



The Coalition News



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE FIREARMS OWNERS COALITION - June/July 2000

We're Not For Sale

The Responsible Firearms Owners Coalition of BC refuses to be part of a new scheme to co-operate with the Federal government in the implementation of the new gun control legislation. We continue to oppose this ineffective and unworkable legislation and will not assist in its implementation. We will not participate in any program that encourages firearms owners to obtain licences nor will we carry Canadian Firearm Center advertising.

The Federal government is currently employing a massive and costly advertising campaign in a futile effort to get at least 3 million firearms owners licensed by December 31, 2000. An "Outreach" program designed to help(?) firearms owners complete the licence application forms has been proposed and will commence in the near future. **Failure to achieve licencing compliance deadlines may force the Federal government to consider other options.**

As many may be aware, the Federal government recently hosted two meetings with invited representatives of firearms groups from across Canada. The first meeting, held April 17-18 in Toronto, billed as a licencing forum, consisted of an information session. A second meeting, held on May 10-12 in Winnipeg, was attended by the major firearms groups, the governments' User Group, the CFOs and various Fish & Wildlife organizations. The majority of the meeting was devoted to trying to foster firearms community assistance in getting the federal licencing program on track. We reiterate, no CILA organization will help the Federal government with its' licencing program.

The RFOCBC is prepared to work with the Federal government to develop a law that will address criminal activity and not persecute law abiding firearm owners. We stand by the eight provinces and territories that are challenging the current law in the Supreme Court.

You do not have to register your firearms until January 1, 2003.

Licence Application Forms To Change?

New, shorter and simpler firearms licence application forms seem to be in the works. The new forms will make those who wish to obtain a licence a much easier process. The draft versions of the application forms are now down to only two pages. Page one for **Possession Only Licence** and pages one and two for a **Possession and Acquisition Licence**. The fee for a **Possession Only Licence** is also rumoured to be dropping to \$10.00 from the current \$45.00. Similar to fattening the calf before the slaughter. Also rumoured is the issuance of a temporary licence for those that apply at the last minute and a possible one year amnesty for the really slow folks. Two more reasons to wait before you may be forced to apply.

REGISTRATION LEADS TO CONFISCATION

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Will You be Bequeathing or Inheriting a "Relic"?

Under section 12(7) of the *Firearms Act*, certain prohibited handguns manufactured before 1946 may be transferred to specified family members. This is to allow heirloom handguns to remain within a family.

Section 12(7) of the *Firearms Act* states: *A particular individual is eligible to hold a licence authorizing the particular individual to possess a particular handgun referred to in subsection (6) that was manufactured before 1946 if the particular individual is the spouse or a brother, sister, child or grandchild of an individual who was eligible under this or that subsection to hold a licence authorizing the individual to possess the particular handgun.*

Firearms Left in a Will

Under the *Firearms Act* everyone who inherits firearms or acquires them by any other means needs a Possession and Acquisition Licence (or a valid FAC). The three classes are:

- **non-restricted** (most hunting rifles and shotguns);
- **restricted** (mainly handguns); and
- **prohibited** (mainly automatic and converted automatic firearms, or handguns with a barrel length of 105mm or less, or that fire 25 or 32 calibre cartridges.)

In most cases, to get a Possession and Acquisition Licence for any type of firearm, you must pass the Canadian Firearms Safety Course.

To get a Possession and Acquisition Licence for **restricted firearms** (mainly handguns), you must show that you will be using the firearms for a "permitted purpose" such as gun collecting, target shooting or, in very limited circumstances, for lawful employment purposes.

In most cases, to hold a licence for **prohibited** firearms, you must have "grandfathering rights" for each category of prohibited firearm that you will be inheriting. "Grandfathering rights" allow people who already legally own a prohibited firearm to keep that firearm and to get more of a similar type. The main categories of prohibited firearms are:

- full automatics;
- converted automatics;
- 25 or 32 calibre handguns, or handguns with a barrel length of 105 mm or less; and
- firearms prohibited by Order in Council

Exception: You and your heirs do not need grandfathering rights to inherit 25 or 32 calibre handguns, or handguns with a barrel length of 105 mm or less if:

- the handgun was manufactured before 1946, **and**
- it is being passed down to a spouse, brother, sister, child or grandchild **and**
- the handgun is used for a "permitted purpose." (See above.)

