



COMMISSIONER OF FIREARMS

2015 REPORT

THE RCMP CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM
CANADA'S AUTHORITY ON FIREARMS



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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) administers the *Firearms Act* and its regulations, provides specialized support services to law enforcement, and encourages firearms safety. The CFP is a national program that contributes to the RCMP's strategic priorities by working with partners and communities in order to enhance public safety.

The year 2015 was eventful for the CFP, as it continued to assist domestic and international law enforcement while serving more than two million individual and business firearms clients. Key developments impacting the work of the CFP in 2015 included the Supreme Court of Canada's decision on the *Ending the Long-gun Registry Act* for the province of Quebec and the implementation of the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act*.

The CFP also provided expertise to law enforcement in several criminal cases and continued to promote its online licence renewal process for individuals. The CFP's 2015 accomplishments demonstrate how the Program has once again successfully implemented legislative changes in a timely and efficient manner, all while continuing its commitment to client service excellence.

It is my privilege and duty to present the 2015 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Firearms.

Commissioner Bob Paulson
Commissioner of Firearms
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The 2015 Commissioner of Firearms Report summarizes the CFP's operational activities and support to its more than two million clients over the course of the year. As required by the *Firearms Act*, the report is submitted annually to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness for tabling in Parliament.

CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM

History

The Canadian Firearms Centre was established to oversee the *Firearms Act* and the Program under the Department of Justice in 1996. In 2003, it became an independent agency under the Department of the Solicitor General. In 2006, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) became responsible for managing the CFP. The Program currently reports to the Commissioner of Firearms, who is responsible for the administration of the *Firearms Act*. The Commissioner of Firearms is also the Commissioner of the RCMP.

Mission and Values

The CFP's mission is to enhance public safety by reducing the risk of harm from misuse of firearms. It screens individual owners to confirm their eligibility to possess firearms, and promotes responsible ownership, storage and use of firearms. The Program also provides Canadian and international law enforcement agencies with specialized services vital to the prevention and investigation of firearms crime and misuse.

In pursuit of its mission, the CFP:

- supports the lawful ownership and use of firearms in Canada, and serves firearms clients with quality service, fair treatment and protection of confidential information;
- recognizes that the involvement of firearm owners and users, firearms businesses, law enforcement agencies, the provinces, the territories, federal agencies, Aboriginal peoples, safety instructors and firearms verifiers is essential for effective program delivery;
- commits to ongoing improvement and innovation to achieve the highest levels of service;
- engages its clients and stakeholders in reviewing and developing policies, and in communicating critical information on Program requirements and results;

- manages its resources efficiently to provide good value for money;
- provides clear and accurate reporting of Program performance and resource management; and,
- upholds the values and ethical standards of the Public Service of Canada by committing to fair staffing, supporting employee development, and fostering a work environment that encourages staff involvement and initiative.

Partners

Through the offices of Chief Firearms Officers (CFOs), the CFP works with the provinces, territories and municipalities to manage firearms licensing, authorizations to carry or transport, and the continuous eligibility of licensees for each province or territory. The Program also works with domestic and international law enforcement agencies to provide information on potential public safety risks, assist with or execute search warrants, and provide firearms tracing, identification and disposal services. Finally, the Program works with other federal departments and agencies, including:

- *Public Safety Canada*: Provides accurate and up-to-date firearms-related policy advice and technical information, which is then shared with the Minister and other senior government officials.
- *Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)*: Assesses and confirms firearms declarations being imported, and inspect firearm shipments to confirm admissibility.
- *Global Affairs Canada*: Ensures Canada's international commitments regarding firearms reflect the country's priorities and issues the permits required to export and import firearms.
- *Department of Justice*: Consults on policy development on criminal law related to firearms.
- *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada*: Advises on firearms legislation and related issues.
- *Guns and Gangs law enforcement units*: Supports provincial/territorial and municipal Guns and Gangs units with investigations leading to successful prosecution of criminals involved in the smuggling, trafficking and criminal use of firearms.
- *International partners*: Works with law enforcement agencies from the United States, other countries and Interpol to prevent the illegal movement of firearms across borders and provides an electronic exchange of firearms trace information with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Support to National and International Law Enforcement Agencies

The CFP makes Canada safer by strengthening the ability of law enforcement and criminal justice partners to combat the illegal smuggling, trafficking, distribution and use of illicit firearms. Its National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST) assists national and international law enforcement agencies with all aspects of firearms investigations and prosecutions. The Firearms Operations and Enforcement Support unit receives, analyzes and reports information on illicit firearms trends and patterns in Canada. This information is shared with law enforcement agencies during investigations to help combat the trafficking of firearms, and mitigate the impact these firearms have on public and police officer safety. The Program also delivers firearms safety training to public agents and provides expert testimony on firearms identification and classification. Finally, Internet services are provided directly to law enforcement agencies in support of ongoing criminal investigations. For example, the CFP received 127 requests from law enforcement agencies for Internet screening services in 2015.

