



COMMISSIONER OF FIREARMS

2019 REPORT

THE RCMP CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM
CANADA'S AUTHORITY ON FIREARMS



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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF FIREARMS



With a mission to enhance public safety, the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) continues to make progress in fulfilling the key initiatives and objectives of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in support of the Government of Canada's priorities. The CFP administers the *Firearms Act* and associated regulations throughout Canada and also works with Program partners and stakeholders to promote firearms safety and provide specialized support services to law enforcement.

In June 2019, the Government of Canada announced that Bill C-71, *An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms*, received Royal Assent. This new legislation enhances existing firearms laws that provide practical, targeted and measured steps to help keep Canadians safe. Certain elements of Bill C-71 came into force upon Royal Assent while others will be brought into force at a later date by an Order in Council.

Throughout 2019, the CFP continued to advance our commitment to the broader Government of Canada initiative to reduce gun and gang violence. Other notable 2019 milestones include the launch of the Program's new website, to enable easier navigation and enhance client service, as well as the five-year anniversary of its successful Online Licence Renewal initiative.

For more information on these items, as well as the CFP's 2019 contributions to responsible stewardship of federal firearms legislation, client service, and firearms safety awareness, I encourage you to review the following chronicle of the Program's annual activities and achievements.

I am pleased to present the 2019 Commissioner of Firearms Report.

Commissioner Brenda Lucki
Commissioner of Firearms
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The 2019 Commissioner of Firearms Report summarizes the CFP's operational activities and support to its more than two million licensees. 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

MISSION AND VALUES

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

In pursuit of its mission, the CFP:

- supports the lawful ownership and use of firearms in Canada by regulating firearms licensing and registration, and provides firearms owners with quality service, fair treatment and protection of confidential information;
- recognizes that the involvement of firearms owners and users, firearms businesses, law enforcement agencies, the provinces, the territories, federal agencies, Indigenous communities, safety instructors and firearms verifiers is essential for effective program and service delivery;
- commits to ongoing improvement and innovation to achieve the highest levels of service and client experience;
- engages its clients and stakeholders to review and develop policies, and to communicate 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 collaborative and respectful work environment.

PARTNERS

Through the offices of Chief Firearms Officers (CFOs), the CFP works with provinces, territories, municipalities, and Indigenous communities to manage firearms licensing, authorizations to carry or transport firearms, and the continuous eligibility of licensees. The Program works with other federal departments and agencies, including:

- **Public Safety Canada (PS):** The CFP provides firearms-related policy support and technical information.
- **Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC):** The CFP provides technical guidance on firearms-related questions.
- **Department of Justice (DOJ):** Consults the CFP on policy development in firearms-related criminal law.
- **Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC):** The CFP advises on firearms legislation and related issues that are of particular interest to Indigenous people.
- **Guns and Gangs law enforcement units:** The CFP collaborates with provincial, territorial, and municipal law enforcement units on investigations leading to prosecution of individuals involved in the smuggling, trafficking and criminal use of firearms.
- **International partners:** The CFP assists in preventing the illegal movement of firearms across borders; maintains strong relationships with law enforcement agencies from the United States and INTERPOL; and provides for electronic exchange of firearms tracing information with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

HISTORY

In 1996, the Canadian Firearms Centre was established under the Department of Justice as a stand-alone agency to oversee the *Firearms Act*. In 2003, it became an independent agency under the Department of the Solicitor General and a Commissioner of Firearms was appointed. In 2006, responsibility for the administration of the *Firearms Act* and the operation of the Canadian Firearms Centre was transferred to the RCMP. In 2008, the RCMP amalgamated the Canadian Firearms Centre and the Firearms Support Services Directorate into one integrated organization – the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP).