Note: You will generally be given a reasonable amount of time to get a Possession and Acquisition Licence. Until then, the firearms must remain with the executor of the estate, or with another person allowed by law to have them.

Registration

Your inherited firearms must be registered to you before you can take possession of them. You will receive a separate registration certificate for each firearm you register.

Fees

Licence Fees: A five-year Possession and Acquisition Licence costs \$60 for non-restricted firearms, or \$80 for restricted and prohibited firearms. (A licence for restricted or prohibited firearms will also let you acquire non-restricted firearms.)

Registration Fees: Normally, the fee for registering firearms acquired after December 1, 1998 is \$25 per firearm. However, if you inherit a number of firearms from a single estate, you will only have to pay for up to 10 firearms (a maximum of \$250.) The fee for the remainder will be waived. This waiver does not apply to quantities of firearms acquired by other means.

If You Are The Executor

While the firearms laws set out what firearms may be passed on, and what paperwork is needed, the role of the executor is determined by estate laws. As an executor, you generally have the same rights as the deceased did to possess the firearms. If the deceased owned them legally, you can hold onto them temporarily (unless a court order prohibits you from having firearms) while you handle their distribution as part of the estate. You do not need a Possession and Acquisition Licence or FAC to do so. However, if you are also an heir, you will need either a Possession and Acquisition Licence or an FAC to transfer ownership of firearms from the estate to yourself.

Distributing Firearms to the Heirs

Before letting an heir take possession of an inherited firearm: 1) you must get a "transfer approval" from a provincial or territorial Chief Firearms Officer (CFO); and 2) the firearm must be registered to the heir.

Promises Made - Promises Broken

- A. In 1995, the Justice Minister promised Parliament that he had consulted with the provinces about his proposed gun registry. In February of this year, six provinces and two territories challenged the constitutionality of the legislation in the Supreme Court.
- B. In 1995, the Justice Minister promised that the registration scheme wouldn't require a huge bureaucracy. Research, conducted by the Library of Parliament this spring, revealed that the registry now employs more than 1,400 paper pushers.
- C. On April 24, 1995, the Justice Minister promised the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice that the firearms registry would run a deficit of only \$2.2 million over the first five years. In fact, the registry has produced a deficit in excess of \$320 million over the first five years.
- D. On July 19, 1999, the Toronto Star published a letter by Justice Minister Anne McLellan that promised, 'user fees will cover the entire cost of the [gun registry] program.' In February of this year, Treasury Board officials advised the Senate National Finance Committee that only \$6.4 million in user fees had been collected - far short of the \$327 million the Justice Department admitted the registry cost in the first five years.
- E. On November 30, 1994, Justice Minister Allan Rock promised Parliament, "The import inspection and registration process will be operated by Canada Customs officials who will ensure that accurate information is entered into the registration system as firearms enter or leave Canada." On April 7, 2000 the RCMP advised, "The Canadian Firearms Registry has not been advised by Canada Customs of all the newly imported firearms." On February 16, 1995, the Justice Minister said, "Last year approximately 375,000 firearms came into Canada. We do not know where they are or how they got here." According to the RCMP, they still don't!

