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# Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

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Chair: Mr. Ron McKinnon





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• (1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.)):** I call this meeting to order.

Welcome, everyone, once again. I welcome you all to meeting number 53 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. We will start by acknowledging that we are meeting on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin people.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Thursday, June 23, 2022, the committee resumes consideration of Bill C-21, an act to amend certain acts and to make certain consequential amendments regarding firearms.

The committee is resuming clause-by-clause consideration, but before we resume debate, I will now welcome, once again, our officials who are with us today. From the Department of Justice, we have Paula Clarke, counsel, criminal law policy section; and Phaedra Glushek, counsel, criminal law policy section. From the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, we have Rachel Mainville-Dale, acting director general, firearms policy. From the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we have Rob Daly, director, strategic policy, Canadian firearms program; and Murray Smith, technical specialist, Canadian firearms program.

These names are starting to roll off my tongue very easily. Practice makes perfect.

Thank you for joining us today once again. Your participation is very important for the committee members.

(On clause 1)

**The Chair:** We are resuming debate on amendment G-4. At the time of adjournment, Mr. Noormohamed had the floor, and he will continue. Following Mr. Noormohamed, we will have Ms. Dancho, followed by Ms. Damoff, and there's another long list coming.

Mr. Noormohamed, if you please, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank our officials for coming back.

Before I pick up where we left off last night, I just want to take a minute to set the stage a little bit.

I think, as I said last time, that all of us are keen to put forward measures to make our communities safe. I don't think there's any disagreement about that. I think that there are different perspectives. We've made it very clear that there are different perspectives on how to approach the topic of gun safety, gun violence and getting guns off our streets. We've all heard from our constituents. We've all heard from folks who are not our constituents. We've heard from Canadians in general.

I have stated, as have my colleagues on this committee, as has the Prime Minister, that there is a willingness, a desire for openness and an intention to make sure that this is the best possible legislation it can be and that we take the time to hear the voices of folks who have either not had clarity as to what this bill contains or have concerns about what this bill does contain.

Part of what I am hoping we can accomplish today with our witnesses is to get some clarity around areas of concern and to, frankly, try to break down some of the myths that may exist around this bill. If we are speaking candidly, we should also find areas where there could be potential room for opportunity. I think this is something from which we would all benefit, and I think all Canadians would benefit.

There has been a lot of work that has gone on to try to do that, but we can always do more.

We've all been very clear that Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities, but we also need to respect hunters, other law-abiding gun owners, farmers who use appropriate guns to protect livestock and protect their farms and, of course, indigenous communities.

As we take the time to clarify any misinformation regarding the amendment that was presented at this committee on November 22, I want to make sure we do whatever we can. We are all committed to taking down the temperature wherever we can, to listening to whatever perspectives are out there and to having a healthy discussion based on facts.

[Translation]

Today, Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, along with the Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party, requested two urgent meetings.

I'd like to thank our colleague from the Bloc for having this idea.

Frankly, we have to get in the habit of working together on the committee. On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to thank Ms. Michaud. This will allow us to invite new witnesses to testify before the committee and will allow Canadians to hear from other experts.

[*English*]

Those two meetings will hopefully allow us to hear from witnesses to address any of the outstanding issues that exist, to improve the proposed law where appropriate, to give Canadians the confidence that their government is listening and to give opposition and other parties the opportunity to ensure we are doing our part together to do what was intended in this bill, which was to ban assault-style weapons—

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** —not those commonly used for hunting.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Mr. Noormohamed is mentioning two additional meetings for witness testimony. I'm not clear on what he's talking about. We have not agreed to two meetings.

**The Chair:** There has been a 106(4) distributed.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Has it been agreed to?

**The Chair:** Standing Order 106(4) compels the chair to call a meeting.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Right, but has it been discussed as a committee, sir?

He's talking as if this is established.

**The Chair:** He can talk about it in whatever manner he likes.

It's public information that a meeting to discuss that has been requested and—

• (1110)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** Right, but just to be clear, it has not been agreed to as a committee that we would have only two additional meetings of witness testimony external to the witnesses we have here today. Is that correct? That has not been agreed to...?

**The Chair:** That's correct. That will be the subject of the 106(4) meeting.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Just to clarify, it is certainly my hope that we can do that.

Let me be very clear about what the goal is. The goal is for us to have the time to hear from witnesses. The goal is for us to then, in an efficient manner, not hold up good legislation but to improve it and to do it in a way.... I know that it may seem funny to others on the other side but it's an important piece of legislation, and we need to do our part.

If the effort to hear from other witnesses is something that others wish to partake in, I think that's an important step. I know that others have been asking for it, and we hope this step will take us to that place. We want to make sure that we work collaboratively to make sure that there are no guns that are commonly used for hunting captured within these proposed amendments.

We're listening to Canadians and we're going to get this right. I have been saying that, and my colleagues have been saying that, since the beginning of this. Again, we may have different approaches, but I think the intention is the same.

That said, I would like to try to do a bit of what we were doing last time, which is to just get some clarity for folks out there who are watching this and have been bombarded by messages that the government is coming.... I believe there was some narrative out there that the Bloc, the NDP and the Liberals are coming for every single hunting rifle and shotgun out there, and we've made it clear time and again that we are not. That is not the intention.

We've all spent time discussing these amendments, this amendment, with our friends and our families, in this committee and with constituents. I have heard from my constituents, who have said that it is very important for them to make sure that we get this right so that we don't lose the opportunity to make once-in-a-generation advances in protecting Canadians. We've heard from farmers who have expressed concerns that they have not had the opportunity to understand whether or not the guns they have would indeed be affected.

We've also heard from extreme views, from those who have chosen to turn this into a culture war, bringing racism, misogyny and all kinds of other vitriol and hate into this conversation. The emails that some of them send are a reminder of why some people frankly should not have firearms, but it does not mean that they represent the vast majority of gun owners in this country, and I want to make that very clear. I think that those who choose to use racism, misogyny, calls to violence and these types of tropes actually do not advance the cause that many people who have reached out to us with good intentions and goodwill seek to do.

As I said last week, I think it's really important for everyone on this committee, regardless of their political party, to denounce those views, to denounce the misogyny, the racism and the hate that has come from a lot of folks on the extreme right who are using the work of others to be able to carry legal firearms to promote some other sort of rhetoric of hate. I hope we'll all be able to do that together.

We have heard from folks who have expressed real concerns about the content and the context, so what I'd like to be able to do is.... We've been asking a lot of very specific and very technical questions about specific makes and models. Today, Mr. Smith, if I can, I would like us to try to break down the complex concepts to make sure we all understand the very foundation of what it is that we're proposing.

While we can answer the highly technical questions, we could also break down—and I hope you can help us with this—the technical concepts and make them digestible for average Canadians who might not know as much about hunting, shooting or firearms generally. With that in mind, perhaps we can establish a few key principles.

What is the range of firearms that are available in Canada for purchase?

**Mr. Murray Smith (Technical Specialist, Canadian Firearms Program, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** I presume you mean purchase by individuals.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** By individuals, yes.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** In that case, the kinds of firearms that are available for purchase include rifles, shotguns, carbines and handguns. Those are the broad categories. There are some specialty firearms, as well, that would be available to members of the public.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay.