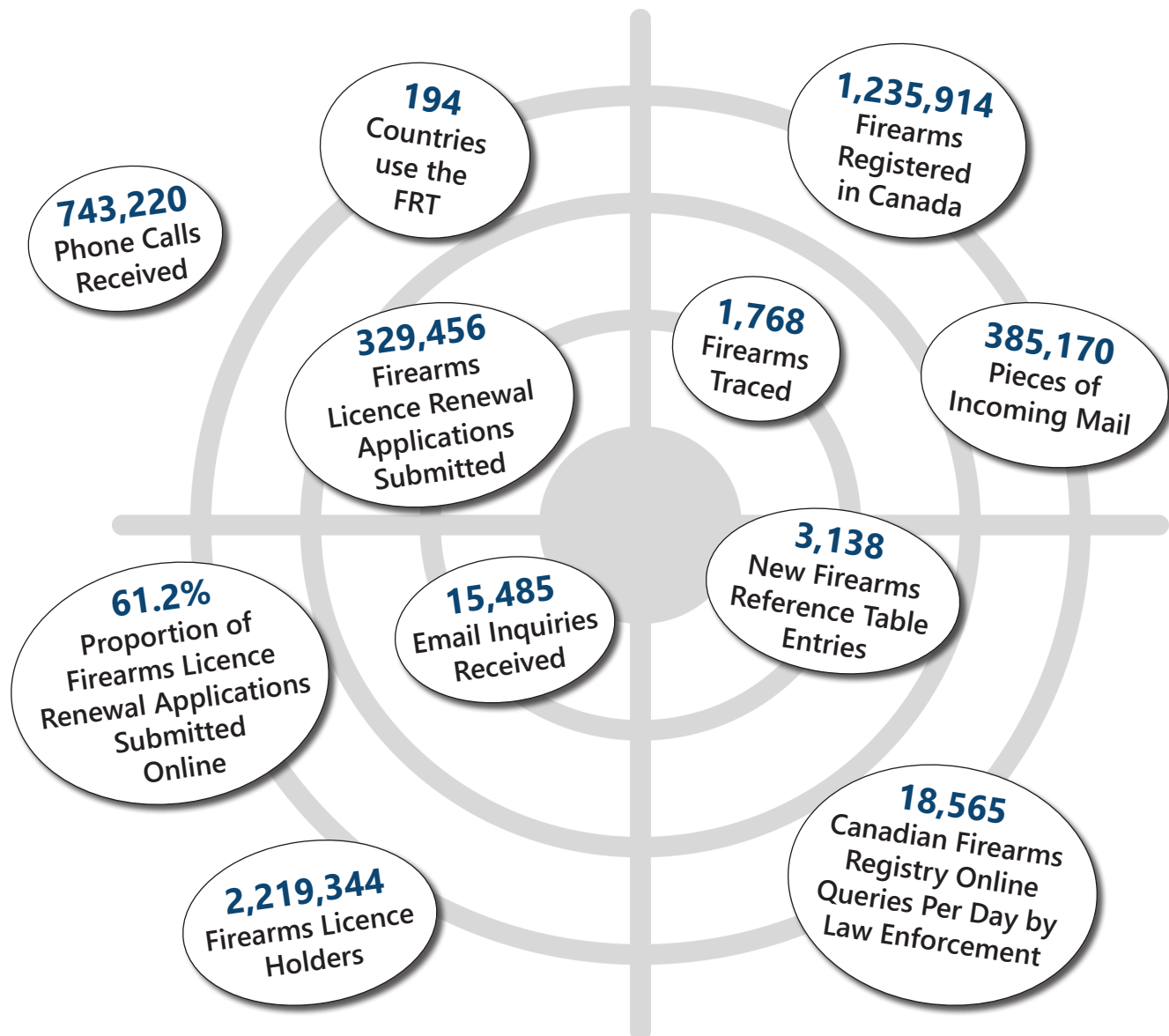
Since 2008, the CFP has supported the lawful ownership and use of firearms in Canada by administering the *Firearms Act* and its regulations, and assisting law enforcement with firearms-related investigations and expertise. The CFP falls under the authority of the Commissioner of Firearms, who is also the Commissioner of the RCMP.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE *FIREARMS ACT*

The CFP administers the *Firearms Act* and is responsible for licensing individuals and businesses through CFOs for each province and territory, and registering restricted and prohibited firearms through the Registrar of Firearms (Registrar).

The CFP's national firearms safety education and awareness programs are key for the safe use of firearms. The CFP also works with partner organizations and provincial/territorial governments to disseminate information to firearm owners and users, and to the general public.

2019: CANADIAN FIREARMS PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS



NOTEWORTHY IN 2019

BILL C-71 RECEIVES ROYAL ASSENT

On June 21, 2019, the Government of Canada announced that Bill C-71, *An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms*, received Royal Assent.

Bill C-71 was tabled in March 2018 to strengthen the federal firearms regulatory regime and provide law enforcement with better tools to help solve firearms-related crimes.

Certain elements of Bill C-71 came into effect as of Royal Assent which include the Commissioner of Firearms, if requested by the Government of Quebec, shall provide a copy of all records that were in the Canadian Firearms Registry for all non-restricted firearms registered to residents of Quebec (data as on April 3, 2015). The new legislation also introduced a number of other measures, which are to be brought into force by Order in Council at a later date.

CFP WEBSITE RENEWAL

The CFP is routinely the most-visited part of the RCMP external website, with an average of more than six million page views per year. In an effort to enhance client service delivery, a website renewal initiative was launched in 2017, which resulted in the publishing of the new CFP website (<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms>) in November 2019. The website has a fresh look and feel, improved navigation, and is compliant with current Government of Canada web standards.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF ONLINE LICENCE RENEWAL

On September 8, 2019, the CFP successfully completed its fifth year of the Online Licence Renewal Application program. Online Licence Renewal has proven to be a very successful endeavour. A total of 691,474 licence renewal applications have been received online since the initiative's implementation in 2014. This translates to approximately 138,294 online licence renewals per year. The benefits of using Online Licence Renewal include:

- Renewal applications submitted online normally take 40-60% less time to process than paper applications.
- It takes only minutes to complete the application.
- No postal service is required.
- Users can submit their renewals online 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Online Licence Renewal is available to individuals with a valid firearms licence. New applicants and individuals with an expired firearms licence are required to complete a paper application.

