by police) firearms in their possession. They are administered by the Canadian Firearms Registry.

This firearm-reporting requirement supports Canada's commitment to combat the trafficking of illicit firearms as it creates a comprehensive, centralized and accessible database containing seized-firearm information from across the country. PAFR data can be used to assist in investigations and has particular relevance in multi-jurisdictional cases as it helps monitor the location, movement and distribution of illicit firearms across Canada. This centralized firearms database makes it easier for law enforcement officers to identify the types of firearms being seized both nationally and in their respective jurisdictions.

**Table 1: Canadian Public Service Agencies\*  
in Possession of Firearms - 2012**

<b>Agency Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Court</b>	122
<b>Federal Agency</b>	252
<b>Municipal Agency</b>	48
<b>Police Academy</b>	6
<b>Police Agency/Detachments</b>	1,023
<b>Provincial Agency</b>	252
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,703</b>

*\*The numbers represent **individual reporting agencies** in possession of agency and/or protected firearms. In some instances, this can be an entire police force, while in other cases, it may represent a single detachment of a larger police force, such as the RCMP.*

**Table 2: Firearms Seized\* by Public Service Agencies (Location) - 2012**

<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>Number of Firearms</b>
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	309
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	8
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	1,437
<b>New Brunswick</b>	754
<b>Quebec</b>	9,518
<b>Ontario</b>	9,729
<b>Manitoba</b>	1,353
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	725
<b>Alberta</b>	3,028
<b>British Columbia</b>	5,055
<b>Yukon</b>	92
<b>Northwest Territories</b>	20
<b>Nunavut</b>	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,063</b>

*\* These numbers represent only information reported to the CFP and do not necessarily reflect ALL firearms seized in Canada*

**Table 3: Firearms Seized\* by Public Service Agencies (Class of Firearm) - 2012**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number of Firearms</b>
<b>Non-Restricted</b>	25,793
<b>Restricted</b>	4,236
<b>Prohibited</b>	2,023
<b>Other</b>	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,063</b>

*\* These numbers represent only information reported to the CFP and do not necessarily reflect ALL firearms seized in Canada*

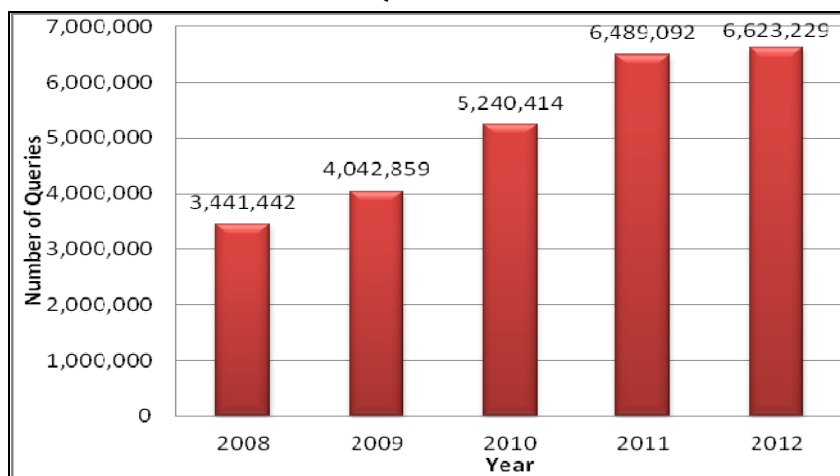
## Canadian Firearms Information System Canadian Police Information Centre

The Canadian Firearms Information System (CFIS) contains current and historical firearms licence-holder data. Licensed individuals are continuous-eligibility screened and, if a licence holder is the subject of an event involving violence or drugs that is reported via the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), a Firearms Interest Police (FIP) report is automatically generated and sent to the relevant CFO for review. CFIS also contains descriptions and details of the more than 765,000 firearms registered in Canada. When a firearm is reported lost, stolen or recovered in CPIC, a CPIC “event” is automatically sent to the CFP Registrar of Firearms for review.