Firearms identification services



Forensic Identification Assistant examining a firearm using a forensic light source

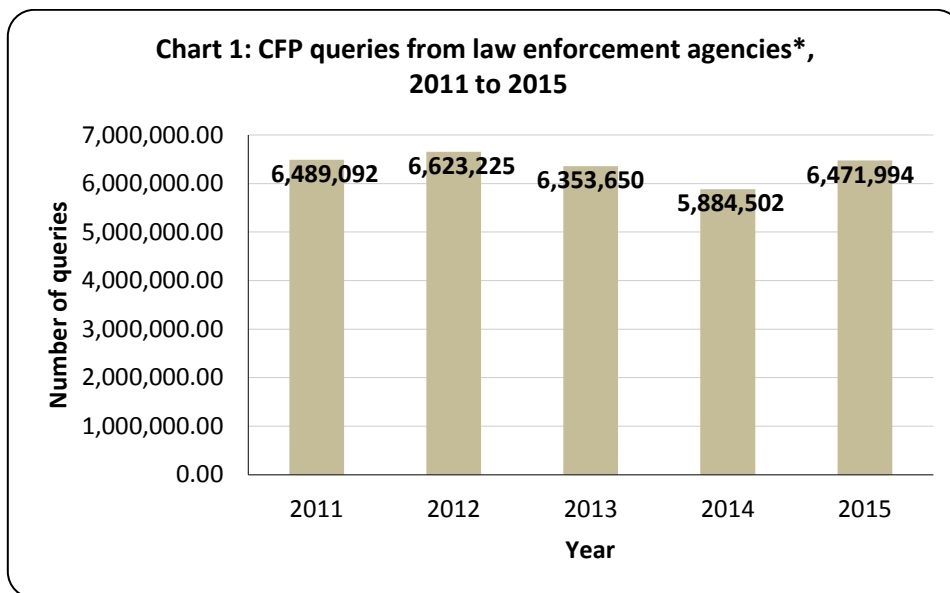
The Firearms Reference Table (FRT) is a computer database managed by the Program that provides national and international law enforcement officers with a tool for identifying and describing firearms. Containing 160,895 firearms records and 45,975 images, the FRT improves accuracy in import-export control cases and facilitates information sharing. The FRT also assists in firearms tracing, record keeping and determining the class of a firearm as outlined under the applicable *Criminal Code* definitions. In 2015, the Program received 55 firearms for inspection. Inspections can be necessary to assist in a criminal case or determine its classification.

Firearms tracing services

The Canadian National Firearms Tracing Centre processes tracing requests to assist national and international law enforcement agencies with their investigations by determining the origin and history of a firearm, and possibly assisting with linking it to a crime. A firearm is a critical piece of physical evidence in a gun-related crime and tracing it to an individual or criminal organization provides key information in criminal cases. In 2015, the Program received 2,479 firearms tracing requests.

Fostering information sharing

The CFP provides police agencies with statistical reports on firearms in their jurisdiction. Firearms information can help police in addressing and countering gun violence, combating the illegal movement of firearms in their jurisdiction, and focusing and planning investigative efforts. Information about licensing and registration is additionally available to law enforcement officers through the Canadian Firearms Registry Online (CFRO), which is accessed through the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database. CPIC allows officers to trace recovered firearms or to anticipate the potential of firearms at a location prior to attendance. For example, if a firearms licence is revoked and the police must recover the firearm(s) from an individual or location, an officer can query the database to determine the number of registered firearms (restricted or prohibited) associated with the individual, their descriptions and their serial numbers. Canadian law enforcement agencies queried the CFP database an average of 17,731 times per day in 2015 (Chart 1).



* Non-restricted firearms were registered in Quebec only up until March 27, 2015.

Public Agents Firearms Regulations

The *Public Agents Firearms Regulations*, in full effect since 2008, require public service agencies and public agents, including police forces, to report all agency-owned and protected (seized, turned in or found by police) firearms in their possession. In 2015, there were 1,728 public service agencies that declared an inventory of firearms (Table 1), with 25,577 firearms seized among them (Tables 2 and 3).

Agency type	Number
Court	130
Federal agency	254
Municipal agency	51
Police academy	5
Police agency or detachments	1,044
Provincial agency	244
Total	1,728

*The numbers represent individual agencies reporting possession of 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.

