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906E07

CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM¹

Zeying Wan prepared this case under the supervision of Professor Derrick Neufeld solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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Skyrocketing costs of the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) have led many Canadians to consider the project "an unconscionable taxpayers' waste of money."² By 2004, reported costs were nearly \$1 billion officially, while some pundits speculated that true costs were nearing \$2 billion,³ figures that far surpassed the original "break-even" estimates for the program. How could such a simple project — essentially a shared, distributed database — have gotten so dramatically out of control? Should the federal government let this snowball keep rolling or try to de-escalate and perhaps cancel the program?

Gun Deaths in Canada

According to Statistics Canada,⁴ 816 Canadians died from gun-related injuries in 2002 (i.e., 2.6 out of every 100,000 people), including suicides (80 per cent), homicides (15 per cent) and accidents (four per cent). Although the total number of gun-related deaths had declined steadily between 1979 and 2002,⁵ this was mostly

¹ This case has been written on the basis of publicly available published sources only. Consequently, the interpretation and perspectives presented in this case are not necessarily those of the Government of Canada's Firearms Centre or the Government of Canada or any of their employees.

² "Issue — Gun Registry in Canada," Canada Online, March 3, 2003,

http://canadaonline.about.com/library/issues/bligunreg.htm, January 26, 2006.

³ "Gun Registry Cost Soars to \$2 Billion," CBC News, February 13, 2004,

http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2004/02/13/gunregistry_rdi040213, January 26, 2006.

⁴ Statistics Canada.

⁵ "Gun-related Death More Likely in U.S. — Stats Can," CTV News, June 28, 2005,

http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1119965250902_5/?hub=TopStories.

due to a sharp drop in suicides rather than a reduction in the number of homicides.⁶ Gun-related crime continued to be a serious social problem. The following list denotes some notorious gun death tragedies in Canada:

- Toronto Boxing Day shooting On December 26, 2005, a 15-year-old girl who was out shopping with her family was shot and killed on a busy Toronto street filled with holiday shoppers. The shooting stemmed from a dispute among a group of 10 to 15 youths.
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police On March 3, 2005, four Canadian RCMP officers were shot and killed while investigating a marijuana grow operation in Northern Alberta. The shooter committed suicide.
- Taber tragedy On April 28, 1999, a 14-year-old boy opened fire with a .22calibre sawed-off rifle inside W.R. Myers High School in Taber, Alberta. The attacker had been a student at the school but had dropped out. One 17-year-old student was killed, and another was wounded.
- Concordia University shooting On August 24, 1992, Professor Valery Fabrikant used three handguns to shoot and kill four other academics at Concordia University. Fabrikant was angry because he had been denied tenure on several occasions. Patrick Kenniff, Concordia University's rector, became an outspoken proponent of gun control.
- Montreal massacre On December 6, 1989, Marc Lepine entered a classroom in the engineering school at the University of Montreal's École Polytechnique carrying a Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic rifle. He separated the men and women and then opened fire on the women. Within a few minutes, he had shot 28 students and teachers and killed 14 young women.

Canada has a long history of firearms control (see Exhibit 1). The current firearms control legislation, Bill C-68, was passed in 1995. The Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) was established by the Department of Justice in the same year.

Program Implementation to Date

The CFP was a multi-jurisdictional program that regulated the mandatory registration of all firearms in Canada and set the licensing requirements for firearms owners under the Firearms Act. The Act applied to any person (including visitors to Canada) and any business that owned, wanted to obtain or use firearms, or wanted to purchase ammunition. The purpose of the Act and the program was to promote responsible ownership and to keep firearms out of the hands of those who might misuse them — in other words, to promote shared outcome of "Safer homes, safer streets in Canada."⁷ On April 11, 2003, responsibility and accountability for the CFP was transferred from the Minister of Justice to the Solicitor General.

 ⁶ Gary Mauser, "Suicides and the "Gun Deaths" Fraud," <u>Fraser Forum</u>, September 2005, pp. 21-22.
⁷ "Canadian Firearms Program," http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/cfp-pcaf/description_e.asp, accessed January 26, 2006.