Addresses and registered firearms associated to firearms licences are available to law enforcement officers via CPIC. This information helps police trace recovered firearms or anticipate the presence of firearms at a location prior to attendance. Also, if a firearms licence is revoked and police are deployed to recover the firearm(s), they can query the CFP to determine the number of registered firearms associated to the individual, their descriptions and their serial numbers.

In 2012, Canadian law enforcement agencies queried the CFP database (CFIS) an average of 18,196 times per day.

**Chart 1: Annual CFP Queries from Law Enforcement**



### CFP Geographical Firearms Reports

CFP Firearms Management and Strategic Services is able to provide police with jurisdiction-specific firearms-related statistical information, upon request. By combining data from the Canadian Firearms Information System, CPIC, Statistics Canada and other sources, the CFP can prepare reports with current and accurate firearms data relevant to specific geographical areas. This accurate and timely firearms information can help police address and counter gun violence, combat the illegal movement of firearms in their jurisdiction and focus their investigative efforts and planning in relation to firearms crime.

## CFP SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

### Licensing of Firearm Users

Individuals and businesses that possess or use firearms must be licensed. Similarly, all individuals or businesses who acquire firearms or ammunition must be licensed. There are four types of firearms licences available to Canadians:

1. Possession Only Licence (POL)
2. Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL)
3. Minor's Licence
4. Business Licence

Province/Territory	Possession and Acquisition Licence	Possession Only Licence	Minor's Licence	Total Licences
Newfoundland and Labrador	47,382	26,175	231	73,788
Prince Edward Island	3,281	3,110	19	6,410
Nova Scotia	35,644	38,485	1,074	75,203
New Brunswick	34,453	38,290	152	72,895
Quebec	335,257	163,305	18	498,580
Ontario	352,014	184,538	4,159	540,711
Manitoba	57,846	25,761	386	83,993
Saskatchewan	65,716	29,254	138	95,108
Alberta	179,811	58,622	1,494	239,927
British Columbia	164,656	71,730	488	236,874
Yukon	5,470	1,008	40	6,518
Northwest Territories	4,572	496	30	5,098
Nunavut	2,929	43	3	2,975
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,289,031</b>	<b>640,817</b>	<b>8,232</b>	<b>1,938,080</b>

Licence Type	Total Issued in 2012
Possession and Acquisition Licence (New and Renewals)	328,107
Possession Only Licence (Renewals Only)	85,884
Minor's Licence	3,910
<b>Total Issued to Individuals</b>	<b>417,901</b>
<b>Total Issued to Businesses</b>	<b>1,219</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>419,120</b>

As of December 31, 2012, there were 4,503 firearms businesses in Canada licensed under the *Firearms Act*, not including carriers and museums. Of these, 2,432 are licensed to sell ammunition only.

In 2012, 94.6% of properly completed individual licence applications were processed and completed within 45 days.

In 2012, 80.6% of properly completed business licence applications were processed and completed within 55 days.

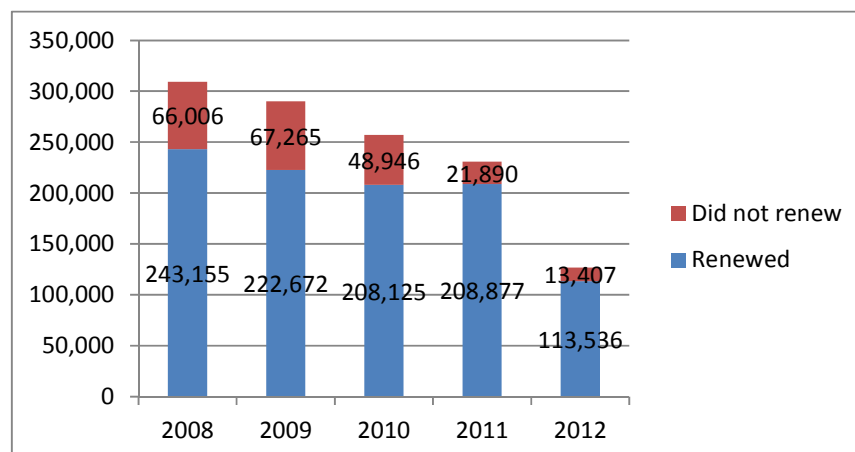
## Firearms Licence Renewals

As stated in the *Firearms Act*, firearms licence holders are responsible for renewing their licences prior to expiry. The CFP facilitates this by sending out partially populated renewal application forms approximately 90 days prior to the expiry of the current licence. As a condition of their licence, licensees are legally required to advise a CFP CFO of any address changes. This also helps ensure they receive these renewal reminders and pre-populated application forms.