Province or territory	Seizures
Newfoundland and Labrador	140
Prince Edward Island	3
Nova Scotia	1,003
New Brunswick	566
Quebec	7,101
Ontario	6,453
Manitoba	963
Saskatchewan	758
Alberta	3,663
British Columbia	4,874
Yukon	18
Northwest Territories	27
Nunavut	8
Total	25,577

Class	Seized
Non-restricted	20,731
Restricted	3,333
Prohibited	1,513
Total	25,577

Community Outreach

Call centre

The Program is committed to regularly communicating with the public and distributing firearms safety information through a variety of channels. When seeking firearms-related information or assistance, the public can contact the CFP call centre by using the toll-free number 1-800-731-4000 or via email at cfp-pcaf@rcmp-grc.gc.ca. In 2015, the CFP call centre received 788,050 telephone calls and almost 13,000 email inquiries. The CFP encourages the general public to report any public safety concerns by phone. Reported safety concerns are taken seriously by the Program and play a role in applicant screening and continuous eligibility screening of licensees.

Website

The CFP website, a sub-site of the RCMP website, is regularly updated to provide information regarding firearms safety, policies and client-service initiatives. It offers a variety of information to individuals, businesses and law enforcement about licensing and registration requirements, as well as firearms safety awareness. In 2015, the CFP website received 6,415,108 unique page views, an increase of almost 1.25 million compared to 2014.

Communication products

A variety of communication materials are provided to inform the public, businesses, front-line police and other law enforcement agencies about the CFP and firearms requirements in Canada. In 2015, CFP staff continued attending hunting, outdoor and gun shows across the country, distributing firearms-safety products and responding to requests for firearms information. Additionally, the Program maintained its partnerships with various Canadian law enforcement agencies and community groups by distributing firearms-related information in brochure, card and fact sheet formats.

Aboriginal and youth outreach

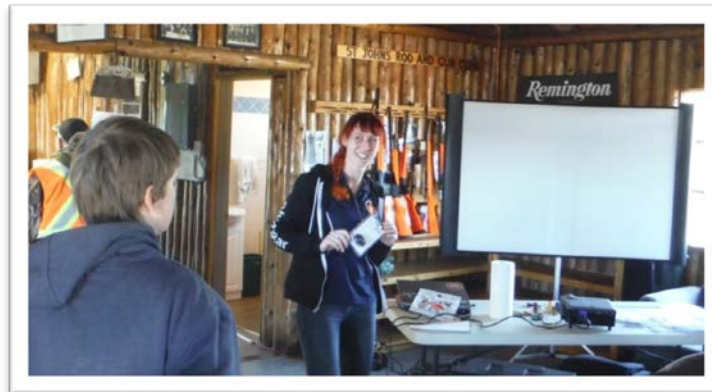
The CFP continued to provide specific firearms services to Aboriginal peoples and youth in 2015 to support the RCMP's strategic priorities. For example, the CFP worked with communities in Nunavut that engaged in the sale of firearms and/or ammunition to ensure their compliance with licence conditions. Other initiatives included assisting community members with the processing of new licence and renewal licence applications, involving Alternate Certification where applicable, providing the instruction of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (CFSC), and promoting safe storage.

Similarly, the staff from the CFO office in Newfoundland and Labrador participated in a successful outreach event in the Aboriginal community of Natuashish in March 2015. The objective of the event was to enhance awareness of - and promote firearm safety by contacting as many clients as possible, renewing expired firearms licences and making the CFSC available to interested residents. Two CFSC sessions were presented, numerous expired licences were renewed with the assistance of the Firearms Officers in attendance, and safe storage examples were reviewed. A first for this region was the offering of alternative certification to adults who had trouble understanding English and to community Elders.



Firearms Officer delivering the CFSC in Natuashish, Labrador

Furthermore, the CFO Newfoundland and Labrador office had the opportunity to represent the CFP at the St. John's Rod and Gun Club Youth Day event in June 2015. A short presentation was given to the 50 youth and parents that attended to explain the process of obtaining a Minor's Licence. The CFP presentation focused on the Minor's Licence requirement to successfully complete the CFSC, as well as the differences between a Minor's Licence and a Possession and Acquisition Licence. The event was a great community outreach opportunity to answer questions about firearms licensing for minors.