The CFP was implemented in three main phases:

- Licensing phase: the Firearms Act called for the licensing of all firearms owners as of January 1, 2001.
- Registration phase: the Act set the deadline for the registration of all firearms as of January 1, 2003.
- Ongoing operations phase: focus shifted from licensing and registration to solidifying management practices, risk management, client services and quality assurance.

According to the Government of Canada's Firearms Centre website,⁸ as of September 30, 2005, approximately two million individuals had received firearms licenses, including:

- 1,230,000 Possession Only Licences (POLs)
- 748,000 Possession and Acquisition Licences (PALs)
- 5,000 Minor's Licences.

This website also indicated that approximately 7.1 million firearms had been registered in the Canadian Firearms Information System (CFIS), representing an estimated compliance rate of 90 per cent for licensing and registration:

- 6,840,000 firearms were registered to individuals.
- 236,000 firearms were registered to businesses.
- 43,300 firearms were registered or recorded to public agencies and museums.

Program opponents have challenged the compliance rate figure, arguing that it accounted for law-abiding citizens only, and that active and would-be criminals would never voluntarily comply.

Between December 1, 1998, and September 30, 2005, the chief firearms officer (CFO) refused 6,119 applications and revoked an additional 9,846 licences. Reasons for refusing or revoking an application were typically related to an applicant's history of violence, unsafe firearm use or storage, drug offenses, providing false information, or mental illness.

Since the Canadian Firearms Registry was first launched on December 1, 1998, police and other public safety officials have queried the online database a total of 4.6 million times. As of 2005, the system received approximately 5,000 queries per day.⁹ By September 30, 2005, more than 5,450 affidavits had been provided by the Canadian Firearms Registry to support court proceedings in firearms-related crimes.

⁸ Statistics Canada, "Quick Facts about the Canadian Firearms Program as of December 31, 2005," http://www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca/media/program_statistics/default_e.asp, January 26, 2006.

⁹ Statistics Canada, "Quick Facts about the Canadian Firearms Program as of December 31, 2005." http://www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca/media/program_statistics/default_e.asp, accessed January 26, 2006.

Since December 1, 1998, more than one million firearm transfers had been completed (i.e. from one individual or business to another individual or business). An additional one million firearms had been exported, destroyed or deactivated, and removed from the system during this time period. Summary activity data from December 1998 through December 2004 are provided in Exhibit 2.

Information Systems

Prior to the implementation of the CFP, a variety of national database systems had been developed over time, primarily by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada's national police force. These systems included, for example, the Restricted Weapon Registration System, the Canadian Police Information Centre System, and the Firearms Interest Police database.

The Restricted Weapon Registration System maintained data on prohibited weapons, the only firearms that were subject to registration prior to December 1, 1998. It was a manual, non-shared registry maintained under the authority of the RCMP. Information in this system dated back to the early 1930s.

The Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system was a centralized national system, first developed in 1966, and accessible to police forces nationally. CPIC was maintained by the RCMP and contained records related to criminal activity, property and missing persons drawn from a variety of other systems. One subsystem maintained in CPIC, for example, was the Firearms Interest Police (FIP) database. This database was compiled by extracting data from local police departments. All items were related to firearms incidents (such as name and age of person involved) and were used to track individuals who might present a risk to themselves or others.

The new system proposed to support the Canadian Firearms Program, introduced on December 1, 1998, was called the Canadian Firearms Registration System (CFRS). The CFRS was to replace the Restricted Weapon Registration System and would be integrated with the various other police information systems and databases, such as CPIC and FIP, to provide administrative and enforcement support to all partners involved in firearms licensing and registration. As with the other national systems, the information technology branch of the RCMP would manage the new system.

In 2001, the Canadian Firearms Centre (CAFC) admitted that the three-year-old system was not working very well. Its technology was "expensive, inflexible, out-of-date, and could not be modified at a reasonable cost to support future operations."¹⁰ Tremendous political and public controversy ensued.

¹⁰ Eugene Plawiuk, "Canada's Billion Dollar P3 Boondoggle," Canadian Democratic Movement, http://canadiandemocraticmovement.ca/displayarticle388.html, January 26, 2006.