The screenshot shows the 'Individual Web Services' page of the Canadian Firearms Program. At the top, it says 'Canadian Firearms Program'. Below that, the title 'Individual Web Services' is centered. A paragraph states: 'This web site provides self-service options to key firearms licensing and registration services. Please begin by choosing to login based on your firearms licence situation:'. There are two main columns. The left column is titled 'I have a valid licence' and lists services: 'Renew your firearms licence', 'Check the status of your licence application', 'Check the status of your registration application', 'Change your address or contact information', and 'Register a firearm'. At the bottom of this column is a blue button labeled 'Licence Holder'. The right column is titled 'I have a pending licence application' and lists the service: 'Check the status of your licence application'. At the bottom of this column is a blue button labeled 'Licence Applicant'.

CFP CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC SAFETY

FIREARMS LICENSING

In Canada, an individual must possess a valid firearms licence to be authorized to acquire, use, or own a firearm, as well as to acquire ammunition. The licence requirement does not apply where an individual is using a firearm under the direct and immediate supervision of a valid firearms licence holder.

Under the existing licensing regime, individuals must apply for a licence to the CFO in their province or territory of residence. All applicants are screened to ensure that there are no reasons why, in the interest of public safety, they should not possess a firearm.

There are two main types of firearms licences available to individuals in Canada:

1. The Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL), issued to individuals aged 18 and older.
2. The Minor's Licence, primarily issued to individuals between the ages of 12 and 17 to use, but not acquire, a firearm.

Section 5(2) of the *Firearms Act* provides CFOs with criteria to be considered in determining eligibility to obtain a licence or in determining a person's continuous eligibility to hold a licence. These criteria include: whether the person has been treated for a mental illness associated with violence, has a history of violent behaviour, or has been convicted of certain *Criminal Code* offences. Section 5(1) of the *Firearms Act* gives CFOs further discretion to determine an individual's eligibility to obtain and hold a firearms licence.

As of December 31, 2019, there were 2,219,344 licensed individuals across Canada, which includes both PAL holders and individuals who hold a Minor's Licence (Table 1).

TABLE 1: INDIVIDUAL FIREARMS LICENCES, BY TYPE AND PROVINCE OR TERRITORY			
Province or Territory	PAL	Minor's Licence	TOTAL
Alberta	324,349	2,170	326,519
British Columbia	309,273	920	310,193
Manitoba	92,885	540	93,425
New Brunswick	70,804	154	70,958
Newfoundland and Labrador	76,629	487	77,116
Northwest Territories	5,983	39	6,022
Nova Scotia	76,198	819	77,017
Nunavut	3,854	5	3,859
Ontario	624,939	3,775	628,714
Prince Edward Island	6,512	18	6,530
Quebec	497,758	104	497,862
Saskatchewan	112,784	359	113,143
Yukon	7,938	48	7,986
Total	2,209,906	9,438	2,219,344

In 2019 alone, the CFP issued 458,375 individual licences, including new licences and renewals for Possession and Acquisition Licences and new licences for minors (Table 2).

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL LICENCES ISSUED (INCLUDING NEW AND RENEWALS), 2019	
Licence Type	Licence Count
Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL)	453,832
Minor's Licence	4,543
Total	458,375

FIREARMS BUSINESSES

A business, museum or organization that manufactures, sells, possesses, handles, displays or stores firearms or ammunition must have a valid firearms business licence. Employees who handle firearms for these businesses must also have valid firearms licences, and be listed as an employee on the business licence. 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 proper 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, 2019, there were 4,437 firearms businesses in Canada licensed under the *Firearms Act*, not including carriers and museums. Of these, 1,981 were licensed to sell only ammunition (Table 3).

TABLE 3: VALID BUSINESS LICENCES BY AUTHORIZED PURPOSE 2015 TO 2019*					
Licence Purpose	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Business Licence	4,522	4,495	4,478	4,442	4,437
Ammunition Only	2,117	2,026	2,022	2,004	1,981
*Excluding museums and carriers					

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. The CFP develops and implements range safety measures and reviews range safety inspection reports to improve guidelines, procedures and tools 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. In 2019, there were approximately 1,400 shooting ranges in Canada.

FIREARMS LICENCE APPLICATION REFUSALS

Under the *Firearms Act*, CFOs are authorized to refuse an application for a firearms licence based on their assessment of the applicant's potential risk to public safety.

In 2019, there were 946 firearms licence applications refused for various public safety reasons (Tables 4 and 5). An individual may challenge any licence application refusal by applying to a provincial court for a reference hearing, unless the individual has been prohibited from owning firearms through a court-ordered firearms prohibition.