Embarrassing Results

1. In his April 2000 report, the Auditor General reported: "The Canadian Firearms Registry had a difficult start because the systems and processes had not been fully tested before the Registry was implemented. In May of 1999, a consultant's study found that the Firearms Registry was unable to cope with the backlogs even though the number of applications was much lower than forecast."
2. As of May 5th, 2000, only 164,948 firearms licences had been issued by the government in the first year and a half of operation. Another 110,035 licences were "in processing" and 30,817 more were backlogged. The government will have to increase production by 30 times to licence at least 2.5 million more gun owners before the government's self-imposed deadline at the end of this year.
3. As of March 31st, 2000, the RCMP had registered only 377,814 firearms. They have at least 10 million more to go. The RCMP are only registering 1,135 guns per day but must increase production to at least 11,832 per day to meet the government's arbitrary deadline of Jan 1, 2003.
4. The program successes claimed by the Minister in the form of blocked gun sales, refused and revoked licences, are the result of better background checks and could have been accomplished with better administration of the old Firearm Acquisition Certificate program. The government didn't need a \$400 million dollar gun registry to make these improvements.
5. A Briefing Note prepared by RCMP Superintendent Mike Buisson, Registrar for the Canadian Firearms Registry, dated September 10, 1999 states: "The lower than planned application intake levels for both licences and registrations, as well as the unacceptably higher than anticipated error rates in applications is raising concern about the success of the firearms program." Another RCMP document dated November 1-2, 1999 describes the registry's dilemma: "First, the rate of errors made in the completion of these forms has been much higher than predicted; fewer than 1% of Registration Applications and 10% of Licence Applications arriving at the Central Processing Site are without error. The intake of Licence Applications has been about 10% of the forecast level, and is dropping; the intake of Registration Applications has dropped to less than 30% of the forecast level, and is continuing to drop. Unfortunately, since Program Commencement, all the resources at our processing sites have been fully utilized in processing these very low intake levels due to the high error rate and, to a lesser extent, the relatively-poor application performance, many inefficient processes, and staff inexperience."
6. On June 1, 1999, Justice Minister Anne McLellan's hand-picked User Group on Firearms wrote to her saying, "The current transfer and registration process is permitting an unchecked growth in the most unwanted elements of the firearms trade, specifically, the black market. The control based service delivery model has been shown incapable of addressing the volume of firearms to be registered in Canada. Every firearm illegally transferred compromises the safety of all Canadians and encourages the rampant increase in the black-market. We believe the fabric forming the 'culture of safety' is unraveling." The Justice Minister ignored her own User Group's recommendations.
7. In his 1999-2000 Annual Report, the Privacy Commissioner reported about problems the RCMP is having with the FIP database - FIP stands for "Firearms Interest to Police." The FIP system is treating people who are "in full compliance with the strict registry procedures" as criminals. The Commissioner reported that these law-abiding people are leaving licenced gun shops "empty-handed and embarrassed, and feeling suspected of being a criminal." On August 12, 1999, the Parliamentary Research Branch exposed the problem: "Another consequence of the different procedures used by police agencies across Canada is that, in some cases, individuals who are not a safety concern will be linked to the F.I.P. data base. For example, in some agencies all of the names in a file are linked to the ORI code. Therefore, a person who is a witness to an offence or even the victim of an offence may have their name in the F.I.P data base because their name was linked to one of the codes which fell under the selection criteria pursuant to section 5 of the Firearms Act." The RCMP reported, "on December 11, 1999 there were 3,578,751 FIP records."
8. As of the end of this fiscal year the government will have wasted in excess of \$400 million in an ill-fated attempt to control 99.99% of gun owners who are law abiding instead of targeting the criminals who use firearms. Police are becoming more and more frustrated that this \$400 million has not been available to help them investigate real crime and combat real criminals.

Responsible firearm owners across the country say that fighting crime is not about making criminals out of law-abiding gun owners simply because they fail to do all the paperwork the government demands. They also say that fighting crime is not about tying up thousands of firearms dealers with so much red tape that it drives many of them out of business - leaving room for a black-market to flourish. They tell me that fighting crime is not about forcing police officers to chase duck-hunters to see if their shotguns are registered. They say fighting crime is about putting scarce tax dollars where they'll do the most good. Too bad the Liberals seldom heed good advice. Too bad the Liberals seldom keep their promises.

Are you a 12(6) Handgun Owner?

In the recent meetings with the Canadian Firearms Centre, it appears that we may have gained some ground regarding the removal of the Section 12(6) from the Firearms Act. This is the section that allows for the confiscation of legally acquired .25 caliber, .32 caliber and handguns with barrel lengths less than 105 mm (4.14"). A Bill currently before parliament will change the dealer inventory firearm grandfather date to December 31, 1998. There is a real possibility that the firearm owner grandfather date may also be changed to December 31, 1998. Complete removal of this type of handgun from the prohibited classification is our ultimate aim. We request that you IMMEDIATELY write to Anne McLellan, Minister of Justice and Maryantonett Flumian, CEO of the Canadian Firearms Centre stating your support for the removal of this provision. The contact information is provided below. Please remember to make your letters short, polite, respectful and to the point.