The Firearms Control Controversy

Although the CFP had been in place since 1995, recent controversy regarding massive cost overruns had aggravated the public's concerns regarding not only its implementation, but also its legitimacy.

Supporters continued to assert that the program promoted responsible gun use and was essential for quelling the misuse of firearms. The registry provided a record of who owned what kinds of firearms and where they were located at any given time, making it much easier for police to track both legal and illegal firearms. This improved public safety and, at the same time, respected lawful ownership and use of firearms. According to criminologist Neil Boyd, "In three separate forms of statistical analysis — exploratory, time-series and structural — researchers have found evidence to suggest that gun control has had an impact on homicides and firearms homicides."

Opponents responded that the program had done nothing to increase public safety. To the contrary, the program had created a thriving black market in firearms trading and smuggling. One member of Canada's Recreational Firearms Community described it as "the most needless, ineffective, costly, dangerous, deceptive, error-ridden, wasteful, offensive, incompetent, undemocratic and odious pieces of garbage legislation."¹² It was argued that the program would not make Canadians safer and that it was only one step on the way to the confiscation of all guns in Canada. There were also concerns expressed regarding loss of privacy due to the collection and use of personal information. For example, it was argued that some of the "personal history" questions on the firearms application form¹³ needed to be revised or eliminated because the program had not established a sufficient need to collect such personal information.

Implementation Challenges

The program had experienced a number of severe implementation challenges.

The first challenge related to the deficiencies and subsequent changes to the program delivery structure. For example, the program did not initially have a full-time chief executive officer (CEO) to provide central leadership and co-ordination, resulting in an unintended escalation of features and processes in order to meet the interests of the different stakeholders. One informant to a Department of Justice internal probe noted: "There were too many actors involved ... Partnerships were

http://www.lufa.ca/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=49&whichpage=1, January 26, 2006.

¹¹ http://www.guncontrol.ca/Content/TheCaseForGunControl.html, accessed January 26, 2006.

¹² Online forum of the Law-Abiding Unregistered Firearms Association (LUFA),

¹³ http://www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca/online-en_ligne/form-assistance/indiv_forms/921_e.asp, accessed January 26, 2006.

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good, but they led to over-complexity."¹⁴ In response, a Commissioner of Firearms was appointed as CEO.

A second challenge had to do with opposition to firearms control among many existing firearms owners, including members of Canada's Recreational Firearms Community.¹⁵ CAFC management and politicians had to spend a great deal of time addressing these challenges and trying to convince Canadians of the importance of the program. In addition, several of the provinces (such as British Columbia and Alberta) chose to opt out of administering the Firearms Act, which increased program delivery costs in these regions and may have hurt the perceived credibility of the program nationally.

The third set of challenges was more technical in nature. Numerous CFRS system failures were reported, and users complained about long processing wait times.¹⁶ Furthermore, firearms officers in the field did not typically have access to high-speed Internet services and were forced to call personnel at their regional office to access CFRS information. To make matters worse, quite a few jurisdictions did not have electronic connections to their provincial court databases, which meant that prohibition orders were not automatically captured and entered into the CFRS. Instead, courts sent in hard copies of orders, which were (eventually) manually entered into the CFRS.

Fourth, according to the CAFC, several issues were threatening effective integration of the CFRS with the CPIC/FIP database (described earlier).¹⁷ First, policing agencies were not following consistent data entry procedures — e.g., some agencies entered full names, while others entered surname and first initial only, resulting in problems identifying individuals and in additional follow-up work. Second, significant procedural inefficiencies were cropping up — e.g., anytime a FIP record was modified by a police agency, no matter how small the modification, the system generated a flag indicating that the CFO should review the record. This resulted in a huge volume of flags, which not only placed a great burden on the CFO office personnel but also increased the likelihood that high-risk data could be overlooked among large amounts of irrelevant or duplicated data.

Finally, weak internal and external communication, program rescoping, changes in implementation deadlines, changes in fees, complexities related to initial and ongoing licensing and registration, and related errors led to growing confusion among firearms owners and the general public.

¹⁴ Canada. Department of Justice, <u>Canadian Firearms Program Implementation Evaluation (to September</u> <u>2002)</u>, April 2003.