As part of the CFP's mandate to promote public safety, firearms licence applicants are screened to assess their eligibility to possess a firearms licence. After a firearms licence is issued, continuous eligibility screening is conducted over the term of the licence. Information of concern that is brought to the attention of a CFO may bring an individual's eligibility to hold a licence into question. That individual might then be subject to review and further investigation (Table 5).

TABLE 4: NUMBER OF FIREARMS LICENCE APPLICATION REFUSALS, 2015 TO 2019*

Year	Refusals
2015	688
2016	771
2017	817
2018	827
2019	946

*The statistics provided are a snapshot in time and reflect the number of refusals processed in the year 2019.

TABLE 5: REASONS FOR FIREARMS LICENCE APPLICATION REFUSALS, 2019*

Reason	Refusals
Court-ordered prohibition/probation	267
Domestic violence	74
Drug offences	14
Mental health	212
PAL ineligible	5
Potential risk to others	312
Potential risk to self	212
Provided false information	223
Unsafe firearms use and storage	37
Violent behaviour	85

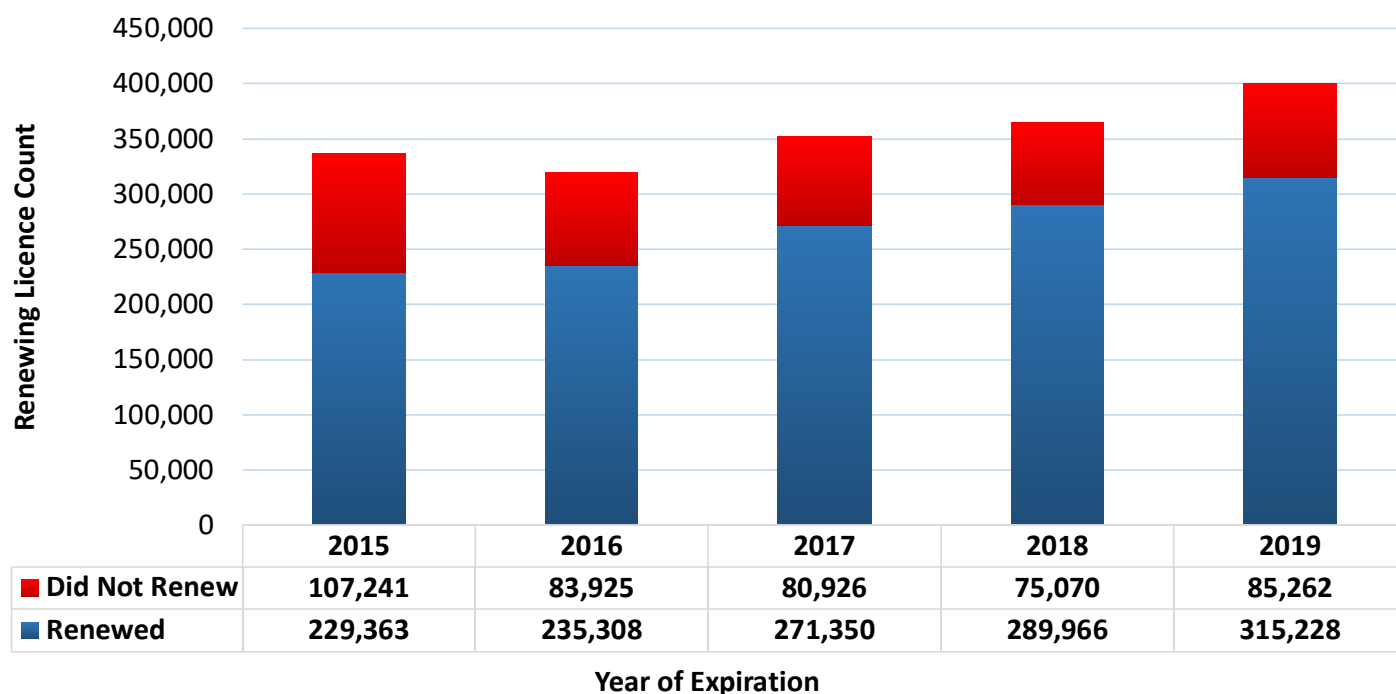
*Because a firearms licence application refusal can be influenced by more than one reason, the sum of refusal reasons will exceed the annual total number of firearms licence applications refused.