How many makes and models does that involve or entail?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I don't think anyone really knows the answer to that. The firearms reference table has over 200,000 makes and models listed, so it's at least that many and we're sure there are more, but no one really knows how many for sure.

• (1115)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** To be clear, that's 200,000 makes and models that are available for purchase?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** No, that's a slightly different question. The firearms are categorized by whether they are prohibited, restricted or non-restricted.

If you look at all possible combinations of firearms, you wind up with something just over 200,000 specific types. That breaks it right down to calibre, barrel length and magazine capacity.

You can also look at it from a higher level, and look at it from the standpoint of makes and models, which is the way it's organized in the schedules. That gives you a smaller number because the make and model would include many firearms that have different barrel lengths and different magazine capacities and so on. In that case, if you look at it from the standpoint of makes and models, there's something on the order of 25,000 makes and models that have been manufactured over the years.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** That's 25,000 makes and models, approximately, and over 200,000 individuals on the table.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes, to avoid confusion, it depends on how you divide the pie here because there are around 25,000 makes and models, but those makes and models can be broken down into further subcategories based on the barrel length. A model might be available in two barrel lengths, for example, or it might be available in two calibres or more. Looking at it from a higher-level standpoint on makes and models, it's around 25,000. If you look at it from the standpoint of the number of combinations possible of make and model, barrel length, calibre and so on, then it's over 200,000. That includes all categories.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Would you know, for a reference point, what that stat would look like for, say, the U.K. or Australia?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The firearms reference table is international in scope. It represents all firearms as best we can catalogue made anywhere on the planet. The list of firearms is going to be the same no matter what nation you're in.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** You and others have referred to the firearms reference table. Can you describe to us what that actually is?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes, it's a database that was created by the RCMP to catalogue firearms with three purposes in mind. One was to assist—this was the original purpose of the firearms reference table—police and officials involved in the firearms administration programs to identify firearms. That was point one. Point two was to create a standardized description of firearms, because for some firearms there's more than one way to describe them. They can have nicknames, so this was to create a standardized way of referring to a firearm. Thirdly, it was to assess the classification of the firearm according to the Canadian Criminal Code matrix.

That database was there to serve three purposes. One purpose is to assist police and officials in identifying firearms. Second, the standardized description was there to assist with the population of tracing requests based on the notion that if you don't properly describe the firearm, you're not likely to get a result out of a data system, so the purpose of creating a standardized description was to improve the chances of getting a hit if a firearm involved in crime was being traced. The third purpose was to assist police with the determination of classification and also officials engaged in the firearms program to determine the classification of a firearm so that the appropriate controls can be applied.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** If we were to specifically talk about the RCMP, how would they use this table?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The table is used administratively. It is not a legal document.

The firearms reference table is not the law. The law resides in the Criminal Code. The firearms reference table represents the RCMP's opinion on what the firearm should be named and what its classification is according to the current rules in the Criminal Code. It is used throughout the RCMP and other police forces across Canada. They use it to identify firearms, so if it is seized by a police officer, then the firearm can be properly identified and recorded in the police data system.

It assists the courts. If the firearm description is standardized, then the description remains the same as the firearm goes through the court system. You don't wind up with continuity problems or other legal issues in court. It's used by administrators in the firearms program to ensure the firearm is properly described and that they are applying the appropriate administrative rules to the firearm.

The classification portion is used likewise by police and officials to ensure that, in the case of policing, it assists with the laying of the appropriate charge, and with the determination of whether an offence has actually occurred or not. On the administrative side, the classification is necessary in order to apply the Firearms Act controls, to ensure that the possessor has the correct firearms licence, with the correct conditions. Some firearms need to be registered. This is a way of identifying which firearms need to be registered as well.

• (1120)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

I'm sure there are people at home who are watching this and are riveted by this conversation. There are lots of folks who need to understand some of what is going on here.

You've used the term "classification" a few times now. What are the classifications of firearms that people should know about? Can you explain that?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The Criminal Code has three classifications for firearms—prohibited, restricted and non-restricted.

You will also hear two other categories that, strictly speaking, are not classifications but are widely used as if they were. Those categories are antique firearm and deemed non-firearm, which is like an industrial tool, for example.

The firearms reference table is organized along those lines to represent those categories.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** How do agencies like CBSA use this list to make determinations of what should or should not be allowed in Canada?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The determination as to what is allowed to be imported into Canada is, I believe, shared by officials at Global Affairs Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency. It's their role to determine what crosses the border. Both of those agencies use the firearms reference table to assist them in their decision-making processes.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Who helps to review these classifications?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I'm not sure what you mean by that question, sir.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** As the classifications are made, is there a continuous process of review? Is it static? How do the classifications work?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The firearms reference table is continuously reviewed and updated. As the staff who build the reference table become aware of new firearms, they're added to the table. If there are new variations of existing models, those are added. If it turns out there is some kind of missing or erroneous information in an FRT record, and that becomes known, then there's a process for ensuring that it is corrected.

The firearms reference table process is very much akin to the ISO process, even though it's not ISO-certified. It follows a similar process in that one researcher will be responsible for collecting the information to either create or update an FRT record concerning a particular firearm. Then, a second, independent quality assurance analyst will review that information to ensure that it is accurate and complete before the record is actually published.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** You mentioned that it is not a legal document, per se, but it's used by everyone. What authority does it have? Where does it get its legality from? On what authority are people using this document?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The authority for the firearms reference table comes from the RCMP Act, and it's simply a process that the RCMP has put in place to assist RCMP operations. It was later expanded to assist other police departments and officials in other departments, but, fundamentally, it's simply a police database that was originally developed for police use.

• (1125)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** At the last meeting, we spent a lot of time on this, and you were very helpful in explaining to the committee that paragraphs 1 through 86 had firearms that were prohibited during the 1990s. Now, just for clarity's sake, because there's been a lot of confusion about this, how many different makes and models have been prohibited in Canada since the 1990s?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Again, I'm inferring that you mean by regulations. After the 1990s, the next round of prohibitions occurred in May 2020, when nine families of assault-style firearms were added to the regulations and two categories were added to the regulations, those firearms that produced a muzzle energy greater than 10,000 joules and those firearms that had bore diameters in excess of 20 millimetres.

**Mr. Rob Daly (Director, Strategic Policy, Canadian Firearms Program, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** If I may....

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Again, for the sake of clarity, what is the number? How many were prohibited in the May 2020 order in council and how many predated that?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** With respect to makes and models, there were approximately 800 in the 1990s through the regulations. As of May 1, 2020, there are approximately 1,900 makes and models.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Just to be clear, it was 800 from the 1990s. Then was it a further 1,100 or further 1,900?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** It was a further 1,900.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Just for clarity's sake, that would capture everything that has happened since the 1990s, new makes and models, etc., that would not have been contemplated in the 1990s because they didn't exist. Is that correct?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** I think, if I understand your question correctly, yes. As of today, there are approximately 800 makes and models that were covered by or prohibited by the 1990 regulations. Then there are an additional 1,900 that have now become prohibited based on the May 1 prohibition.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I was doing the math in my head. Those on the list in schedule 2 that were not part of the 1990s prohibition number of 1,900. Is that correct?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** Yes.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What test would have been applied to get these ones added to the list in May 2020? How would they have been added?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** They would have been added based on the criteria that was used from May 1, so they would have all been semi-auto, sustained rapid fire, military tactical design capable of receiving a large-capacity magazine. They would also have been modern design, meaning post-World War II, and there would have been a prevalence or a market volume test in excess of 1,000 known firearms within the market at the time.