¹⁵ Online forum of the Law-Abiding Unregistered Firearms Association (LUFA),

http://www.lufa.ca/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=49&whichpage=1, January 26, 2006.

¹⁶ Canada. <u>Department of Justice, Canadian Firearms Program Implementation Evaluation (to September</u> 2002), April 2003.

¹⁷ Canada. <u>Department of Justice, Canadian Firearms Program Implementation Evaluation (to September</u> 2002), April 2003.

Program Cost Overruns

When Bill C-68 received Senate approval in 1995, the budgeted cost for the CFRS was \$119 million, to be offset by \$117 million in registration fees, resulting in a \$2 million cost for taxpayers. Exhibit 3 represents known costs incurred since 1995.

In 2002, Auditor General Sheila Fraser delivered an internal audit report on the CFP. She determined that cost overruns had resulted from loss of control since the beginning of the program and that Parliament was ignorant of the escalating costs. Fraser reported that, by 2005, gun registration would have cost around \$1 billion, with registration fees offsetting this by only \$140 million. Other key findings from her report¹⁸:

1996: The Department of Justice stated that it needed additional money because its original processing cost estimates of \$5.50 per owner licence and \$4.60 per firearms registration were too low. These estimates were revised to \$23.75 for processing licences and \$16.28 for registering a first firearm. As a result of these revisions, the Department of Justice estimated that it needed approximately \$60 million in additional funds.

1998: The Department of Justice obtained Effective Project Approval from the Treasury Board of Canada, and a total of \$544 million was allocated to the program for the period 1995-2003. By February 2000, the total estimated costs for this period increased to \$764 million.

February 2001: The government approved a plan to restructure the program and reduce future costs by \$180 million from 2001-2005. Apparently, the restructured plan was ineffective. By December 2001, actual costs had reached \$527 million.

April 2002: An estimated \$629 million had been spent on developing and implementing this program. Estimated costs to date included¹⁹:

- \$2 million to help police enforce legislation;
- \$60+ million for a public relations programs, including television commercials;
- \$227 million in computer costs (complicated application forms resulted in slower-than-expected slowing processing times, which drove costs higher than anticipated);
- \$332 million for other programming costs, including on the employment costs of staff to process the forms.

¹⁸ The data are extracted from the <u>Report of the Auditor General of Canada, 2002</u>, Chapter 10.

¹⁹ Justin Thompson, "Implementing the Firearms Act — The Rising Cost," CBC news Online, updated January 7, 2004.

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In February 2003, the Liberal government announced an action plan to address the problems with the gun control program, based on recommendations provided by external management consultants. The goal of the action plan was to reduce the gross costs of the gun control program in Canada to approximately \$67 million annually by 2009.

In March 2003, despite public outrage and widespread condemnation of the rising costs, the Liberals voted to bolster the gun registry with an additional \$59 million in funding.

On February 13, 2004, documents obtained by Zone Libre of CBC's French news service suggested that the gun registry had actually cost Canadian taxpayers nearly \$2 billion so far.²⁰

Now What?

Stephen Harper, leader of the Conservative Party of Canada — the Official Opposition party — declared that if his party were elected, the Canadian gun registry would be scrapped and funds would be reallocated to front-line law enforcement.²¹ Current gun control laws would be replaced by a practical firearms control system that would be cost-effective, while respecting the rights of Canadians to own and use guns responsibly.

After the recent Boxing Day shooting in Toronto, gun-related crime and gun control had again become a hot topic, just in time for Canada's 2005 federal election campaign. The major parties all suggested stronger penalties for those who used guns to commit a crime, and all shared the belief that it would be preferable to prevent the crime in the first place. Should the federal government continue improving the firearms program or cancel it? Perhaps a national referendum would answer this question.

²⁰ "Gun Registry Cost Soars to \$2 Billion," CBC News, February 13, 2004,

http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2004/02/13/gunregistry_rdi040213, January 26, 2006.

²¹ Conservative Party of Canada, "Stand Up for Security,"

http://www.conservative.ca/?section_id=2326§ion_copy_id=31902&language_id=0, January 26, 2006.