FIREARMS LICENCE RENEWALS

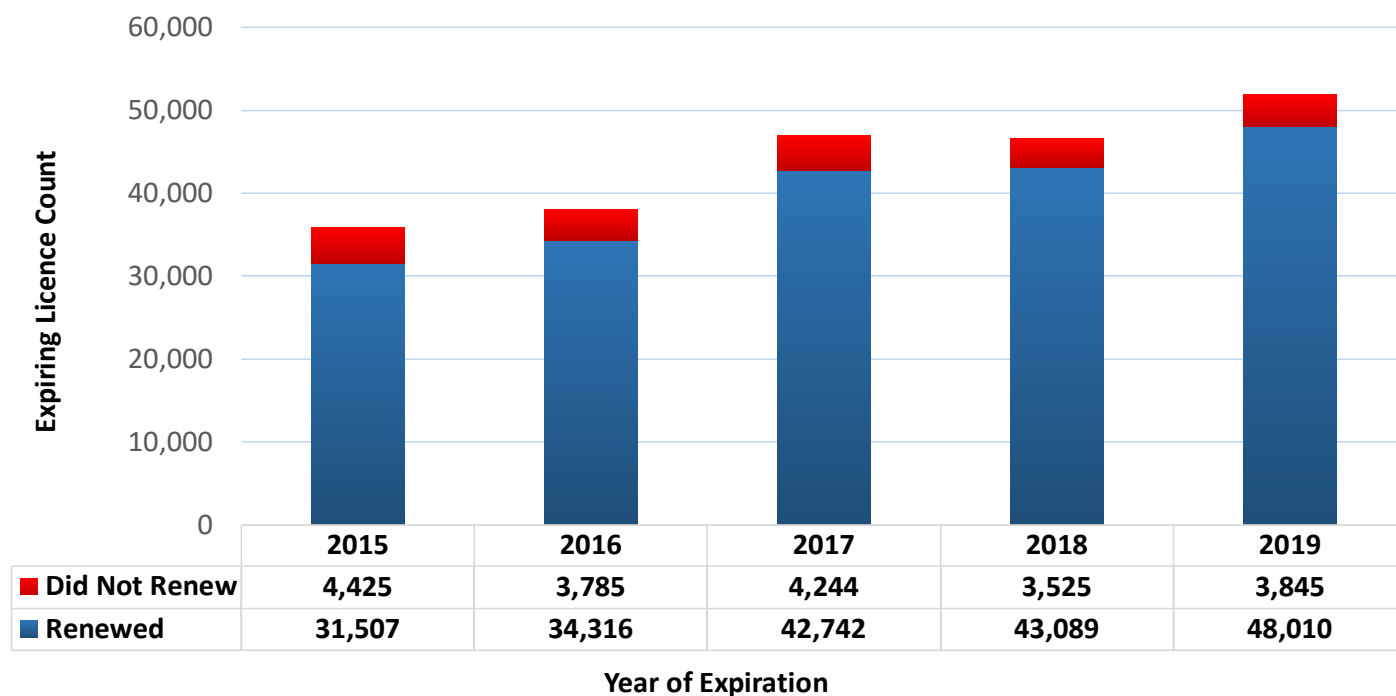
Under the *Firearms Act*, firearms licence holders are responsible for renewing their licences prior to expiry. The CFP facilitates this process by sending renewal notices to licensees approximately 90 days prior to the expiry of their current licence. As a condition of their licence, licensees are legally required to advise the CFO of any address changes, which helps to ensure they receive the renewal notice.

A total of 400,490 individual PAL licences expired in 2019 (Chart 1). There were 51,855 expired licences with a restricted or prohibited firearm registered to them at the time of expiration. Of these expired licences, 48,010 licence holders renewed them. However, 3,845 licence holders did not renew them (Chart 2). The CFP works internally and with program partners to follow up on those individuals who do not renew their licences to determine the disposition of their firearms.

**CHART 1: FIREARMS LICENCE RENEWALS
2015 TO 2019**



**CHART 2: LICENCE RENEWAL FOR RESTRICTED AND PROHIBITED PRIVILEGES ONLY AND IN
POSSESSION OF A FIREARM, 2015 TO 2019***



*When a licence has expired, a registration certificate is revoked and a revocation notice is sent to the licence holder. If there is no change in the licence holder's file, a report is sent to the police of jurisdiction for follow-up. Non-renewals could be associated with a licence holder having disposed of his/her firearm(s), moved outside Canada or passed away.

In 2017, the Governor in Council brought into force an amendment to the *Firearms Act* which provides firearms owners an automatic six-month extension period for a firearms licence that has not been renewed before the expiry date. More information on the six-month extension period can be found on the Canadian Firearms Program's website.

CONTINUOUS ELIGIBILITY SCREENING OF FIREARMS LICENCE HOLDERS

At any point during an individual's licence validity period, an event could occur that prompts a review of their eligibility to hold a firearms licence.

If a firearms licence holder is involved in an event which could affect their eligibility (as determined under section 5 of the *Firearms Act*), it is reported by law enforcement via the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database and sent to the relevant CFO for review. An event can also be registered by individuals using the CFP's 1-800 number. A CFO is authorized to investigate the incident to determine if the licence holder remains eligible to hold a licence. Courts may also order a firearms prohibition under sections 109 or 110 of the *Criminal Code* that do not require CFO authority/intervention.