Possession Only Licences (POL) are generally available only as renewals. However, under the “New POL” compliance incentive, in effect until May 16, 2014, individuals with expired POLs may apply for a “new POL”, providing they meet certain requirements.

In 2012, a total of 126,943 licences (POL and PAL) for individuals deemed to be in possession of firearms required renewal.

**Chart 2: Firearms Licence Renewals\* (POL and PAL) for Individuals Deemed in Possession of Firearms**



\*The 2012 numbers reflect licensees deemed to be in possession of restricted and/or prohibited firearms only, whereas previous years included licensees deemed to be in possession of any class of firearm.



Other advantages to renewing a licence before it expires include:

1. Using a renewal application form which is shorter and more streamlined than a new licence application form;
2. Avoiding the risk of having a registration certificate revoked or losing grandfathered privileges to possess prohibited firearms; and
3. Avoiding the risk of penalties for being in unlawful possession of a firearm.

## **Firearms Business Support**

Organizations and businesses that manufacture, sell, possess, handle, display or store firearms or ammunition must have a firearms business licence. Employees who handle firearms for these businesses must also have firearms licences, and all restricted and prohibited firearms in a business inventory must be registered.

Chief Firearms Officers perform periodic business inspections to confirm safe and lawful business practices and firearms storage.

The CFP offers businesses the option of performing firearms registrations and transfers through the Program's web-based services.

Standards set out in the *Firearms Act* seek to ensure the safety of members, visitors and the general public in relation to shooting clubs and ranges. CFP-published range guidelines and periodic CFP Firearms Officer inspections promote firearm and participant safety at these locations.

## **Chief Firearms Officers (CFO)**

Each province and territory has a CFO who is responsible for the administration and delivery of key components of the *Firearms Act*:

- licensing individuals and businesses
- approving transfers of restricted and prohibited firearms
- approving shooting clubs and shooting ranges
- issuing Authorizations to Carry
- issuing Authorizations to Transport
- designating Firearms Officers and
- designating instructors for firearms safety courses

This also includes determining an applicant's eligibility to obtain or keep a firearms licence. The CFO can issue, refuse to issue, renew or revoke a licence or authorization to transport, carry or transfer, or set specific conditions on these documents.

## Registrar of Firearms / Canadian Firearms Registry

The CFP Registrar of Firearms is responsible for the administration and delivery of the following key components of the *Firearms Act*:

- issuing, refusing to issue or revoking firearm registration certificates for businesses and individuals
- issuing, refusing to issue or revoking carrier licences
- administering the *Public Agents Firearms Regulations*
- maintaining the Canadian Firearms Registry
- maintaining the Firearms Verifiers' Network

All restricted and prohibited firearms in Canada must be registered. A registration certificate number links each firearm to its licensed owner in the CFP's national database, the Canadian Firearms Information System. As with firearms licences, a subset of this information can then be accessed by law enforcement agencies via the Canadian Police Information Centre.

Firearm Class	2011	2012	Difference
Restricted	531,735	576,847	45,112
Prohibited	197,024	190,910	-6,114
<b>Total</b>	<b>728,759</b>	<b>767,757</b>	<b>38,998</b>

Registration applicants must be at least 18 years old and have a firearms licence allowing them to possess that class or category of firearm. There is no fee for registering a firearm and registration certificates have no expiry date. The only time a registration certificate needs to be replaced, other than when the firearm is transferred to a new owner, is when the firearm is modified in a way that changes its class or description.

Before a firearm can be registered for the first time, it must be verified. Verification is the process of confirming the identification and class of a firearm.