Firearms Agent giving a presentation on firearms licensing

2015 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Supreme Court of Canada's decision on Quebec's non-restricted firearm registration records

April 2012 to early March 2015

The *Ending the Long-gun Registry Act* came into effect on April 5, 2012. At that time, the CFP undertook the necessary work to implement the new legislation, which included the destruction of existing non-restricted firearms registration records held in the Canadian Firearms Registry in October 2012. Between April 2012 and early March 2015, due to a court challenge from Quebec, the Registrar still registered non-restricted firearms for residents of Quebec, and the Commissioner of Firearms continued to maintain Quebec residents' non-restricted firearms registration records, pending the final decision by the Supreme Court of Canada.

March 2015

The Supreme Court of Canada released its decision regarding the non-restricted firearms registration records for residents of Quebec on March 27, 2015. The Court dismissed Quebec's appeal challenging the constitutionality of the provisions of the *Ending the Long-gun Registry Act* requiring the destruction of non-restricted registration records, and refused to order the transfer of these records to Quebec. The CFP immediately complied with the decision and Act, by halting the acceptance and processing of registration and transfer applications for non-restricted firearms from within the province of Quebec, and taking steps to execute the deletion of the remaining Quebec non-restricted registration records from the Canadian Firearms Registry.

The Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act

On June 18, 2015, the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act* received Royal Assent. This legislation amended the *Firearms Act* and the *Criminal Code*. Some of these changes were brought into force upon Royal Assent (effective immediately), while others came into force upon a date fixed by Order in Council. The provisions include the following:

Came into Force on June 18, 2015.	Make classroom participation in firearms safety courses mandatory for first-time licence applicants.
	Provide for the discretionary authority of CFOs to be subject to the regulations.
	Strengthen the <i>Criminal Code</i> provisions relating to orders prohibiting the possession of firearms where a person is convicted of an offence involving domestic violence.
	Provide the Governor in Council with the authority to prescribe firearms to be non-restricted or restricted.
Came into Force on September 2, 2015.	Eliminate of the Possession Only Licence (POL) and conversion of all valid POLs to Possession and Acquisition Licences (PALs).
	Authorizations to Transport become a condition of a licence for certain routine and lawful activities such as target shooting; taking a firearm home after a transfer; going to a gunsmith, gun show, a Canadian port of exit; or a peace officer or a CFO for verification, registration or disposal.
Not yet in force	Create a six-month grace period at the end of the five-year licence.
	Share firearms import information when restricted and prohibited firearms are imported into Canada by businesses.

Online Firearms Licence Renewals for Individuals

Since the September 2014 implementation of online firearms licence renewals for individuals, the CFP has received over 100,000 online licence renewal applications. In 2015 only, there were 92,759 online renewals. The new service was promoted throughout 2015 via the CFP website, call centre scripts and communications products, and was well received by individual clients. This service enhances client service delivery because it is secure, fast and easy in comparison to paper applications. In addition, online licence renewal provides a faster turnaround time for issuing renewed licences by eliminating the requirement to submit forms by mail. It is also greatly beneficial for the CFP since it significantly reduces the processing time, while following the same eligibility review as done with paper applications.

2015 Firearms Cases of Interest

Working with municipal law enforcement agencies

Members of NWEST in Quebec were asked in March 2015 by the Montreal Police Service to identify firearm pictures that were posted online to Pinterest by a suspected criminal gang member. After consultation, NWEST determined that the firearms in the pictures were real and identified them accordingly. A few weeks later, the Montreal Police Service obtained a search warrant for the residence of the individual of interest. Five illegal and prohibited firearms were found. The NWEST members provided further assistance by identifying the seized firearms and submitting a list of infractions for the Crown.



Firearms retrieved from the residence in Montreal

Working with Aboriginal police services

In November 2015, NWEST, the Treaty Three Police Service's Street Crime Unit and other uniformed officers executed a search warrant on a residence at Obashkaandagaang Bay in Manitoba that resulted in the seizure of cache of weapons and ammunition. Officers seized ten firearms, including some that were loaded and stored in an unsafe manner. In addition to the firearms, officers seized an assortment of high capacity magazines and over 200 boxes of ammunition. The suspect was charged with unsafe storage of a firearm, possession of a prohibited device, possession of a firearm knowing its possession is unauthorized, possession of a loaded firearm with readily accessible ammunition, possession of a firearm in an unauthorized place, and careless storage of ammunition.



Firearms retrieved from the residence in Obashkaandagaang Bay

Working with other government departments

Members of NWEST in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia participated in a joint forces operation with members of CBSA, Environment Canada and other members of the RCMP, in June 2015. NWEST members inspected firearms declarations for hunters returning to the United States, with a focus on targeted outfitters and individuals that were identified within the last five years. In the end, NWEST confirmed that over 100 firearms brought into Canada returned to the United States with the travellers. NWEST also examined for CBSA two restricted firearms from United States citizens attempting to enter Canada.