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 3,220 firearms licences revoked in 2019 (Tables 6 and 7). Similar to licence application refusals, an individual may challenge a licence revocation by applying to a provincial court for a reference hearing, unless the revocation is the result of a court-ordered firearms prohibition. As a result, some of these revocations may have been referred to, or overturned by, the courts since the initial revocation.

TABLE 6: NUMBER OF FIREARM LICENCE REVOCATIONS, 2015 TO 2019*

Year	Revocations
2015	2,347
2016	2,223
2017	2,662
2018	3,012
2019	3,220

*The statistics provided are a snapshot in time and reflect the number of revocations processed in the year 2019.

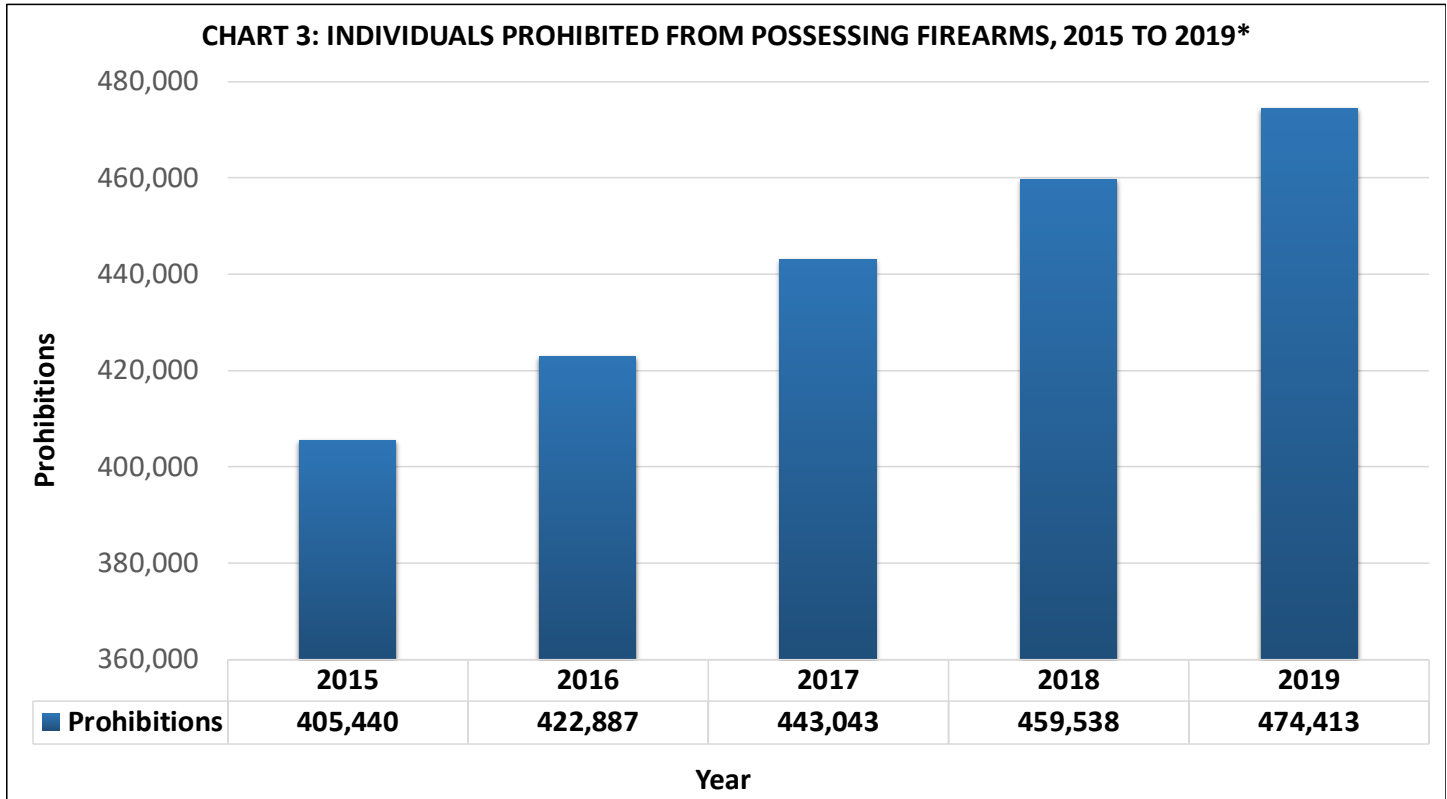
TABLE 7: REASONS FOR FIREARMS LICENCE REVOCATIONS, 2019*

Reason	Revocations
Court-ordered prohibition/probation	1,759
Domestic violence	182
Drug offences	37
Mental health	572
PAL ineligible	8
Potential risk to others	854
Potential risk to self	705
Provided false information	42
Unsafe firearms use and storage	116
Violent behaviour	174
*Because the revocation of a firearms licence can be influenced by more than one reason, the sum of revocation reasons will exceed the annual total of firearms licences revoked.	