They would have met all three of those criteria in order to be added to the list of the 1,900 makes and models.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Can you recap the three criteria?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** The criteria, again, are semi-auto, sustained rapid fire, military tactical design capable of receiving a large-capacity magazine, modern design in the sense of post-World War II and prevalence in the market in excess of 1,000 known firearms.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** In sum, these would be guns that most reasonable people should not really be using for common use, I would imagine.

**Mr. Rob Daly:** I can just say that those are the guns that met all of those criteria.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay.

Going back to the table for a second, whether it's Mr. Smith or Mr. Daly, is the table publicly accessible?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It's accessible, certainly, to all police and government agencies by a direct connection on the Internet. It's also available to the public via a PDF document that is posted, I believe, every two weeks these days. It's not the easiest document to access, and the RCMP is presently working on an improved system to deliver to the public.

• (1130)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let me tell you why I asked this question.

I'm going to speak for everybody here. Correct me if I'm wrong. I think we have all received emails, text messages and phone calls from people asking a specific question: Is my gun, which I have had for however many years, prohibited or not? Many of these, up on our research, were captured in previous iterations.

How do people look these up to make sure that they don't have to reach out to their MPs or be upset and worry? How can they get confirmation that they are okay or not?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The firearms reference table is in use today. Thus, it must represent the law as it exists today. There is no future or forward-looking aspect to the firearms reference table, because it is and must be based on the current legislation.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Mr. Smith, my question is not so much forward-looking. We've been getting requests about guns that are on past lists, but there's no way for people to know.

There are two things. There is a need to assuage people of concerns that their gun—past, present or future—is not going to be affected. I think that is one element. There's a second element of people not being aware of whether or not something was already covered previously.

The concern is how we make sure that we aren't conflating everything that has happened in this bill and the amendment as being all net new.

What I'm trying to understand...for a lot of us, the very detailed lists that were provided in the amendment can be confusing. We see something and we think it's net new when, in fact, it's been on a list for quite some time, or we see something and we don't see the word except at the top of the chapeau.

How do we give people the means—and I asked for the list in the last meeting—with which to sift through this and understand where they sit on the continuum?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Frankly, that's something that's beyond my control.

My understanding is that the lists are now public. They've been released by the chair, I believe. People can peruse the lists themselves. They are relatively lengthy.

What I can say is that in my interactions with members of the public on the classification of firearms, they generally find favour with the concept of firearms being listed explicitly in lists, because they can look them up and see them in black and white, as opposed to having to interpret a statute. That isn't to say that everyone is in favour of that. That's generally what I've heard.

I guess the lists that are here are rather lengthy. It probably requires a bit more effort than in the past to go through them.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** With that in mind, Ms. Clarke, do we have the list that I asked for?

**Ms. Paula Clarke (Counsel, Criminal Law Policy Section, Department of Justice):** It has been prepared. It is being vetted through our approval process to be able to forward it to the committee.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

I know it's a lot of work, so thank you for doing that.

When do you think we will have the benefit of that list?

**Ms. Paula Clarke:** I am hoping it will be today.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Excellent. That will, hopefully, go a long way.

Is there any intention, desire or plan to create a searchable database for Canadians?

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek (Counsel, Criminal Law Policy Section, Department of Justice):** In terms of the list, the 480 new makes and models—not the 1,900 that were banned in 2020 and the 800 that were banned in the nineties—would presumably be added and published, if passed, with the regulations as they are now in the consolidated *Martin's Criminal Code*, or online on the Justice website.

With respect to the definition, there is no list that would support the definition in proposed paragraph (g). If it were to pass, there would be no list at this point. The legislation doesn't provide for a list to set out those firearms.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I understand.

Going back to what you said, there are 2,700 firearms that were on the 1990s list and the 2020 list.

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** That's the makes and models.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** It's the makes and models.

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** That's the makes and models. It's not firearms; it's the make and models.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Excuse me. It's the make and models.

The new list has 480 makes and models.

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** It's the makes and models. That's correct.

• (1135)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let me do my math quickly. It's not 3,180 new makes and models that are being added to the list.

Is that correct?

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** That's correct. It's only 480 approximately, and that includes the variants.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** If you were to distill this down further, into the specific kind and then the variants A, B, C and D within each of those brand types—not variants—what would that number actually look like?

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** It would be approximately 480.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** It would be 480, but you're saying that includes variants.

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** That includes variants.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I think the word you're searching for is families. We have referred to them as families of firearms. In the new list in schedule 2, it would be those firearms in clauses 97 to 232. I don't have a calculator to do the subtraction, but that would be the number of new families listed.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

You talked a little bit about the classification system under which a firearm can be non-restricted, restricted or prohibited.

What does non-restricted mean to the average person?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The firearms classifications affect how an individual can use the firearm and whether or not the individual can actually possess the firearm.

In the case of non-restricted firearms, which is the least regulated classification of firearms, what it means to the average firearms owner is that they must obtain a firearms possession and acquisition licence at the lowest level, the non-restricted firearms licence, which is commonly referred to as a non-restricted PAL—PAL meaning possession and acquisition licence. That entitles the individual to acquire a non-restricted firearm and to possess it provided that the licence is continuously maintained. Thereafter, the individual is free to use the firearms in any way that is permitted by law.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What would be an example of a commonly used non-restricted firearm?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It would be a typical hunting rifle, say, a bold action rifle like a Remington Model 700, or something of that ilk. There are something like 20,000 families of those kinds of firearms available to choose from. You really can't categorize that breadth of firearms makes and models with a couple of examples. It's a very wide range.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** That's a fair point.

Let's talk about restricted then. What does that mean? I'm assuming that you need a restricted PAL for that, an RPAL for that, but what does that mean?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** If a firearm is restricted, it means the individual must obtain the higher-level firearms licence, the restricted possession and acquisition licence, or RPAL as you indicated. It also means that the firearm itself would need to be registered with the Canadian firearms program firearms registry.

Also, if you wished to use that firearm for any lawful purpose, you would require an authorization to transport in most cases for that purpose. There are some exceptions. There are automatic authorizations to transport for regular uses like going to the range, but broadly speaking you have to have an authorization to move a restricted firearm from your home to use it.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why would I need—

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Chair, on a point of clarification, another element of Mr. Noormohamed's question to Mr. Smith is that any restricted firearms' owners are run through the police database every 24 hours. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I believe what you're referring to is called the FIP system. Firearms interest police is what that decodes to. That system has been in place since the Firearms Act came into force in the 1990s. Under that, if there is a police incident that matches certain criteria, usually crimes related to violence, then any names in the police investigation associated with that particular criminal investigation are flagged with what's called a FIP hit. Where a FIP hit has occurred on a person who also has a firearms licence, that goes to the chief firearms officers for review.