Exhibit 1

THE HISTORY OF FIREARMS CONTROL IN CANADA

- In 1934, the first real registration requirement for handguns was created. Registration certificates were issued and records were kept by the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) or by police departments that provincial Attorneys General had designated as firearms registries.
- In 1951, for the first time, the registry system of handguns was centralized under the Commissioner of the RCMP. Additionally, automatic firearms were added to the category of firearms that had to be registered.
- In 1968/1969, the categories of "firearm," "restricted weapon" and "prohibited weapon" were created for the first time. The introduction of these categories ended confusion over specific types of weapons and allowed for the creation of specific legislative controls for each of the new categories.
- In 1977, firearms control legislation (Bill C-51) was passed in the House of Commons and established the first general screening process for prospective firearm owners. The legislation also introduced requirements for Firearms Acquisition Certificates (FACs) and requirement for Firearms and Ammunition Business Permits.
- In 1991, changes to firearms control legislation (Bill C-17) were introduced and largely strengthened many of the 1977 measures. The new legislation required a more detailed screening check of FAC applicants, which included requiring applicants to provide a photograph and two references; imposing a mandatory 28-day waiting period for an FAC; a mandatory requirement for safety training and expanding the application from to provide more background information.
- In 1995, the current firearms control legislation (Bill C-68) was passed. Major changes included a Criminal Code amendment providing harsher penalties for certain serious crimes where firearms were used (for example, kidnapping, murder, etc.); the creation of the Firearms Act, to take the administrative and regulatory aspects of the licensing and registration systems out of the Criminal Code; a new licensing system to replace the FAC system; mandatory licenses for the possession and acquisition of firearms, and for the purchase of ammunition; and registration of all firearms, including shotguns and rifles.
- The central component of the 1995 firearms control measure was the Firearms Act. The Act and its related regulations controlled the acquisition, possession, use and movement of firearms, other weapons, devices and ammunition. More specifically, the Act required individuals to have a license to possess or to acquire a firearm, and to acquire ammunition and crossbows. It also required businesses to possess a license if they were to engage in activities related to firearms, other weapons, devices or ammunition. In addition, every firearm was required to be registered. There was a transitional period allowed for gradual implementation of the law: individuals had until January 1, 2001, to obtain a firearms license, and had until January 1, 2003, to register their firearms.
- As a result of the firearm control changes introduced by Bill C-68, the Canadian Department of Justice established the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP). The CFP was created for the purpose of supporting the implementation and administration of the 1995 firearms controls. This program placed special emphasis on licensing all firearms owners and users, and on registering all firearms.
- The CFP became operational on December 1, 1998, the same date that the Firearms Act came into effect and the Canada Firearms Centre started accepting and processing license applications from businesses and individuals.
- In 2003, Bill C-10A, an Act to Amend the Firearms Act, was passed. Bill C-10A was critical to achieving a firearms program that would better respond to the needs and expectations of Canadians while maintaining public safety. It included amendments to the Firearms Act that would provide better client service and reduce costs. These amendments would reinforce the program's contribution to public safety by improving access to program services.

Source: Canada Firearms Centre, "History of Firearms Control in Canada: Up to and Including the Firearms Act," http://www.cfc-cafc.gc.ca/pol-leg/hist/firearms_firearms_control_e.asp, January 26, 2006.

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Exhibit 2

FIREARMS REGISTERED AND LICENCES ISSUED (1998 to 2004)

Firearms Newly Registered by Class and by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Non-Restricted	Restricted	Prohibited	Total
Newfoundland	2, 226	17	3	2, 246
and Labrador				
Nova Scotia	2, 038	341	70	2, 449
Prince Edward	291	20	6	317
Island				
New Brunswick	1, 908	102	36	2, 046
Quebec	52, 329	4, 477	2, 478	59, 284
Ontario	211, 076	17, 457	6, 898	235, 431
Manitoba	9, 949	455	94	10, 498
Saskatchewan	4, 182	217	81	4, 480
Alberta	16, 603	1, 331	252	18, 186
British Columbia	12, 090	1, 570	324	13, 984
Yukon	337	15	7	359
Northwest	260	14	5	279
Territories				
Nunavut	147	1	1	149
Others	2, 232	57	9	2, 298
TOTALS	315, 668	26, 074	10, 264	352, 006

Source: 2004 Report, Commissioner of Firearms.