All firearms can be categorized into one of three classes:

- **Non-restricted** firearms, typically shotguns and rifles
- **Restricted** firearms, predominantly handguns
- **Prohibited** firearms\*, mostly assault rifles, particular types of handguns and fully automatic firearms

\*Prohibited firearms cannot be newly imported into Canada by individuals. Only individuals "grandfathered" to have prohibited firearms are allowed to possess them.

When a restricted or prohibited firearm is transferred to a new owner, the record must be changed to reflect both the cancellation of registration from the original owner and the new registration to the new owner.

<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>Restricted firearms</b>	<b>Prohibited firearms</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	4,746	1,499	<b>6,245</b>
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	1,850	761	<b>2,611</b>
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	17,192	6,978	<b>24,170</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	12,716	4,855	<b>17,571</b>
<b>Quebec</b>	60,794	31,729	<b>92,523</b>
<b>Ontario</b>	202,328	79,664	<b>281,992</b>
<b>Manitoba</b>	20,767	5,756	<b>26,523</b>
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	30,897	7,968	<b>38,865</b>
<b>Alberta</b>	112,409	24,267	<b>136,676</b>
<b>British Columbia</b>	109,198	26,517	<b>135,715</b>
<b>Yukon</b>	2,041	396	<b>2,437</b>
<b>Northwest Territories</b>	1,107	309	<b>1,416</b>
<b>Nunavut</b>	238	37	<b>275</b>
<b>Other</b>	564	174	<b>738</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>576,847</b>	<b>190,910</b>	<b>767,757</b>

## **Firearms Assistance and Outreach to the Public**

The CFP is committed to communicating with the public and distributing firearms safety information through a variety of media. The goal is to improve public safety by expanding awareness of and compliance with safe use, handling and storage of firearms.

Outreach activities by the CFP also serve to inform the public on how the Program works with and assists front-line police and other law enforcement agencies in their fight against the criminal use of firearms. In 2012, the CFP maintained its commitment to partnerships with various Canadian law enforcement organizations by distributing firearms-related information in bulletin, brochure, card and fact-sheet formats to facilitate the enforcement of firearm-related crimes. To enhance service to police, the CFP has also designated toll-free telephone lines and e-mail addresses to police requesting assistance.

The CFP website is continually updated to provide accurate and current information regarding firearms safety, policies and client-service initiatives to a wide and varied audience. In 2012, the CFP website received 5,080,188 “unique page views” – individual page viewings, not including multiple viewings within the same session.

The public, when seeking firearms-related information or assistance, can contact the CFP call centre using the toll-free number (1-800-731-4000) or via e-mail ([cfp-pcaf@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:cfp-pcaf@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)).

In 2012, the CFP call centre received 1,039,623 telephone inquiries and approximately 8,842 e-mail inquiries, including firearms application status checks and requests for information and forms.

CFP representatives also attended hunting, outdoor and gun shows across the country, distributing firearms-safety materials and responding in person to requests for firearms information.

## **Outreach to Aboriginal Communities**

The CFP provides firearms services to Aboriginal people and their communities and is committed to continually improving the quality and variety of these services. The CFP has conducted research studies to identify the specific needs of this community and to develop and tailor their services accordingly.

Between June and December 2012, the CFP supported safety training in northern Ontario Aboriginal communities. During this period, 36 firearms safety courses were delivered and 301 individuals successfully completed firearms safety-training certification. As part of these safety-training outreach initiatives, the CFP also helped with applications, registrations, verifications and general firearms information provision.

The goal of these efforts is to increase public safety in Aboriginal communities by increasing safety awareness among those who have access to firearms.



## KEEPING CANADA SAFE

### Firearms Safety Training

As outlined in the *Firearms Act*, to be licensed to use or possess firearms in Canada, individuals must demonstrate awareness of the principles relating to safe handling and use of firearms. The Canadian Firearms Safety Course (CFSC) and the Canadian Restricted Firearms Safety Course (CRFSC) are fundamental firearms-education and safety-training components of the CFP. Developed in partnership with the provinces and territories, as well as organizations with an ongoing interest in hunter education and firearms safety, these courses provide instruction on the safe handling, use, transportation and storage of both restricted and non-restricted firearms.