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

FIREARMS PROHIBITION ORDERS FOR INDIVIDUALS

Under section 89 of the *Firearms Act*, every court, judge or justice that orders, varies, or revokes a firearms prohibition order must notify the CFO 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 or the revocation of a firearms licence. However, under section 113 of the *Criminal Code*, special provisions may be made for an individual, against whom a prohibition order is made, to possess a firearm if they are able to establish to the satisfaction of a competent authority that they require a firearm for the purpose of hunting in order to sustain themselves and/or their family. As of December 31, 2019, there were 474,413 individuals prohibited from possessing firearms (Chart 3).

CHART 3: INDIVIDUALS PROHIBITED FROM POSSESSING FIREARMS, 2015 TO 2019*


Note: Data generated from CPIC system. *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.

REGISTRATION

All firearms fall into one of three classes, as defined in subsection 84(1) of the *Criminal Code*:

- Non-restricted firearms - typically shotguns and rifles;
- Restricted firearms - predominantly handguns; and
- Prohibited firearms - mostly certain handguns and fully automatic or converted 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 used by an approved verifier to confirm the identification and class of a firearm. The CFP, through the Registrar of Firearms, coordinates the National Verifiers Network. The National Verifiers Network authorizes verifiers and responds to all inquiries about becoming a certified verifier.

Applicants who wish to register a firearm must have a firearms licence allowing them to possess the corresponding class of firearm. In other words, a firearms licence with the appropriate privileges is required to register a restricted or prohibited firearm. When a registered firearm is transferred to a new owner, the

Registrar of Firearms will issue a new registration certificate if the new owner is eligible to possess that class of firearm. The registration certificate number links a firearm to its licensed owner in the CFIS database. As with the firearms licences database, a subset of this information can then be accessed by law enforcement agencies via CPIC.

As of December 31, 2019, there were 1,235,914 restricted or prohibited firearms registered to individuals or businesses in Canada (Tables 8 and 9).

TABLE 8: FIREARMS REGISTERED TO INDIVIDUALS OR BUSINESSES, BY CLASS, 2015 TO 2019*

Firearm Class	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Prohibited	182,493	183,333	183,068	180,405	178,496
Restricted	795,854	839,295	907,362	983,792	1,057,418
Total	978,347	1,022,628	1,090,430	1,164,197	1,235,914

*Data captured as of December 31 of each year.

TABLE 9: FIREARMS REGISTERED TO INDIVIDUALS OR BUSINESSES, BY CLASS AND PROVINCE OR TERRITORY, 2019*

Province or Territory	Restricted	Prohibited	Total
Alberta	205,289	24,854	230,143
British Columbia	194,613	28,643	223,256
Manitoba	39,604	5,229	44,833
New Brunswick	19,520	4,200	23,720
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,638	1,487	10,125
Northwest Territories	1,846	306	2,152
Nova Scotia	27,394	6,039	33,433
Nunavut	398	30	428
Ontario	401,319	72,446	473,765
Prince Edward Island	2,842	758	3,600
Quebec	97,409	26,460	123,869
Saskatchewan	55,431	7,688	63,119
Yukon	3,115	356	3,471
Total	1,057,418	178,496	1,235,914

*Data captured as of December 31, 2019.

FIREARMS REGISTRATION APPLICATION REFUSALS AND CERTIFICATE REVOCATIONS

The Registrar of Firearms has the authority to refuse firearm registration applications and revoke registration certificates based on a failure to meet the eligibility criteria under the *Firearms Act*. In 2019, there were eight firearm registration applications refused and 6,027 firearm registration certificates revoked (Table 10).

TABLE 10: NUMBER OF REGISTRATION REFUSALS AND REVOCATIONS, 2015 TO 2019*

Year	Applications Refused	Certificates Revoked	Total
2015	60	7,159	7,219
2016	59	6,825	6,884
2017	46	8,285	8,331
2018	17	3,430	3,447
2019	8	6,027	6,035
Total	190	31,726	31,916

*Note: In the 2018 Commissioner of Firearms Report, the number of Firearm Certificates Revoked for the year 2018 was incorrectly reported as 3,411. The correct total for 2018 appears above.

SAFETY TRAINING

As a prerequisite to obtaining a firearms licence in Canada, individuals must demonstrate a sound knowledge of the principles relating to the safe handling and use of firearms, and familiarity with firearms law. To be eligible for a non-restricted firearms licence, an individual must successfully complete the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (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.

The CFSC was developed in partnership with the provinces and territories, national organizations with an ongoing interest in firearms safety, and many firearms instructors from across Canada. The content of this course is overseen by the CFP and approved by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

SAFE COMMUNITIES

The CFP assists domestic and international law enforcement agencies to combat the smuggling, trafficking, illegal distribution, and criminal use of firearms. Through partnerships with municipal, provincial/territorial, and other federal law enforcement and regulatory agencies, the CFP supports firearms investigations and prosecutions, tracing of crime guns, managing specialized firearms-related data, and applying the *Criminal Code* criteria to identify and confirm the classifications of firearms.