The checking process that you're referring to does not take place every day for every firearms owner. Rather it occurs only when a firearms owner is somehow connected to a serious police investigation and not necessarily as a criminal. There could be some other element through which the individual firearms owner is connected to a police investigation that is serious enough that it is flagged and goes to the chief firearms officer so there will be a review of the licence. That's what that's all about.

• (1140)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ruff.

**Mr. Rob Daly:** If I may...?

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Rob Daly:** Just to clarify with a quick answer, yes, it does apply to individuals with a possession and acquisition licence with restricted privileges. It also applies, though, to people who have possession and acquisition licences, so it's both. It's not just exclusive. Anybody who has a firearms licence is run through those same processes.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Noormohamed.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

Just to clarify, though, this depends on the police department doing that. Is that correct? Is it done universally or does it depend on whether or not a particular police department or police force decides they're going to do that?



**Mr. Murray Smith:** It's done universally.

The program is run by Statistics Canada, and it's part of the obligatory reporting process for police agencies. I believe the nickname for it is UCR—uniform crime reporting. That's a StatsCan program and it's mandatory for police.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** For what purpose would an average Canadian need an RPAL?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** An individual would need an RPAL if they chose to acquire a restricted firearm. They fall, broadly speaking, into two categories. One is handguns and the other is restricted long guns—rifles and shotguns that happen to be restricted.

The individuals would generally acquire those for the purpose of target practice, but there are other reasons. For example, someone whose employment depends on a firearm will have to get the RPAL in order to use the firearm in the course of their employment.

There are a number of possibilities all laid out in the Firearms Act. Those are the two most common.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Now, what about “prohibited”? What is a prohibited firearm? What does that mean? What does that look like in terms of a Canadian's ability to obtain it? What is a prohibited firearm in this context?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Again, as far as individuals are concerned, a prohibited firearm is a firearm they cannot possess, that they're forbidden to possess. There are some exceptions. There were firearms prohibited in the 1990s that were grandfathered to the owners even though they're prohibited firearms, but only those owners can continue to possess them.

For the average Canadian today, a prohibited firearm is inaccessible. They're not allowed to have it for any reason.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Talk a little bit about the grandfathering. What does that actually mean for someone who has one?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Grandfathering was a process that was last used in the 1990s. It is a process whereby an individual who is in lawful possession of a firearm prior to its becoming prohibited—and presuming the individual meets all of the terms and conditions—is granted a licence to allow that individual to continue to possess one or more of those firearms.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What determines how each of these weapons falls into each of these categories?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** That's a choice by either Parliament or the Governor in Council. They are the decision-makers in those cases.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** From those that are commonly available, what types of firearms can be used for hunting? It's a vague question, but for the purpose of hunting, what would you, as an expert in this field, say? Which type would be commonly used within the classifications here?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** In Canada, nearly all hunting is carried out with rifles and shotguns. The kind of firearm that can be used for hunting is regulated by provincial hunting regulations for the most part. There is a federal component to the regulation as well, for the federal migratory game birds act, which covers ducks and geese and certain other migratory game.

For the most part, the kinds of firearms that a hunter is allowed to use are determined by the provincial hunting regulations in concert with the provisions of the Firearms Act, which limits hunting to the use of non-restricted firearms.

• (1145)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** For clarity's sake, then, the vast majority of rifles and shotguns that are used for hunting would fall into the non-restricted category. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Based on the laws that are enforced in Canada now at both the federal and the provincial level, my understanding is that those laws would preclude the use of any firearm other than a non-restricted firearm for hunting.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** It's a philosophical question. I'm not going to ask it of you, but it seems to me as you're saying that, when we're talking about rifles and shotguns, people who are using rifles and shotguns that are non-restricted don't have much to worry about.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** What I can say, and try to avoid philosophical questions, is that the firearms that are affected by the proposal before the committee would become prohibited. By law, those firearms would be inaccessible for hunting. As for whether that's a good idea or bad idea, that falls to you and your colleagues.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Right.

Let's now talk about Bill C-21 and this amendment and classifications. How would these classifications change on the basis of Bill C-21 or the proposed amendment?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The provisions that affect firearms classification fall into two broad categories. The schedules are being proposed that would continue the existing prohibitions from the 1990s and 2020, as well as add new ones. Those are the ones at the end of schedule 2, from clause 97 onwards. There would be more firearms prohibited by the action of the schedules, if those were adopted.

The second broad manner that would change classifications is the so-called evergreening definition, which would automatically put firearms into the prohibited category if they met the criteria that were specified in that particular proposed amendment.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Going back to this question of classifications and the conversation that we had had earlier, you talked about firearms that are used for hunting, and then you mentioned others that were available for tactical purposes.

What is the difference between a rifle or shotgun that is designed for a tactical purpose versus common use in hunting, in terms of the classification?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There's no generally accepted definition that holistically defines a hunting rifle, but logically a hunting rifle is one that is designed for the purposes of hunting. The design features can vary significantly depending on the kind of game the hunting firearm is designed for use with. Twenty-twos and similar firearms would be suitable for very small game, and then a centre-fire cartridge for hunting big game, for example, in a rifle that supports that. Shotguns are generally used for hunting birds, although they can be used for big game hunting as well.

Tactical firearms, on the other hand, are firearms that are again, broadly speaking—there's no accurate, holistic definition of what is a tactical firearm—associated with military and police.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What would they be used for, then? Let's be very clear. We've said that hunting rifles were used for hunting game. What are tactical rifles or shotguns used for?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** They'd be used by police to assist with their obligations to enforce the laws. It could be used against people or animals as the circumstances would dictate in a police or military operation.

• (1150)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** When manufacturers are developing or marketing firearms for our market here in Canada, do they take these classifications into account?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** A manufacturer in general will design a firearm for sale to a particular segment of the market that they think would be interested in their firearm. Depending on what group of potential purchasers they're aiming for, they would design the firearm accordingly. That's extremely varied. The market is very much fragmented in that respect. There are all kinds of uses for firearms that fall into general use categories or specialty categories that a firearm manufacturer may be aiming for in the design of their firearm. There's no general answer to that question.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I want to go back to what you were talking about in terms of use in a military operation. Then we talked about tactical a little bit. What is the difference between military and tactical, in your expertise? These are terms that get thrown around a lot. I want to make sure we are all on the same page.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes, there's not a hard black line you can draw between military and tactical. Military firearms, broadly speaking, are those that are designed for military use. They would include large-calibre armaments—grenade launchers, rocket launchers, etc.—the types of firearms that are mentioned in clause 95, I believe. The military firearms would also include fully automatic firearms. Military use would also include what I would loosely call tactical firearms. These would be firearms that are not fully automatic, but which fulfill a tactical role on the battlefield, such as sniping and other specialty purposes.