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Remember These Dates - Mark Your Calendar Now

T.V. Appearance

Tuesday July 18th 8:00 to 9:00 pm
Rogers Community Television

Tony Bernardo, CILA Executive Director, will be the special guest on Scott Taylor's *Under Appeal*. The subject, of course, will be Canada's Firearms Act. Please tune in and call with your comments and questions. Mr. Taylor's informative programs, dealing with various topical subjects, may be seen throughout the Lower Mainland (except Delta) every Tuesday evening. Each second Tuesday is a repeat of the prior week's program. Scott also writes a column for the *Abbotsford News*, *The Langley Times* and *The Surrey/North Delta Leader*.

RFOC Annual General Meeting

Wednesday July 19th 7:30 to 10:00 pm
At The Shannon Hall,

6050 - 176 Street, Surrey (Cloverdale Fairgrounds)

Enter through Gate 4, off 60th Avenue

Elections for the new directors will be held. Guest speakers, including Tony Bernardo of CILA, will be in attendance to inform you of ongoing events. Plan to attend and become involved in the direction of the RFOC. Come for free coffee, door prizes and most of all the wealth of information on the unfolding events in Ottawa and the world. Bring a buddy - there is still too many gun owners who are not yet aware of the erosion of their rights.

Firearms Information Meeting in Victoria

Friday, July 21st 7:00 to 10: pm

At Victoria Fish & Game Protective Clubhouse

700 Holker Place (turn right at top of hill past Shawnigan Lake turnoff) VICTORIA, BC

The public is invited to a Firearms Information Meeting hosted by the Victoria Fish & Game. The guest speaker will be Tony Bernardo, the Executive Director of the Canadian Institute for Legislative Action. This will be a must-attend meeting for anyone who owns firearms.

Correction

In last months newsletter we advised sending your licence application "double registered". Unfortunately, Canada Post has recently discontinued this service and replaced it with a different, more convoluted and more expensive (surprise) system. Their new system requires an item to be sent registered mail, keeping your receipt and record, and subsequently requesting a "signature confirmation" that will be faxed to you. All in all a pain in the

Worldwide Webley by Stephen Cuthbertson

A recent publication that will appeal to the collector, military and police historians and all firearms enthusiasts who appreciate fine firearms. The book is a masterpiece of scholarship and painstaking and meticulous research detailing all aspects of the Webley & Scott automatic pistol. Stephen's interest in these pistols dates from the 1950s and led him to extend his study of these firearms. "I was going to donate it (*Worldwide Webley*) to our library, but I liked it so much that I decided to keep it and have told them to buy their own! It is quite excellent and a testament to your good research." *Martin Pegler, Senior Curator, Royal Armouries, UK*

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RFOC BUSINESS ALLIANCE MEMBERS

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- Grand Forks Glass Ltd. - Grand Forks
- Martlen Enterprises - Surrey
- Rainbow Mechanical Ltd. - Surrey
- South Coast Signs Ltd.- Surrey

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

FOR THOSE LAPSED MEMBERS THAT RECEIVED A RED INSERT FORM:

This is your **FINAL NOTICE**. Renew now to continue receiving information on firearms issues.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

RESPONSIBLE FIREARMS OWNERS COALITION OF BC

Member No. _____ Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

Age _____ Occupation _____

New Renewal Change of Address

\$15 One Year Membership Cheque

\$25 One Year Silver Membership Visa

\$50 One Year Gold Membership Master Card

And/or Donation \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Credit Card# _____

MAKE CHEQUE PAYABLE & MAIL TO:

RFOC BC PO Box 93052

LANGLEY, BC V3A 8H2 Telephone: (604) 532-8048 Fax (604) 532-0380

Exp. Date _____

Yes I would like to be an RFOC Volunteer

BC Societies #S-32155 NL 06/00