The *Firearms Act* states that, to be eligible for a non-restricted firearms licence, an individual must successfully complete the CFSC. In order to be eligible for a restricted firearms licence, they must successfully complete both the CFSC and the CRFSC. In 2012, there were 110,317 CFSC graduates and 39,878 CRFSC graduates.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Canadian Firearm Safety Course</b>	<b>Canadian Restricted Firearm Safety Course</b>
<b>2008</b>	83,225	20,149
<b>2009</b>	83,287	22,773
<b>2010</b>	84,622	23,246
<b>2011</b>	86,740	26,509
<b>2012</b>	110,317	39,878

The RCMP CFP is responsible for the continued development, implementation, evaluation and revision of national firearms-safety standards, the CFSC and the CRFSC. Each CFO is responsible for the delivery of the courses within their jurisdiction.

### Enhanced Screening of Firearms Licence Applicants

The CFP employs an in-depth licence applicant screening process to reduce the possibility that individuals who pose a public safety risk acquire or have access to firearms. The majority of first-time firearms licence applicants undergo thorough security screening, including interviews of the applicants and their references, as well as Internet checks.

In 2012, the CFP performed enhanced security screening on 65,420 firearms licence applicants and interviewed 196,260 applicants or their references.

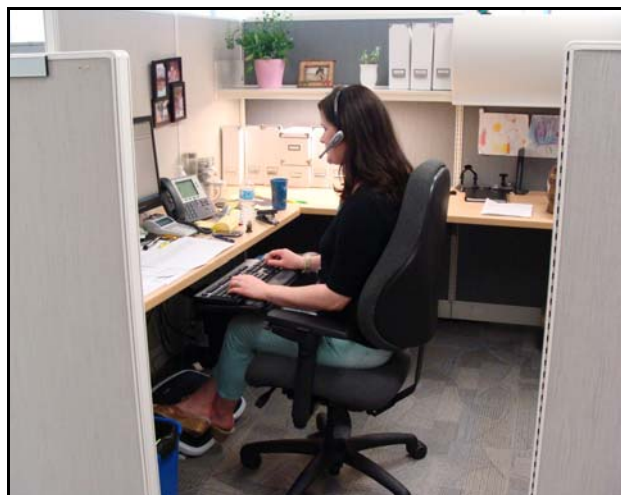
## Firearms Licence Application Refusals

Chief Firearms Officers play a key role in authorizing an individual to acquire a firearms licence. Under the *Firearms Act*, CFOs are authorized to refuse an application for a licence, based on their assessment of the individual's risk to public safety.

In 2012, there were 670 firearms licence applications refused for various public safety reasons. (This total does not include the numerous applications that are withdrawn by applicants subsequent to questioning but prior to a potential application refusal by a CFO.)

<b>Table 9: Number of Firearms Licence Application Refusals</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Refusals</b>
<b>2008</b>	462
<b>2009</b>	515
<b>2010</b>	570
<b>2011</b>	520
<b>2012</b>	670
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,737</b>

<b>Table 10: Reasons for Firearms Licence Application Refusals (2012)</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Refusals*</b>
<b>Court-Ordered Prohibition / Probation</b>	245
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	31
<b>Drug Offences</b>	26
<b>Mental Health</b>	99
<b>POL Ineligible</b>	13
<b>Potential Risk to Others</b>	291
<b>Potential Risk to Self</b>	256
<b>Provided False Information</b>	45
<b>Unsafe Firearm Use and Storage</b>	27
<b>Violent</b>	55
*A firearms licence application refusal can be influenced by more than one factor. Therefore, the sum of refusal reasons will exceed the annual total of licence applications refused.	



CFP client service representative

## Continuous Eligibility Screening of Firearms Licence Holders

All firearms licences are recorded in the Canadian Firearms Information System. If a licensed individual is the subject of a police report involving violence that is recorded on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), an interface between CPIC and the CFP database ensures that a report is automatically sent to the Chief Firearms Officer of their province or territory for further review and investigation.