Uniformed public agents from RCMP, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and CBSA

KEEPING CANADA SAFE

The CFP was transferred to the RCMP in 2006 to help reduce gun crime while allowing Canadian police authorities to more effectively coordinate gun control. The Program administers the *Firearms Act* and its related Regulations, and targets firearms use that is unsafe or criminal in nature. In order to enhance public safety, the CFP regulates firearms licensing and registration, as well as manages and administers the firearms safety training courses.

Licensing

Individuals who possess or use firearms must be licensed, unless an individual is using a firearm under the direct and immediate supervision of a licensed holder. Similarly, all individuals who acquire firearms or ammunition must be licensed. Three types of firearms licences were available to individuals in Canada up until September 2, 2015, when the POL was eliminated by the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act*:

1. The PAL is the only licence available to new applicants 18 and older.
2. The POL existed until September 2, 2015 and did not allow for the acquisition of more firearms, only the possession of firearms owned on or before December 1, 1998.
3. The Minor's Licence allows individuals between the ages of 12 and 17 to use, but not acquire, a firearm.

In 2015, the CFP issued 399,086 individual licences, including new licences and renewals (Table 4). There were 2,026,011 individual licence holders in Canada as of December 31, 2015 (Table 5).

Table 4: Number of individual licences issued, 2015 (including new and renewals)	
Licence type	Licence count
Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL)	326,754
Possession Only Licence (POL)*	67,329
Minor's Licence	5,003
Total	399,086

* POLs were issued until September 2, 2015, when the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act* provision came into force.

Province or Territory	PAL	POL	Minor's Licence	Total
Newfoundland and Labrador	73,680	1	386	74,067
Prince Edward Island	6,070	0	11	6,081
Nova Scotia	71,935	0	1,273	73,208
New Brunswick	67,532	0	195	67,727
Quebec	493,449	2	56	493,507
Ontario	564,376	1	4,659	569,036
Manitoba	84,647	1	542	85,190
Saskatchewan	99,670	0	233	99,903
Alberta	273,339	0	2,047	275,386
British Columbia	265,330	0	802	266,132
Yukon	6,879	0	69	6,948
Northwest Territories	5,358	0	46	5,404
Nunavut	3,418	0	4	3,422
Total	2,015,683	5*	10,323	2,026,011

* These POLs were still valid as of December 31, 2015, because they were in the process of being converted to PALs.

Firearms licence application refusals

Under the *Firearms Act*, CFOs are authorized to refuse an application for a firearms licence based on their assessment of an individual's potential risk to public safety. In 2015, there were 688 firearms licence applications refused for various public safety reasons (Tables 6 and 7). Some of these refusals may have been referred to or overturned by the courts since the initial refusal.

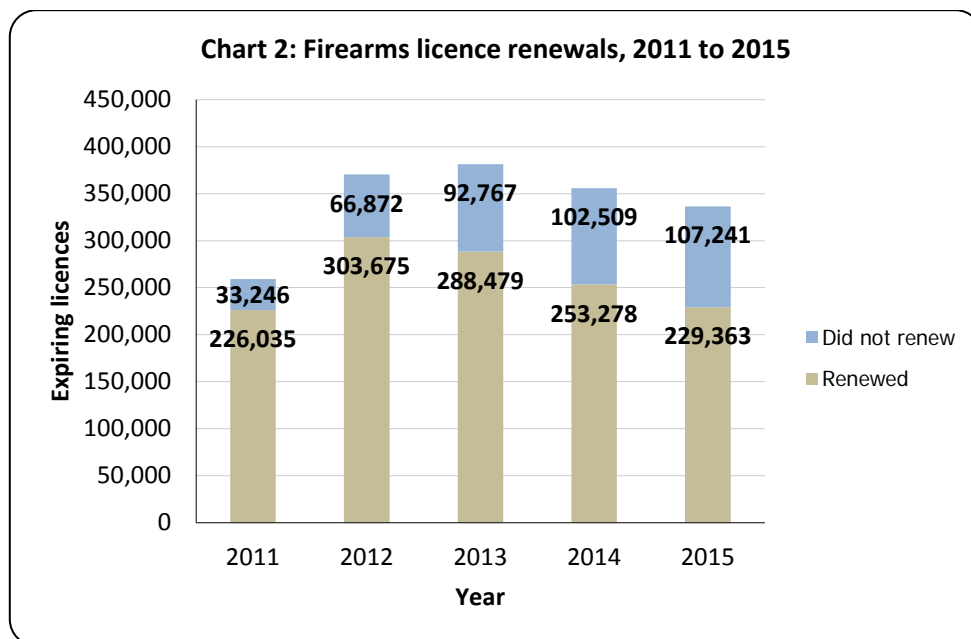
Year	Refusals
2011	520
2012	670
2013	886
2014	805
2015	688
Total	3,569