The term “tactical” is often associated with police and security agencies that are not permitted to use fully automatic firearms, but use firearms that are similar in nature, except for the automatic fire.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Previously you said there wasn't a clear definition of “tactical weapon”. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** No. The definition will be mushy. There won't be hard borders to it, because firearm manufacturing represents a continuum. It's impossible to draw a line that cuts the continuum at an exact point and differentiates between two classes of firearms.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** You can appreciate that, for many people, a mushy definition is unsatisfactory. I know that my friends across have been asking for some time, as have we, for some clarity around some of these things. If I understand correctly, do Bill C-21 amendments not actually start to give us something that looks like a definition?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The use of words like “tactical” and “military” appear in the RIAS for the regulations of May 2020, but those words do not appear in any definition. I would suggest they are more in the category of criteria that the Governor in Council used to select firearms that were put on the list.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why is it hard for us to get—and I'm going to use your term, because I quite like it—anything beyond a mushy definition? What causes that to be the case? This is a sincere question, because I think for all of us here, we certainly do not have the depth of knowledge, combined, that all of you have. Why is it hard to define these things?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There are two reasons, primarily. One is what I mentioned before, in that the firearms manufacturing design choices represent a continuum. The firearms will have features that range from hunting to tactical. You can add and subtract individual features on a firearm, and there's no clearly defined point at which the addition of operating characteristics changes the firearm from a tactical firearm to a non-tactical firearm.

The second reason is that the firearms themselves can often be modified to switch from one category to another. They can be equipped with features that are suitable for hunting, and then those features can be added and subtracted in order to produce a tactical firearm. That's the trend today in manufacturing, towards the use of modular firearms that can be transformed from one purpose to another simply by adding or subtracting components.

• (1155)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** To clarify, by whom are they transformed? Are they transformed by the manufacturer or by anyone who chooses to buy those parts?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Historically, it was the choice of the manufacturer, or it required the services of a gunsmith to change the firearm, typically. However, the trend for the past couple of decades, at least, has been for manufacturers to build firearms that are modular in nature, and that are designed for the end-user to change the features to transform the firearm from one purpose to another.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I could get my gun licence, my PAL or my RPAL. I could then buy a weapon that is not used for tactical purposes. Then I could buy the components and, in the privacy of my own home, turn that into a tactical weapon, if I so choose.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** In some cases, yes.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why is that problematic for law enforcement?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** You would have to consult someone from law enforcement on why they don't like that.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm sure some of my colleagues in law enforcement might want to jump in on that, but that's perhaps for a later conversation. As I look at it, I can understand why that might be highly problematic, and I do think that this is part of why we are here having this conversation today.

Mr. Smith, I'm going to give you a bit of a break, and I'm going to switch it back to Ms. Glushek and Ms. Clarke.

When you provide us this list, is it going to be organized in a way so that a reader...? I know this wasn't what I asked before, but given the work you've been doing, maybe you've already thought about this. Will people understand why each of these firearms is being banned? Will there be an explanation?

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** In the actual statute—because this will be codified in the Criminal Code—we don't normally, with criminal amendments, add a rationale into the code. However, there will be the availability of Hansard, the debates of this parliamentary committee and any background information by the department. There would be a bit of an explanation in terms of how it's meant to enhance public safety, etc., and our key messages through communication.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I guess what I'm trying to get at is this. Will there be a way for folks to understand if something is specifically listed and which criteria it meets, or is that going to be difficult for folks to get an answer to?

**Ms. Phaedra Glushek:** In terms of posting, it's like any other criminal definition or part of the Criminal Code in terms of offences. No, there's no explanation in the code. It's a matter of reading the definition and being able to apply it to a specific fact situation, but my colleague might want to jump in on that.

**Ms. Paula Clarke:** I would just remind the committee that the evergreen definition and schedule 2 would come into force by an order in council and, during that time, the Canadian firearms program would have an opportunity to review the firearms reference table to identify which firearms may be captured by the evergreen definition, and then that information could be communicated prior to the coming into force of these provisions that would prohibit the firearms.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

All right, Mr. Smith, your break is over.

Let's go back to the PAL and the RPAL. There's been a lot of discussion about this. I know that there are many of us who want to know and want to understand what goes into that process. What standards have to be met in order for someone to get a PAL or an RPAL?

• (1200)

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I don't have the details in front of me to go through it atom by atom, but, broadly speaking, an individual who wishes to get a firearms licence today would be required to take a firearms safety training course and pass it successfully. That safety training course involves both a written examination and a practical examination handling firearms.

They would also be subject to a review by a chief firearms officer who would vet their suitability for owning firearms, and the chief firearms officers would have access to various databases for that purpose. They're also free to contact the references that the firearms applicant has nominated to get a sense of the background or the history of the individual.

At that point, the chief firearms officer or the agent working for the chief firearms officer would then make an assessment as to whether the review has been thorough enough, and a licence could either be issued or rejected based on what they know at that point, or further investigation could be required and a CFO is entitled to proceed with additional investigations if necessary.

At the end of the day, the chief firearms officer, or CFO, will make a decision on whether the individual can be granted a licence or not. That decision is appealable to the courts, and the court has the final say on whether the individual can get a licence or not.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Once they have that licence, how often is it reviewed and renewed?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** A licence is good for five years. There is a renewal process that takes place. The CFO then typically looks at the intervening five years between licensing, but is presently entitled to go right back to day one if they so choose. The ability of the CFO to go back in history to vet a potential firearms licence renewal is not limited.

Again, the CFO would go through a similar process of collecting information on the individual and making decisions at various stages as to whether they plan to accept, reject or investigate further.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

If I could, I would like to just turn back to many of those Canadians who have heard a lot of discussion about how hunters could be impacted or are being convinced that they might be impacted by what is or is not in this legislation.

Let's talk about firearm action for a moment. When we're talking about firearm action, what do we actually mean?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The action of a firearm is a descriptive term for the kind of mechanism it has.

Bolt action, for example, refers to an action that operates like an ordinary door bolt, where a handle is moved to unlock the mechanism and then the bolt is slid backwards and forwards to unload and reload the firearm.

There are lever-action firearms, where a lever, typically at the bottom of firearm, is pushed down to open the mechanism and then raised to close it again.

The semi-automatic action is one where much of the loading action is done automatically by the firearm. It's kind of like having an automatic transmission on a car versus a standard. The same operations occur, but the firearm does it automatically for the user.

There are many types of actions. Those are some common ones.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** We've heard a lot about pump action. What about pump action?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Pump action is a mechanism where the fore-end of the rifle or the shotgun, which is the handle of the firearm that is typically below the barrel at the front of the firearm, is moved backward and forward by the operator of the rifle or shotgun. Typically the backward stroke is used to unload the firearm or eject a fired cartridge and the forward stroke is used to load a fresh cartridge to fire again. It also falls into the category of a manually operated mechanism.