<b>Table 11: Firearms Interest Police (FIP) Events</b>	
<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>FIPs</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	3,076
Prince Edward Island	297
Nova Scotia	4,806
New Brunswick	4,152
Quebec	31,808
Ontario	39,834
Manitoba	9,471
Saskatchewan	6,856
Alberta	4,484
British Columbia	15,266
Yukon	695
Northwest Territories	81
Nunavut	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,826</b>

## Firearms Licence Revocations

Under the *Firearms Act*, CFOs are authorized to revoke a firearms licence based on their assessment of the licence holder's risk to public safety.

In 2012, there were 2,421 firearms licences revoked. This number is increasing annually, possibly as a result of greater judicial and prosecutorial awareness regarding criminal offences, which require firearm prohibitions and licence revocations.

<b>Table 12: Number of Firearms Licence Revocations</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Revocations</b>
<b>2008</b>	1,833
<b>2009</b>	2,085
<b>2010</b>	2,231
<b>2011</b>	2,365
<b>2012</b>	2,421
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,935</b>

<b>Table 13: Reasons for Firearms Licence Revocations (2012)</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Revocations*</b>
<b>Court-Ordered Prohibition / Probation</b>	1,786
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	41
<b>Drug Offences</b>	26
<b>Mental Health</b>	240
<b>POL Ineligible</b>	18
<b>Potential Risk to Others</b>	449
<b>Potential Risk to Self</b>	486
<b>Provided False Information</b>	24
<b>Unsafe Firearm Use and Storage</b>	41
<b>Violent</b>	61
*A firearms licence revocation can be influenced by more than one factor. Therefore, the sum of revocation reasons will exceed the annual total of firearms licences revoked.	

Firearms licence application refusals and firearms licence revocations are recorded in the CFP’s national Canadian Firearms Information System database. Individuals who have an application refused or a licence revoked, therefore, cannot evade this decision by moving from one jurisdiction to another.

## **Firearms Prohibitions**

Courts must notify CFOs of all firearms prohibition orders in their jurisdiction. Firearms-licence applicant screening includes checking if an applicant is the subject of a prohibition order, which would result in the refusal of a firearms licence application.

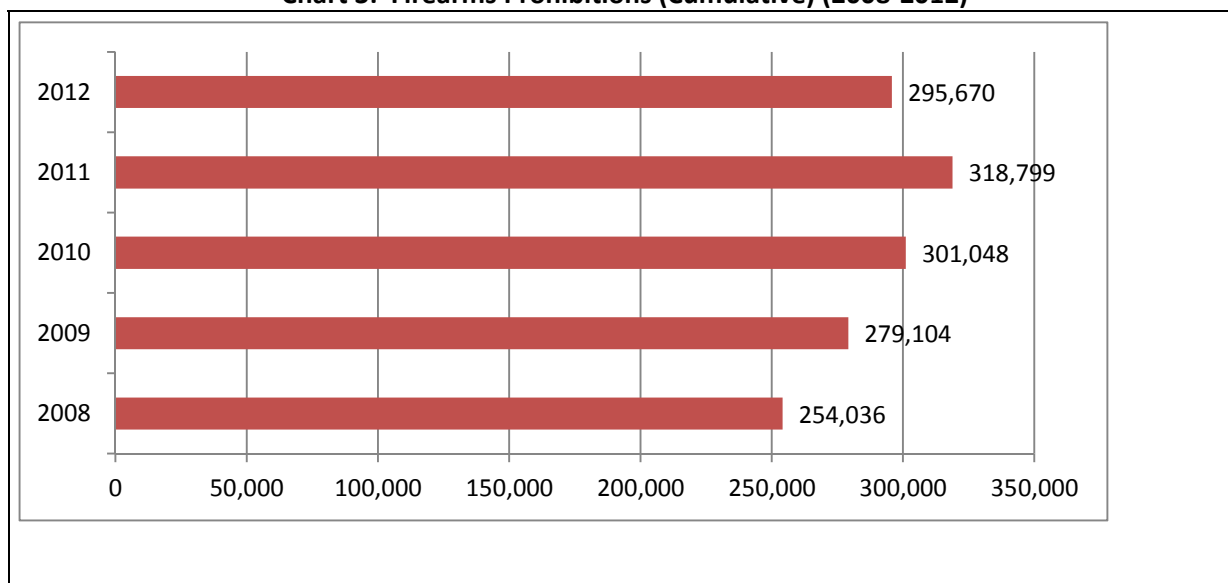
If an individual who holds a firearms licence is the subject of a prohibition order, their licence is revoked and they are instructed by the court to turn in the licence and dispose of all firearms. When the CFO is notified by the court, the individual’s firearms licence is administratively revoked.