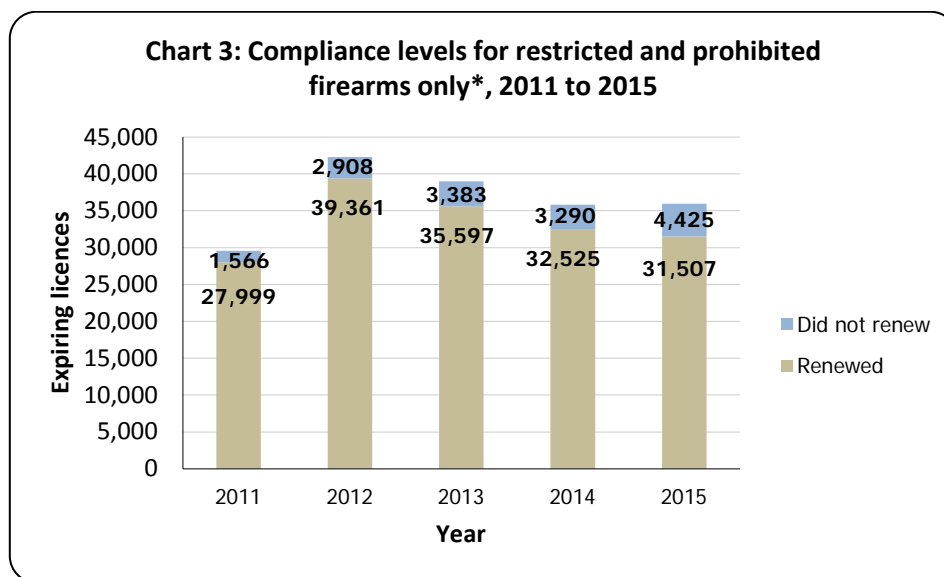
Table 7: Reasons for firearms licence application refusals, 2015*	
Reason	Refusals
Court-ordered prohibition/probation	229
Domestic violence	40
Drug offences	25
Mental health	112
POL ineligible**	10
Potential risk to others	132
Potential risk to self	203
Provided false information	94
Unsafe firearm use and storage	20
Violent behaviour	56

*Because a firearms licence application can be influenced by more than one factor, the sum of refusal reasons will exceed the annual total of firearms licence applications refused.
 ** Until September 2, 2015.

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 process by sending renewal notices to licensees approximately 90 days prior to the expiry of the current licence. As a condition of their licence, licensees are legally required to advise the CFP of any address changes, which helps ensure they receive the renewal notice. A total of 336,604 individual POL and PAL licences expired in 2015 (Chart 2).





* When a licence has expired, a registration revocation notice is sent to the licence holder 30 days after the licence expiry date. If there is no change in the licence holder's file within 90 days after the revocation, a report is sent to the police of jurisdiction for follow-up. A lack of renewal could be associated, for example, with a licence holder having disposed of his/her firearm(s), moved outside Canada or passed away.

Continuous eligibility screening of firearms licence holders

The Canadian Firearms Information System (CFIS) contains current and historical firearms licence holder data. If a licence holder is involved in an event involving violence (or other offences specified in Section 5 of the *Firearms Act*), it is reported in CPIC via a Firearms Interest Police (FIP) and sent to the relevant CFO for review. There were 26,535 FIP events in 2015 that were matched to a person with a firearms licence (Table 8). Licence holders are regularly screened to assess their continuous eligibility to remain licensed. In 2015, for instance, the CFP screened 1,711 licence applications and 88 Internet investigations were conducted to assist the CFOs with applicant eligibility.

CFO jurisdiction	Matches
Newfoundland and Labrador	494
Prince Edward Island	91
Nova Scotia	529
New Brunswick	651
Quebec	7,538
Ontario	7,009
Manitoba and Nunavut	1,447
Saskatchewan	1,273
Alberta and Northwest Territories	4,786
British Columbia and Yukon	2,717
Total	26,535

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. There were 2,347 firearms licence revoked in 2015 (Tables 9 and 10). Some of these revocations may have been referred to or overturned by the courts since the initial revocation.