• (1205)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What about hinge action?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Break open or hinge action can be found on rifles or shotguns and some handguns. Typically the firearm will have a pin and a hinge midway down the firearm that allows the firearm to be opened like a clam, so to speak, for access to either unload or load the firearm.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Which firearm actions are legal for use in Canada and which are illegal?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Broadly speaking, the classification of a firearm does not depend on its action. The exception there is the fully automatic action. Any firearm with a fully automatic action is prohibited. Other than that category, the action really doesn't influence the classification—not directly anyway. It can indirectly but not directly.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let's talk about the automatic actions for just a moment. Why are they prohibited?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Again, that was a choice made by Parliament—in this case, back in 1978—to prohibit fully automatic firearms. I was in the business then and my understanding was that the government of the day viewed fully automatic firearms being possessed by individuals as being contrary to the good of public safety.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What would be ordinary use for an automatic weapon?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Automatic firearms are designed primarily for military use.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** They're used to kill people.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes—to kill people and cause damage.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What does amendment G-4 set out to do in terms of actions? Does it prohibit all semi-automatic firearms?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** No. As written, G-4 would prohibit certain automatics—they must meet other conditions than being semi-automatic—but not all semi-automatics.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What are the other conditions?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Amendment G-4 would require the firearm to be either a rifle or a shotgun. That excludes handguns, for example. It would have to have a semi-automatic action. It would have to be chambered for a centre-fire calibre, so rimfires would be excluded. It would have to be designed to accept a detachable magazine, which would exclude firearms with fixed magazines, for example. The magazine that it is designed to accept would have to have a capacity of more than five cartridges. Again, that would exclude those firearms that have a detachable magazine that contains five shots or less.

The last criterion is that, when assessing the kind of magazine, it must be a magazine of a type that the firearm was originally designed to accept.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Just for clarity's sake, how many of those criteria does it need to meet to be prohibited?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It's all the criteria I just mentioned.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm asking you this question because inevitably someone somewhere is going to clip the answer you gave when you said that it has to be a shotgun or a rifle. I just want it to be abundantly clear. In order for anything that has been set out to be banned, it must meet those four or five criteria that you identified. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** For the evergreening provision, yes.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay. I just wanted to make sure so that the fulsome nature of the answer you gave is not misinterpreted by others, as we have seen to be the case. Thank you.

We've talked about calibre and high level. What does the calibre of a bullet refer to?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Calibre has two meanings that are commonly used. The historical meaning refers simply to the diameter of the interior of the barrel of the firearm. In other words, it's how wide a bullet the firearm would accept.

In modern parlance, with the advent of cartridge-firing guns, the term "calibre" has been broadened to mean the name of the cartridge that a firearm is designed to use. That could be in a standard calibre for a rifle or it could be an engage for a shotgun.

• (1210)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What are the different calibres that are available in Canada right now?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There are hundreds of calibres available. Some are more common than others.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What are some of the common ones?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Calibres that are commonly used are .308 Winchester and .223 Remington for rifles. For shotguns it's 12 gauge and 20 gauge.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** How many of these would be affected by Bill C-21?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Calibre does not factor as one of the criteria directly for either the schedules or the evergreening provision. It does have an indirect effect.

I will deal with the schedules first. The firearms named in the schedules are all firearms. Therefore, they must have a calibre. That means that those particular calibres are affected to the extent that the firearms that use them are listed in the schedule.

In the case of the evergreening provision, it's limited to centre-fire calibres. Any firearm that's chambered for a rimfire calibre would not be affected by the evergreening provision.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** For those of us who are not hunters—my friend Mr. Shipley has left the room, but I think he also mentioned that he was not a regular hunter—what calibre would most hunters commonly use for hunting deer, let's say?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The choice of calibre is highly dependent on the game animal being pursued and is influenced by a variety of factors, which would include, without being exhaustive, the nature of the federal and provincial hunting regulations because they put limits on the calibres that can be used. It would also depend on the personal choices and preferences of the individual who is out hunting. The hunter will generally select a calibre, and a firearm that uses that calibre, that the hunter believes will be humane and effective for the particular kind of game they are pursuing.

To circle back to your question and what calibres are appropriate or which calibres are commonly used, that will vary highly depending on the kind of game animal. If a hunter is hunting ducks and geese, for example, they're obliged by regulation to use a shotgun with a certain range of gauges. In the case of hunting big game animals, the hunting regulations, which are under provincial control and do vary a little bit from one province to the next, will generally put limits on the kind of cartridge that can be used for hunting certain game animals. To give an example, wildlife regulations would not permit the use of a rimfire cartridge for hunting big game.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What are the consequences of using a larger cartridge in terms of when the animal is ultimately killed?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** By larger, I'm presuming you mean more energetic or closer to the 10,000-joule limit. The hunting literature in general describes an ideal energy level for each kind of game animal. However, that's generally not regulated by law, at least not in Canada—other countries do that. In some ways, the provincial hunting regulations limit the energy by indirect means. They won't allow a cartridge, for example, with a bullet smaller than a certain diameter, which indirectly affects the energy level of the cartridge.

As the energy level increases, generally, the firearm becomes more suitable for hunting bigger game and less suitable for hunting smaller game. One reason is that the bullet that's too energetic may cause damage to the game animal and make it unsuitable for eating afterwards. Another relates to the personal comfort of the hunter. As the energy level goes up, so does the recoil, and while opinions vary, owners will have certain ideas of how much recoil they're prepared to accept when they're out hunting. Lastly, the more energetic a projectile is, the further it will travel in general and the more damage it will cause when it impacts. When you get into very high energy ranges, then the issue of the hunter being able to control where the bullet lands when they're out hunting becomes more problematic.

• (1215)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** There's a lot to unpack in what you just said, so let's take a step back. Of the common calibres that are used, how many of them would require a barrel that could fire in excess of, we'll call it, 10,000 joules?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I'm not sure I understood the question, could you repeat it, please?

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** We talked about all these different.... When we were talking earlier, you mentioned the .223 Rem-

ington, and you mentioned the .308 and 10,000 joules. How many of those calibres would require a barrel that could fire in excess of 10,000 joules?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** First of all, the barrel is designed to accept a particular calibre, so if you have a hunting rifle that is .308 Winchester calibre, that means the chamber inside the barrel is manufactured to accept .308 Winchester calibre ammunition and only that ammunition. There are some exceptions, but broadly speaking, a barrel is designed for a single calibre and the choice of calibre will influence the kind of barrel that the firearm has. Does that address your question?

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Yes.

We know that there are weapons that can fire over 10,000 joules that were previously prohibited by the order in council. What would—

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Chair, I have a point of clarification. I want to get a clarification on that last line of questioning.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. MacGregor.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Could you explain to the committee, because this is important, how joules are measured in a firearm? Can you broadly give a technical answer to that? How is the number of joules a firearm can produce measured?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Joules represent the energy level of the projectile. It's basic physics. It's the amount of energy of motion that a projectile has. As it applies to the prohibitions of clause 96, it is the muzzle energy that counts. That's the energy of the projectile as the bullet leaves the muzzle of the firearm.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Is it measured by the mass of the projectile, the amount of gunpowder behind it, etc.?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Joules is the measurement. That's the quantity that's being measured. That is a combination of the mass of the projectile and the speed of the projectile. There is a formula that uses those two factors that will allow you to calculate the joules.

**The Chair:** I'm a physics major. It's half the mass times the square of the velocity.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I just wanted it on the record. Thank you.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you for that clarification. I think we're all better off knowing that now.