NATIONAL WEAPONS ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT TEAM

The National Weapons Enforcement Support Team (NWEST) is a partnership between the RCMP and Canadian municipal and provincial police services in support of law enforcement to counter the illegal movement of firearms into and across Canada. NWEST supports investigations and the prosecution of persons involved in the illegal movement and criminal use of firearms, thereby playing a vital role in combatting organized crime and terrorism. NWEST partners with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to conduct joint investigations to intercept illegal firearms entering Canada through border crossings, and with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) to address the issue of international firearms sales.

NWEST also works alongside U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) on cross-border smuggling and investigations.

NWEST provides operational support including assistance with firearms identification, the preparation and execution of search warrants, production orders and prohibition orders. NWEST also assists in processes leading to the prosecution of persons involved in illegal firearms activities by providing expert advice to law enforcement agencies and crown attorneys, and provides training to front-line law enforcement agencies across the country on firearms law and its application.

PUBLIC AGENTS FIREARMS REGULATIONS

The *Public Agents Firearms Regulations* have been in effect since 2008 and require public service agencies and public agents, including police agencies, to report all agency-owned and protected (seized, turned in, or found by police) firearms in their possession. In 2019, there were 1,845 public agencies that declared an inventory of firearms (Table 11), with 26,351 firearms seized among them (Tables 12 and 13).

**TABLE 11: CANADIAN PUBLIC AGENCIES REPORTING
POSSESSION OF FIREARMS, 2019***

Agency Type	Count of Public Agencies
Court	137
Federal agency	279
Municipal agency	55
Police academy	5
Police agency	1,092
Provincial agency	277
Total	1,845

*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.

**TABLE 12: FIREARMS SEIZED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES,
BY PROVINCE OR TERRITORY, 2019**

Province or Territory	Seizures
Alberta	3,430
British Columbia	4,829
Manitoba	1,122
New Brunswick	628
Newfoundland and Labrador	370
Northwest Territories	9
Nova Scotia	882
Nunavut	3
Ontario	7,147
Prince Edward Island	54
Quebec	6,852
Saskatchewan	995
Yukon	30
Total	26,351

TABLE 13: FIREARMS SEIZED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES, BY CLASS, 2019

Class	Seized
Non-restricted	19,963
Restricted	4,256
Prohibited	2,132
Total	26,351

CANADIAN NATIONAL FIREARMS TRACING CENTRE

The Canadian National Firearms Tracing Centre (CNFTC) processes firearm tracing requests to assist national and international law enforcement agencies in their investigations. The CNFTC determines the origin and history of a firearm, potentially linking the firearm to a crime. In 2019, the CNFTC traced 1,768 firearms.

The CNFTC has access to specialized databases to assist with firearm investigations. The CNFTC also assists ATF and INTERPOL with international and trans-border tracing investigations.

SPECIALIZED FIREARMS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Specialized Firearms Support Services (SFSS) unit is a centre of expertise for the identification and description of firearms in Canada. The unit is regularly called upon to provide technical firearms information and advice to both domestic and international governments and working groups.

The unit maintains and updates the Firearms Reference Table (FRT), its primary tool to support law enforcement. The FRT is a comprehensive firearms database that provides domestic and international law enforcement officers with information to assist in the identification and description of firearms that are subject to criminal prosecutions.

As of December 31, 2019, the FRT held 190,834 separate firearms descriptions and classifications. In 2019, 3,138 new firearms records were entered. As a trusted firearms identification tool, the FRT is available to all police and regulatory agencies in Canada, and is relied upon by 194 INTERPOL member countries. The FRT is also available for public viewing in PDF format on the CFP website, at <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms>.

FIREARMS INTERNET INVESTIGATIONS SUPPORT UNIT

The Firearms Internet Investigations Support Unit (FIISU) conducts open-source Internet investigations in support of CFOs regarding firearms licensing, firearms licence renewals, and the continuous eligibility of individuals to possess a firearms licence. In 2019, there were 467 files involving FIISU.

FIISU also coordinates and collaborates with law enforcement agencies at the municipal, regional, provincial/territorial, federal, and international levels to assist in the collection of case-specific information pertaining to ongoing law enforcement investigations. FIISU has established and participated in specialized working groups and project teams to assist partners, such as the CBSA, in the interdiction of firearms smuggling. FIISU has also assisted the ATF in developing online investigative best practices and processes to combat the criminal use of firearms, and to develop firearms investigation enforcement techniques.

CONCLUSION

The CFP, as Canada's centre for firearms expertise, continues to demonstrate its commitment to enhancing firearms safety and combatting firearms-related crime. The safety of Canadians is the CFP's top priority.