Year	Revocations
2011	2,365
2012	2,421
2013	2,497
2014	2,354
2015	2,347
Total	11,984

Reason	Revocations
Court-ordered prohibition/probation	1,578
Domestic violence	67
Drug offences	26
Mental health	430
POL ineligible**	5
Potential risk to others	197
Potential risk to self	209
Provided false information	56
Unsafe firearm use and storage	49
Violent behaviour	69

*Because a firearms licence application can be influenced by more than one factor, the sum of revocations reasons will exceed the annual total of firearms licence applications revoked.
** Until September 2, 2015.

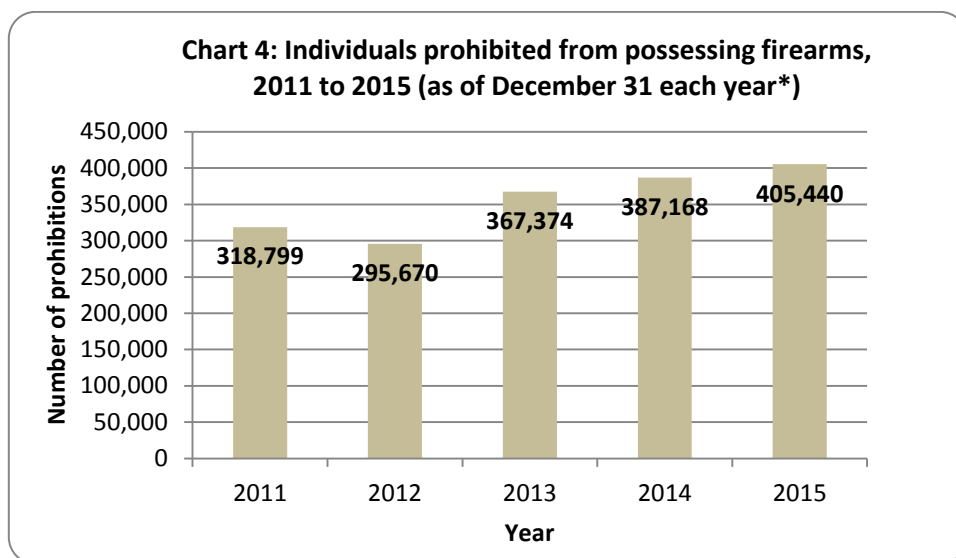
Firearms licence application refusals and firearms licence revocations are recorded in the CFP's national CFIS database. Individuals who have an application refused or a licence revoked, therefore, cannot evade this decision by moving from one municipal or provincial/territorial jurisdiction to another.

Firearm prohibition orders for individuals

Courts must notify CFOs of all firearms prohibition orders in their jurisdiction. Firearms licence applicant screening includes checking if an applicant is subject to a prohibition order. A prohibition order prevents an individual from legally possessing a firearm for a specified period of time and results

in the refusal of a firearms licence application, unless a court specifically orders one to be issued for certain purposes, such as sustenance hunting.

Prohibition orders are recorded in the CPIC database and form part of the background and continuous-eligibility checks for firearms licences. Information from municipal, provincial and federal court records 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. In 2015, there were 405,440 individuals prohibited from possessing firearms (Chart 4).



Note: Data courtesy of CPIC

* Prohibition orders are for a specified period of time and can carry over from year to year. The totals reflect ongoing prohibition orders and not only those that are newly issued.

Firearms businesses

A business, museum or organization that manufactures, sells, possesses, handles, displays or stores 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. CFOs 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 Business Web Services online portal.

As of December 31, 2015, there were 4,522 firearms businesses in Canada licensed under the *Firearms Act*, not including carriers and museums. Of these, 2,117 were licensed to sell only ammunition.

Shooting clubs and ranges

CFOs approve and perform inspections of shooting clubs and ranges within their jurisdictions to ensure safe operation and compliance with the *Firearms Act*. Standards set out in the *Firearms Act* and the *Shooting Clubs and Shooting Ranges Regulations* are intended to ensure the safety of members, visitors and the general public in relation to shooting clubs and ranges. The Program develops and implements range safety measures and reviews range safety inspection reports to improve guidelines, procedures and forms used by Firearms Officers for shooting range inspections. It also reviews range applications, conducts quality control checks, provides feedback on inspection reports and requests or conducts follow-up inspections as required. An estimated 1,320 shooting ranges existed in Canada in 2015.

Registration

According to sub-section 84(1) of the *Criminal Code*, all firearms can be categorized into one of three classes:

- **Non-restricted** firearms - typically shotguns and rifles
- **Restricted** firearms - predominantly handguns
- **Prohibited** firearms - mostly certain handguns and fully automatic firearms

All restricted and prohibited firearms in Canada must be registered; however, 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 by a certified verifier. The Program coordinates the Firearms Verifiers Network, which authorizes new certified verifiers and responds to all inquiries about becoming a certified verifier.