In these cases, the CFP Registrar of Firearms administratively revokes the associated registration certificates and provides the subject with instructions on how to dispose of the firearms. The Registrar also refuses any pending applications to register firearms, advises police of the revocation and follows up on the disposition of firearms in support of law enforcement.

Prohibition orders are recorded in the Canadian Police Information Centre and form part of the background and continuous-eligibility checks for firearms licences. An applicant with a prohibition order would not receive a firearms licence, unless a court specifically orders one to be issued for purposes of sustenance hunting. Information from municipal, provincial and federal courts also contributes to the assessment of an individual’s potential threat to public safety. A match against a court order may result in the CFO conducting an investigation that could lead to a revocation or a change in licence conditions.



**Chart 3: Firearms Prohibitions (Cumulative) (2008-2012)**



### Firearms Registration Application Refusals and Certificate Revocations

The CFP Registrar of Firearms revokes registration certificates and, if applicable, refuses firearm registration applications whenever a firearm owner’s licence is revoked for public safety reasons. The Registrar also refuses firearms registration applications for a variety of other reasons, including when the firearm owner’s licence is revoked as a result of a court-issued firearms prohibition order.

In 2012, there were 163 firearm registration applications refused and 54,222 firearm registration certificates revoked.

Following the revocation of registration certificates and the refusal of registration applications, the Registrar monitors the disposition of the firearms and, if necessary, refers the matter to local law enforcement agencies for further action.

**Table 14: Number of Registration Refusals and Revocations**

Year	Applications Refused	Certificates Revoked	Total
<b>2008</b>	747	191,208	<b>191,955</b>
<b>2009</b>	407	195,543	<b>195,950</b>
<b>2010</b>	311	163,909	<b>164,220</b>
<b>2011</b>	181	89,805	<b>89,986</b>
<b>2012*</b>	163	54,222	<b>54,385</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,809</b>	<b>694,687</b>	<b>696,496</b>

\*includes non-restricted firearms for Quebec, but not for other provinces

## Firearm-related Inspections

Chief Firearms Officers are responsible for approving and performing inspections of shooting clubs and ranges within their jurisdictions to ensure safe operation and compliance with the *Firearms Act*. They are also authorized to inspect firearms businesses and individuals who collect firearms, where they feel it is warranted, to ensure safe storage and handling requirements are met and ultimately ensure public safety.

## National Range Safety and Use-of-Force Advisor

The Range Safety and Use-of-Force Advisor office develops and implements initiatives to support the continuous improvement of Canadian shooting ranges. They develop and implement range safety measures and review range safety inspection reports to improve guidelines, procedures and forms used by firearms officers for shooting range inspections. They also review range applications, conduct quality control checks, provide feedback on inspection reports and request or conduct follow-up inspections as required.

## 1-800 Safety Line – Reporting Public Safety Concerns

The CFP offers a toll-free line (1-800-731-4000) and urges those with non-emergency firearm-related public safety concerns to call and report them. The CFP encourages people to call if they believe a person who owns firearms could be a danger to themselves or to others, or if they know of any valid reason why a person who has a firearms licence or has applied for one should not have such a licence.

These reports about potential threats to public safety are routed to CFOs for appropriate action.



## COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

The Canadian Firearms Program enhances public safety by promoting the responsible ownership, use and storage of firearms. The Program provides law enforcement agencies and other organizations with the operational and technical support they need to prevent and investigate firearms crime and misuse in Canada and internationally. In 2012, the CFP worked to reduce the risk of firearms-related death and injury by promoting and providing firearms safety training, and by thoroughly and continuously screening firearms licence applicants and holders.

As Canada's centre for firearms expertise, the CFP is committed to keeping our country safe from firearms crime and misuse.