We know that there are weapons that can fire above 10,000 joules that were previously prohibited by the order in council. What would commonly fire above that limit?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There are two broad categories of firearms that would be chambered for cartridges that develop 10,000 joules or more. One is military firearms. It's quite common for military firearms to be over that limit. The second would be rifles designed for hunting large game animals such as African game like elephants and rhinoceroses, animals of that size. It will involve the use of firearms that are chambered for calibres around 10,000 joules. They are not all over. There are calibres that are recognized as being elephant gun cartridges, if I can use a less precise term, some of which are over 10,000 joules and some under 10,000 joules. Where you see that level of energy in a hunting application, it is for large African game in general.

• (1220)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm trying to understand what use we would have in Canada for something that would fire over 10,000 joules.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I can speak to what they have been used for to the present. One is that there are individuals in Canada who travel to Africa to hunt big game animals who have their own rifle. They prefer to take their own rifle with them, so they own a rifle in Canada that is not routinely used for hunting in Canada but is the firearm they would take with them when they go somewhere else to hunt a game animal that requires that level of energy.

The second broad use that occurs at present is very long-range hunting or target shooting. These are circumstances where there's an attempt to harvest game or hit a particular target at distances of a kilometre or more.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let's say I were to fire 10,000 joules at 200 metres, and I were to hit a deer, what would happen to that deer, if I were to hit it? I'm probably a terrible shot, but let's assume I were to hit it.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There are a variety of factors that feed into that. One is that it depends on where exactly you hit the deer. Assuming that the bullet goes through the vital organs, then it's very likely the deer would be killed. There could be some destruction of the game meat, but that would be very dependent on the construction of the bullet. Some bullets are built very solidly because they're intended for penetrating deep into large animals like elephants. On a deer, the bullet would probably pass through the deer, not causing much more damage than you would expect from an ordinary hunting calibre, simply because of the construction of the bullet.

The answer to your question is that it is highly dependent on the exact circumstances, the exact calibre of high-energy ammunition, the exact construction of the bullet and where on the deer the bullet impacts.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** In this scenario, could I achieve the same objective using something materially less than 10,000 joules?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes, it's generally accepted that a deer can be successfully harvested with a rifle that produces something in the range of 3,000 joules. The recommendations vary somewhat, a little more, a little less, but around the 3,000-joule mark is typical of what the hunting experts would recommend for a calibre that is intended to be used for hunting deer.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Using the 10,000 joule versus 3,000 joule example, how common is it for someone to use 10,000 joules, semi-automatic fire, versus 3,000 in those scenarios?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** We have no data. The firearms in question are non-restricted, so there are no controls on the transport and use of those firearms for hunting.

I'm not aware of any restrictions on the use of large calibres for hunting, although it's possible there is some regulation in the provincial domain that I'm not aware of.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** You said something very interesting. You said many interesting things, but you said something that I'm a little bit curious about. You talked about the quality of the bullet in the scenario where we talked about the nature of the bullet that was used in shooting. Are there rules about the kinds of bullets that can be used?

• (1225)

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes, there are, and those rules come in two forms. There are actual statute regulations, both federal and provincial, that will stipulate limitations on the kinds of projectiles that can be used. Then there are informal restrictions based on good practices in hunting that would drive the selection of one bullet over another for hunting a particular game animal.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay. Now let's get back to clarifying some terms that we've used.

What does "chambering" mean?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The chambering, or the chambering of a firearm, is referring to the design of the chamber, which is located inside the barrel of the firearm typically, certainly for rifles and shotguns. It refers to the physical dimensions of that chamber and the amount of pressure it is designed to withstand during discharge. It determines the kind of ammunition that can be used in the firearm.

For example, the .308 Winchester calibre rifle that we spoke of earlier would have a chamber that is designed and manufactured for discharging .308 Winchester calibre ammunition. The barrel has a chamber, but the calibre of the ammunition that it uses is referred to as the "chambering", or "chambered for" or "chambered in". There are a variety of variations on how the language is used.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Just talking about a .308 Winchester cartridge for a second, how many joules would you need to fire that?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The exact number of joules depends on factors other than just the ammunition. It's affected by barrel length, for instance. A .308 Winchester rifle, an ordinary hunting rifle, would generate somewhere around 3,000 joules, depending on the exact kind of ammunition being discharged and the barrel length of the firearm.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** How big is this .308 Winchester cartridge?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** You could infer, in most cases, the size of the projectile in very general terms from the numerical portion of the calibre name. If a .308 Winchester fires a bullet, that projectile is .308 inches in diameter.

That's a third of an inch, so that would be something in the order of eight millimetres.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Got it.

For the purpose of this discussion and anyone watching at home, can you just clarify the difference between a cartridge and a bullet?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Okay. A cartridge is a complete unit of ammunition, so it consists, in general, of four components. You have a cartridge case, which is the overall container. You have the propellant powder, which is inside the cartridge case. You have a primer, generally at the rear of the cartridge case, which is what the firing pin strikes and what is used to initiate the discharge of the cartridge. Lastly, you have the bullet, which is at the front of the cartridge. It's seated in the mouth of the cartridge.

When a typical hunting rifle is fired, the propellant powder will be consumed. The bullet will be launched from the muzzle of the firearm and travel down-range to strike the game animal. The cartridge case and primer will remain inside the firearm and be ejected by the firearm operator.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** That makes sense. I think we all now have a good understanding of that.

Let's talk a little bit about cartridges in the context of military-style weapons. We had talked about it previously. How big are those cartridges? What do those look like?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** They can vary enormously in size. The military has all manner of firearms that require cartridges of different sizes.

To give a few examples, the Canadian Armed Forces standard service rifle uses a cartridge called, in civilian terms, .223 Remington. The military name for that cartridge is 5.56 by 45 millimetre NATO. It's essentially the same cartridge, but the military gives it a different name.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** It's materially larger than your Winchester.

• (1230)

**Mr. Murray Smith:** That's quite a small cartridge.

A larger cartridge would be a .50 calibre BMG. BMG stands for Browning machine gun. That's a very large cartridge that exceeds 10,000 joules. That is used in military sniper rifles and machine guns.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** If we were to use these larger cartridges that we just talked about to go deer hunting—going back to our deer scenario of 200 metres away—what would happen in that scenario to the deer?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The answer is the same as before. It depends on the bullet that is loaded.

If an individual were using military ammunition, then that ammunition generally is made very solidly and is not designed to deform or expand on impact. It would go through a deer, largely unchanged. It would just make a hole in the deer the size of the projectile.

Some energy would be transferred from the bullet to the deer, which would cause tissue damage. In the case of a .50 BMG projec-

tile striking a deer, it would almost certainly be fatal to the deer. The amount of damage to the deer would again depend on exactly where it hits and whether it hits a bone or goes through soft tissue, and so on. It's highly variable.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Mr. Motz noted that no self-respecting hunter would use military-style cartridges. Is that a fair statement?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It's common to use military calibres, such as .223 Remington, .308 Winchester and .30-06 Springfield. These are calibres that have been mentioned many times in our conversation here. Those were all originally military cartridges that have been adapted for use in hunting.