Exhibit 2 (continued)

Licences Issued by Owner Type and by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Possession and Acquisition	Possession - Only	Minors Licence	Business Licence	Total
Newfoundland	2, 858	566	62	330	3, 816
and Labrador					
Nova Scotia	1, 712	272	319	171	2, 474
Prince Edward	228	41	1	26	296
Island					
New Brunswick	1, 501	407	27	158	2, 093
Quebec	19, 467	1, 580	35	955	22, 037
Ontario	25, 402	2, 415	1, 576	982	30, 375
Manitoba	3, 418	298	91	248	4, 055
Saskatchewan	3, 900	205	75	392	4, 572
Alberta	11, 104	460	242	472	12, 278
British	10, 271	719	66	495	11, 551
Columbia					
Yukon	370	15	23	17	425
Northwest	363	14	9	56	442
Territories					
Nunavut	135	0	2	59	196
TOTALS	80, 729	6, 992	2, 528	4, 361	94, 610

Source: 2004 Report, Commissioner of Firearms.

Exhibit 3

FULL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COSTS OF CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM (\$ millions)

ORGANIZATION	PAST EXPENDITURES (1995-1996 to 2003-2004)	2004-2005 EXPENDITURES	
Direct Costs:			
Canada Firearms Centre	537.0	74.2	
Other Federal Government Departments			
(costs reimbursed by CAFC):	(7.0		
Canada border Services Agency	17.2	1.7	
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	110.4	4.0	
Human Resources Development Canada	32.7	0.0	
Public Works and Government Services	1.5	0.1	
Canada			
Department of Justice	0.8	0.2	
Transfer payments to Provinces and/or	167.2	12.5	
Territories			
Contribution payments to Aboriginal	1.4	0.1	
Communities, Other Communities			
Total Direct Costs:	868.2	92.8	
Costs not reimbursed by Canada Firearms			
Centre:			
Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness	0.6	0.3	
Canada			
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	3.8	0.5	
Royal Canadian Mounted Police-NWEST	4.5	4.0	
Canada border Services Agency	7.3	0.1	
Correctional Service of Canada	20.3	7.8	
National Parole Board	3.3	0.9	
Department of Justice	10.1	0.5	
International Trade Canada	0.4	0.0	
Public works & Government Services	10.4	1.9	
Canada			
Other	5.9	1.5	
Total Indirect Costs:	66.6	17.5	
TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS	934.8	110.3	
Net Revenues	(87.4)	(11.3)	
NET PROGRAM COSTS	847.4	99.0	

Source: Canada Firearms Centre, Departmental Performance Report, 2004-2005.

Exhibit 4

KEY ADMINISTRATORS

<u>Canada Firearms Centre (CAFC)</u>. The Canada Firearms Centre was designated to be the single point of responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP). It was originally named the Canadian Firearms Centre and was established in 1996 as a division of the Department of Justice. In the summer of 2003, it was renamed the Canada Firearms Centre and placed under the direction of the Commissioner of Firearms.

<u>Registrar of Firearms.</u> The Registrar of Firearms was responsible for the decision-making and administrative work related to the registration of firearms for individuals and businesses and for the issuance of international and inter-provincial carrier firearms licenses to businesses. The registrar also maintained and operated the Canadian Firearms Registry (CFR), which had as its primary role the identification, classification and registration of firearms. As of 2004, the registrar was also responsible for recording the firearms inventories of public agencies (e.g. police forces and federal, provincial and municipal governments).

<u>Chief Firearms Officers (CFO).</u> The CFOs had legislative authority for the administration of the Firearms Act and its regulations in their assigned province or territory. CFOs were responsible for approving and revoking firearm licenses, based on owner eligibility. They also approved or revoked intra-provincial carrier firearms licenses, authorizations to transport or carry firearms, applications from shooting clubs and shooting ranges, and the transfer of firearms. They were also responsible for designating instructors for the firearms safety course. Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick were managed by provincially appointed CFOs. The remaining provinces and territories had opted out of the program and were managed by federally appointed CFOs.

Other federal departments involved in the program included the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Source: 2004 Report, Commissioner of Firearms.