

LIBERAL'S GUN CONTROL REGIME STILL MISSING THE REAL TARGET!

Laws control law-abiding gun owners but those too dangerous to own firearms, not so much.

By Dennis R. Young – March 6, 2017

More than two million law-abiding gun owners issued licenses by the RCMP must report their change of address or face criminal charges with sentences of up to two years in jail. So why are the [324,723 convicted criminals \(as of 2011\)](#) prohibited from owning guns by the courts not forced to do the same? A question that has been asked in Parliament but never really answered. On November 24, 2004, MP Garry Breitkreuz asked Public Safety Minister Anne McLellan, **“Where is the logic.”** She deferred to her Commissioner of Firearms who said, [“On the change of address, if someone is prohibited from having a firearm in the country they are no longer effectively covered by the Firearms Act. The Firearms Act only deals with people who own, possess and use firearms. In terms of firearms officers, they would have no authority to collect information from somebody who is not a client of the program.”](#) Anyone with any common sense still wants a clear answer to the question, “Where is the logic in that?”

Surely, those convicted criminals prohibited from owning firearms are the very ones most likely to acquire firearms illegally, most likely to use them to commit crimes and pose the greatest threat to police and public safety. Where's the evidence that the higher priority for police is to have the current addresses of law-abiding gun owners but not the current addresses of those that have proven themselves by their own criminal acts to be too dangerous to own firearms?

The two million licensed gun owners in Canada are monitored daily for criminal activity and violence under the [Continuous Eligibility Program](#). Prohibited gun owners (as we learned above) are not ‘clients’ and therefore are not covered by the *Firearms Act*. So how does the government police the hundreds of thousands prohibited gun owners? [Recently, MP Brad Trost received a response but no real answers to a very comprehensive Parliamentary Order Paper Question Q-623 which basically asked: How effective is the government's enforcement of court ordered firearms prohibitions?](#)

Instead of answering Trost's questions with evidence that enforcement of these most dangerous persons is effectively keeping firearms out of their hands, the Minister of Public Safety's disappointing response was riddled with responses like this: *“The Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) is unable to provide this information,”* or more alarmingly: *“The CFIS database does not capture information concerning the illegal acquisition of firearms by prohibited persons.”*

Based on what the Government has told Parliament, here is what we now know about the enforcement of firearms prohibition court orders:

- Firearm prohibition orders imposed by the courts on convicted criminals has risen dramatically over the years, 176,000 in 2004, 200,000 in 2006, 325,000 in 2011, 405,000 in 2015. NOTE: [MP Brad Trost is now trying to find out the total number of persons too dangerous to own firearms with the tabling of his Order Paper Question Q-887.](#)
- The RCMP has no legislative authority to demand convicted criminals with firearm prohibition orders to report their current addresses to police.

- The Minister reported that tracking of firearms prohibition orders by the Chief Firearms Officers in every province is not used for monitoring unlawful firearms acquisitions or illegal use of firearms by those convicted criminals with firearm prohibition orders.
- The Minister’s response stated: “*The CFIS database does not capture information concerning the illegal acquisition of firearms by prohibited persons.*” Everyone must now be wondering, why not? How else would the RCMP and Parliament know whether court ordered firearms prohibitions are working to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals – or not?
- The Minister was unable to provide statistics showing the ‘average number of days’ it takes to get information about firearms prohibition orders, conditions, restrictions into the hands of front-line police officers.
- The Minister admitted the *Canadian Firearms Program* was unable to provide statistics showing the average time it takes to remove firearms and weapons from the hands of those convicted criminals prohibited from owning firearms by the courts.
- The Minister reported that the *Canadian Firearms Program* was unable confirm if periodic searches for firearms are conducted of the homes of convicted criminals subject of firearm prohibition orders.
- The Minister was unable to say how long it takes to get notification of the expiration or rescinding of prohibition orders to front-line police officers. The Minister’s reply to MP Brad Trost stated: “*The police service of local jurisdiction is responsible for entering the relevant information about the court’s decision into the CPIC database.*” [The problem is there is a growing backlog of more than half a million criminal fingerprint files waiting to be entered into CPIC.](#)
- The Minister advised that provincial Chief Firearms Officers ‘*may*’ follow up with police jurisdictions to ensure those convicted criminals subject to a firearms prohibition order have properly disposed of their firearms licenses, Authorizations to Transport and Carry and registration certificates.

But the 400,000+ convicted criminals prohibited from owning firearms by the courts aren’t the only bad guys police need to keep tabs on. There are also: wanted criminals, known sex offenders, persons charged with a violent crime, violent criminals released with conditions, on probation or parole, persons subject to a restraining order or protection order, a peace bond, and previously deported criminal. [MP Brad Trost has tabled Order Paper Question Q-887 to get the total number of these individuals that are too dangerous to own firearms.](#)

Now there will be some of you who believe that law-abiding gun owners still need to be licensed and monitored extensively at a [cost of more than \\$50 million a year by nearly 500 full time public servants.](#) This despite evidence to the contrary. For example, [analysis of Statistics Canada data shows that licensed gun owners are far less likely to commit a homicide than the average person in Canada](#) and [another study that shows that all the firearms policies and programs enacted between 1974 and 2008 had no beneficial effect on firearm homicide rates.](#)

Given that the Minister of Public Safety and the RCMP don't have any real information on how well the bad guys are being monitored and firearms prohibition orders are being enforced, it might be wiser for the Liberals to spend some of the millions being wasted tracking the good guys be spent doing a far better job keeping track of the bad guys.

Both [Prime Minister Trudeau](#) and [Ralph Goodale, his Minister of Public Safety](#) have made commitments to all Canadians [to 'evidence-based policy making'](#). It's about time the government start collecting the evidence to justify, not only the promises they made in the last election but also the evidence justifying the entire multi-billion dollar firearms regime they rammed through Parliament in 1995.