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## **Officer's survey finds 92% of police want gun registry scrapped**

### ***Veteran police officer says database is dangerous for cops to use***

Vaughan ON – August 19, 2010 – A national survey conducted by an Edmonton police officer reveals that 92 percent of police officers in Canada want Members of Parliament to vote in favour of scrapping the long-gun registry in September.

Constable Randy Kuntz, a 22-year veteran with Edmonton Police Services (EPS), says the survey he conducted last year should be embraced by M.P.s when they vote on Bill C-391 that advocates dispatching the registry. Kuntz, an Exemplary Service Medal recipient, hopes to expose the grave mistake that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) is making by supporting the registry.

“The CACP is not some mindless group of misguided men and women who strive to oppress,” says Kuntz. “There are many things they do very well as a unit. They simply have this one matter very wrong. The idea that the firearms registry is necessary and useful is wrong. They claim that they speak for all police officers on this matter. I think I have shown that they don’t.”

Kuntz used a popular police magazine to query officers across Canada if they supported the registry as a useful working tool. While he is first to admit the survey is not scientific, he believes it closely reflects the current climate among his fellow officers.

He expected a couple of hundred replies, but of the 2,631 officers who responded from every province and territory, 2,410 said the registry is useless as a crime fighting tool and many believe it poses a danger to police.

“The firearms database shows registered firearms and their owners,” explains Kuntz. “No telling where those firearms are actually located, it just shows the law abiding citizen who owns legal firearms. There is nothing that says the firearms have to be in the possession of the person to whom they are registered. I can loan a firearm to anyone who possesses a valid license for that type of firearm.

“A person can have a valid possession/acquisition license, but not have any registered firearms in his name,” he adds. “So, no firearms are on the database associated to his address. But, he can borrow a firearm and have it in his possession. What good is the registry, then? In the above example, the police officer checks the person and sees he has no firearms registered to him – so does the policeman think there are no firearms? Probably. It’s a huge mistake on the police officer’s part, relying on a database for your safety. It’s ridiculous.”

Kuntz conducted the survey on his own because he was very concerned that officers could be killed if they relied on the registry data. He also believes the CACP is misrepresenting the facts by continually

claiming that a massive majority of police officers support the registry. There is often a gulf between management and employee interests in any organization and police work is no different.

“The CACP tells the public that it is a necessary tool for law enforcement,” says Kuntz. “It is not. It just gives the perception of that. It was pretty overwhelming that those who responded (to the survey) were against the registry. Most of the respondents were constables and sergeants/detectives – guys and gals with their boots on the pavement, so to speak. They’re the cops that the public meets and deals with on a daily basis. I respect Chief Rick Hanson of Calgary Police Services. He took a stand against the CACP’s position on the registry. It takes a lot of guts to face others of equal rank and say, ‘you are wrong.’”

While Kuntz suspects the CACP isn’t deliberately trying to deceive the public, he hopes his survey results will send the chiefs and M.P.s an important message. M.P.s are voting on September 22 on an opposition-led motion that is poised to kill Bill C-391 even before it gets to the 3<sup>rd</sup> reading stage. Many pundits predict that the vote could be very close.

“I believe that the CACP believes they are looking out for us,” he explains. “That’s the scary part. The registry was touted as a public safety program. The problem is, the registry does nothing to improve anyone’s safety and it has cost the Canadian public two billion dollars, plus millions per year to maintain. If such a wasteful program was proposed in the private sector, it would have never got off the ground in the first place.”

During debates on Bill C-391, some police services members told the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security that police were being warned by superiors against speaking publicly against the registry. Meanwhile, Kuntz’s fellow officers have cautioned him that his stance is likely to have a career-limiting effect. During his 22 years as a police officer, he has worked in the Intelligence Analysis Unit, Cold Case Homicide, Integrated Intelligence Unit with EPS and RCMP, Criminal Investigation Section, Driver Training, and he has been acting Detective/Sergeant.

“I have had an excellent career thus far in the rank of Constable,” he says. “I made it clear to our Human Resources recently that I would not be participating in any future promotion processes. Some things are more important than my personal ambitions. This is one of them. It is something that affects all Canadians as it is our money funding this wasteful program.”

He also provides some sage advice for new recruits: “If you rely on a computer database for your safety, you are an idiot. Learn to investigate using your observation and communication skills. We were pretty successful in doing that for 100 years prior to the registry.”

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