Registration applicants must already have a firearms licence allowing them to possess a certain class of firearm. You must have a firearms licence with the correct classes in order to register a restricted or prohibited firearm. When a registered firearm is transferred to a new owner, the Registrar will issue a new registration certificate if the new owner is eligible to possess that type of firearm. The record must be changed to reflect both the cancellation of registration from the original owner and the new registration to the new owner.

The registration certificate number links a firearm to its licensed owner in the CFIS database. As with firearms licences, a subset of this information can then be accessed by law enforcement agencies via CPIC.

As of December 31, 2015, there were a total of 978,347 restricted or prohibited firearms registered to individuals or businesses in Canada (Tables 11 and 12).

Firearm Class	2012	2013	2014	2015
Restricted	576,847	659,387	726,705	795,854
Prohibited	190,910	188,552	185,793	182,493
Total	767,757	847,939	912,498	978,347

Province or Territory	Restricted	Prohibited	Total
Newfoundland and Labrador	6,641	1,471	8,112
Prince Edward Island	2,283	738	3,021
Nova Scotia	20,337	6,288	26,625
New Brunswick	15,619	4,504	20,123
Quebec	73,669	28,281	101,950
Ontario	294,838	76,898	371,736
Manitoba	29,851	5,424	35,275
Saskatchewan	41,642	7,693	49,335
Alberta	161,403	24,481	185,884
British Columbia	144,725	25,896	170,621
Yukon	2,415	355	2,770
Northwest Territories	1,366	302	1,668
Nunavut	378	32	410
Other	687	130	817
Total	795,854	182,493	978,347

The *Ending the Long-gun Registry Act* removed the requirement to register non-restricted firearms in April 2012; however, due to ongoing litigation, Quebec residents were still registering their non-restricted firearms with the CFP until the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in March 2015.

Firearms registration application refusals and certificate revocations

The Registrar has the authority to revoke registration certificates and refuse firearms registration applications. In 2015, there were 60 firearm registration applications refused and 7,159 firearm registration certificates revoked (Table 13).

Table 13: Number of registration refusals and revocations, 2011 to 2015			
Year	Applications Refused	Certificates Revoked	Total
2011	181	89,805	89,986
2012	163	54,222	54,385
2013	134	70,027	70,161
2014	105	58,609	58,701
2015	60	7,159	7,219
Total	643	279,822	280,452

Note: For 2012-2014, totals include non-restricted firearms for Quebec, but not for other provinces. Prior to 2014, registration refusals were calculated by application date. In 2014, they were calculated by refusal date. The significant decrease in 2015 is attributed to the deletion of non-restricted registrations in Quebec.

Safety Training

As outlined in the *Firearms Act*, to be licensed to acquire firearms in Canada, individuals must demonstrate awareness of the principles relating to the safe handling and use of firearms. 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, an individual must successfully complete both the CFSC and the Canadian Restricted Firearms Safety Course (CRFSC). The CFSC and the CRFSC are fundamental firearms-education and safety-training components of the CFP. The CFP is responsible for the continued development, implementation, evaluation and revision of national firearms-safety standards, the CFSC and the CRFSC.

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.

On June 18, 2015, classroom participation in firearms safety courses became mandatory for first-time firearms licence applicants as per the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act*.

MOVING FORWARD

The CFP, Canada's centre for firearms expertise, has demonstrated again in 2015 its commitment to firearms safety and combating firearms crime. Through licence applicant screening and continuous licence eligibility checks, firearms registration and safety training, the CFP promotes the safe use and possession of firearms. The CFP also provided a comprehensive suite of specialized firearms services to law enforcement partners across Canada to help prevent and investigate firearm-related crimes. When investigators need help tracing or identifying a firearm, preparing or executing a search warrant involving firearms or organizing firearm exhibits for courts, the CFP could be relied on for the knowledge and experience of CFP firearm experts.

In 2016, the CFP will seek to further improve its licensing and registration web services, and maintain quality operational and technical support to law enforcement agencies. For example, the updated course material for the CFSC and CRFSC is expected to be made available and administered across Canada. Also, a rewrite of the Firearms Reference Table (FRT) software will commence in 2016 in an effort to improve its efficiency and add capability. This software will replace several different FRT versions currently in use, support mobile devices, have higher resolution images, and support all four Interpol languages.

In addition, the Program will continue working with provincial and territorial partners, as well as Aboriginal communities, to promote firearm safety awareness. This includes increasing its outreach efforts in northern communities across Canada and expanding partnerships across Nunavut.