

FIREARMS REGISTRY: THE GREAT CANADIAN SNOW JOB



The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) has come out swinging in support of keeping the costly and ineffective long-gun registry despite absolutely **no evidence it has prevented or solved a single crime**. As justification, they have regurgitated the same, tired rhetoric from the Coalition for Gun Control. **Here's the real ABC's of the Long Gun Registry.**

A) Consider the following: The Gun Registry is accessed by police 9,400 times per day:

The "9,400 hits" figure for the Canadian Firearms Registry On-Line (CFRO) is deliberately misleading. Whenever police officers access the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) for **any reason**, such as for a simple address check, an automatic hit is generated with CFRO whether the information is desired or not. This is the case, for example, with the Toronto Police Service (5,000 officers), the Vancouver Police (1,400 officers), Ottawa Police Service (1,050 officers) and the BC RCMP (5,000 officers). Additionally, every legal purchase of a firearm generates three administrative hits to the registry; for the buyer, for the seller and for the firearm. Clearly, a hit on the Registry does not denote legitimate investigative use.

B) The registry provides police officers information on the presence of firearms when they respond to emergency calls:

The Firearms Registry only provides a list of the legal guns, **the very guns an officer is least likely to be harmed by**. The truth is, very few legally owned guns are used in the commission of crimes. The latest report shows some 7% of firearm homicides were committed with registered firearms in the last 8 years. The elimination of the registry will only eliminate the useless lists of lawful guns.

The fact an individual has a firearms licence will still be known to the police. They will know whether a legal firearm is at a particular location by virtue of the fact that an individual has a licence. The abolition of the long-gun registry doesn't affect that. No police officer would rely on the inaccurate registry data to dictate how they approach a domestic or emergency call. They would approach all calls with an appropriate measure of safety.

C) Police investigations are aided by the registry:

Information contained in the registry is incomplete and unreliable. Due to the inaccuracy of the information, it cannot be used as evidence in court and the government has yet to prove that it has been a contributing factor in any investigation. Another factor is the dismal compliance rate (estimated at only 50%) for licensing and registration which further renders the registry useless.

Some senior police officers have stated as such: *"The law registering firearms has neither deterred these crimes nor helped us solve any of them. None of the guns we know to have been used were registered . . . the money could be more effectively used for security against terrorism as well as a host of other public safety initiatives."* - Former Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino, January 2003.

A few facts are needed to clear up any misconceptions about the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

1. They are a private, not-for-profit, corporation, not a government advisory body.
2. They are not subject to "freedom of information" legislation and are therefore exempt from public scrutiny, unlike other police forces.
3. Their lavish annual conference costs between \$800,000 and \$1 million dollars
4. They received very substantial sponsorship dollars from a Gun Registry contractor (CGI.)

Recently their Ethics Advisor, the highly respected Dr. Jones, resigned over the issue of tainted corporate sponsorships. He stated: *"[Such sponsorship] doesn't pass the smell test."* and *"Generally, commercial enterprises do not operate altruistically. When they donate money, they expect there is something in return."*

The CACP seems to be completely out of touch with the rank and file police officers. Consider the following quotes:

LEN GRINNELL, RETIRED RCMP STAFF-SERGEANT: - *"As a retired member of the RCMP, who supervised police officers in Canada's largest Detachments, I have grave concerns about the reliance on the registry for data which could result in death or injury of a police officer. . . . Relying on a flawed system for officer safety will eventually lead to a tragedy. It is unfortunate that the CACP did not take the time to consider the consequences of their position and the safety of the men and women they represent."*

SERGEANT BOB COTTINGHAM (RET'D), LETHBRIDGE, ALTA. - *"Not once, however, during my career do I recall using the gun registry to solve a major crime. Simply put, the vast majority of criminals use firearms which don't come close to being included in this bureaucratic jumble of information. Letter-writer Wendy Cukier may also be disappointed to know that I observed that most front-line officers have little faith in the gun registry, and see it as another bloated and failed attempt by the former government to appease its constituents."*

For more information about the Gun Registry and comments from front line police officers, go to: www.cdnshootingsports.org.

Parliamentarians owe it to Canadians to be informed of the truth of this issue. Bill C-301 will save taxpayers millions per year, money that can be used for front-line policing, enhancing the safety of all citizens. Support C-301



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