What differentiates a military cartridge from a hunting cartridge is the kind of projectile that's installed. A hunting bullet is designed to expand on impact and cause a humane kill of the animal, whereas a military cartridge, in general, is designed to penetrate and go through defensive armour. It also has to conform with the Hague conventions on the use of military ammunition.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let's talk a little bit about magazine capacity. Can you tell us a little bit about the magazines that firearms hold generally and some of the variations?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** First of all, many firearms do not have magazines. There are all kinds of firearms used for hunting and sporting activities that are a single shot, or in the case of shotguns, a single or double barrel. There's no magazine, per se, on a wide variety of firearms.

For those firearms that are equipped with magazines, the magazine size historically for hunting firearms, of the type that are widely used in Canada, would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of three or four cartridges, although larger mags are available.

For military firearms, the sky's the limit for magazine size. They can make them as big as they want and as big as is practical. The military also makes use of belted ammunition, which essentially has an infinite length.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** The average hunting firearm would hold how many cartridges?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Again, there's no definition for a hunting rifle, so I can't give a categorical answer there. There aren't any hunting applications that I'm aware of that require a magazine size of 20 or 30 cartridges. The magazine size is self-limiting in the sense of what is useful for hunting.

That said, in Canada right now at the present time, the traditional hunting rifles will have magazine sizes of around three or four shots, but there are exceptions. That is where former military firearms have been reused for hunting purposes. I'll use the classic example of the Lee-Enfield bolt-action rifle from World War II. Many tens of thousands of those firearms were recycled after World War II for use as hunting rifles. They have a 10-shot magazine.

It's possible to have a bigger magazine on a hunting rifle, but a hunter typically would not use that many cartridges.

• (1235)

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** Chair, I have a point of clarification.

**The Chair:** There really is no such thing as a point of clarification, but as long as Mr. Noormohamed doesn't mind, go ahead.

**Mr. Alex Ruff:** I just wanted to make this clear to the committee, and I think Mr. Smith can confirm this as we did ask this a couple of weeks ago.

In general, with some rare exceptions, since 1992 it has been against the law to have a magazine bigger than five rounds for a long gun.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** That's partly correct.

Since 1993, there is a five-shot maximum for an individually possessed magazine that applies to semi-automatic, centrefire calibre rifles and shotguns. However, for firearms with other actions, there is no limit on the magazine capacity.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Ruff.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you.

Just going back to the piece you were talking about, Ms. Damoff and I had the benefit of going to visit the Vancouver Police Department. They showed us how easy it was to modify some of these cartridges, or magazines really, to hold more.

What level of concern should we have in respect of being able to modify some of these things at home to hold more rounds?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The level of concern is a question of public policy, which, again, is in your domain.

However, I was involved at the time in the creation of the magazine regulations. The government policy of the day, as explained to me, was that the concern was to provide a quick and easy way for owners to come into compliance with the magazine regulations at the time the law changed. As a result, the conversion methodology of magazines was not all that strict.

A magazine can be modified from a prohibited capacity to a non-prohibited capacity through the use of a pin or similar device, which does in fact block the magazine, but it's not incredibly secure.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let's go back to cartridges used by hunters.

How many cartridges would you say are needed for your average hunter for, let's say, moose or duck hunting?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It depends how good a shot the individual is, I suppose.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Mr. Motz is one shot, apparently.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The goal of a hunter—I have hunted in the past, and I'm generally familiar with the culture—is a one-shot kill. That is what they strive to do. They are not interested in peppering the game animal with lots of holes. In the case of your moose or your deer, the ideal would be one shot.

Now, that doesn't always occur. A hunter may be shooting at a running animal and require follow-up shots. There may be something that happens at the time when the hunter is shooting and the bullet does not strike the animal in the desired location, and a fol-

low-up shot is required. It's not infeasible to suggest that one or maybe two follow-up shots would be appropriate for big game hunting. I would say that most hunters would probably agree that emptying a mag of 20 shots, if it were available to hunters, is probably not what they want to do.

In the case of hunting birds, the regulations are very clear that, for hunting ducks and geese, which is regulated by the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act, hunters are permitted three cartridges. That's it. When a flock flies over, the hunter has three attempts to bring down three ducks or three geese or as many as they can with the allotted three shots. Then they must stop and reload.

For other game animals where a shotgun cartridge is used, the maximum number of cartridges will depend on the provincial hunting regulations. Typically that's somewhere around five, but that may vary from one province to the next.

● (1240)

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

I believe the member asked an important question, and it received an important response, but Mr. Smith did not outline predatory animals who may charge hunters. I think that's an important part of a hunting rifle that you left out, sir.

If you're going to be clear, it's important to mention predatory animals like grizzlies, wild boars and polar bears. You didn't mention the utility of a firearm and how many bullets may be needed should you be charged by one of those, which hunters, unfortunately, do encounter. I believe you would agree with me.

I think you were making a very good point, but you left out a critical purpose of having a firearm with multiple cartridges.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Dancho.

Mr. Smith, you may certainly respond, if you wish, and then we'll go back to Mr. Noormohamed.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Certainly, if a hunter is engaged in hunting in an area where large predatory animals are a danger, the typical practice—and I have hunted bear myself—is to have more than one person present with a firearm. You would not hunt alone under those circumstances.

In general, the five shots that are permitted for a typical hunting rifle would ordinarily be sufficient under those circumstances.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you for that clarification.

I think Ms. Dancho makes a good point. In that scenario, you're saying that the five would be sufficient. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** In general hunting practice, yes. Again, the choice of rifle, the choice of the cartridge and the choice of the magazine size are all subject to provincial and federal regulation and to preferences on the part of the hunter.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** This might be a bit cheeky, but let's say you were to send me and Mr. Shipley out hunting, and we needed more....



Let's say we got our licence and the two of us decided we were going to go out hunting, and we were not able to take that—

**Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC):** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Let's say by some miracle this happened, and the two of us were to go out, and we were to need more than five cartridges to take that animal. What would that say about our hunting skill? Let's assume the animal was not running.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I don't think that's a situation that really arises.

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** Come on. I'm not that bad a guy.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** That's the next political blind date show.

**Mr. Doug Shipley:** I'm sorry, but it has been a long couple of hours.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** If you don't want to comment on our hunting skill, that's fine. I understand. I get it.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** In my experience, it is something that just doesn't occur.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What laws are in place today to make sure that individuals cannot legally exceed the maximum cartridge capacity?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The cartridge magazine regulations are regulations made under the Criminal Code, and if an individual fails to heed those regulations, they are subject to criminal prosecution.

**Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** I have a point of clarification on that, Mr. Chair, if I may.

**The Chair:** Once again, if it's okay with Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** I won't be going hunting with Taleeb any time soon.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why not?

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Mr. Smith, just for clarification, what you're really trying to say in a political way is that anything greater than a five-round mag is prohibited already in law. Is that correct...on the application that you were just asked a question?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It's prohibited for certain kinds of firearms.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Right. That's what Mr. Noormohamed is trying to refer to. Those firearms that are prohibited from having greater than five-round mags are already prohibited in this country. Is that correct?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Yes. If the firearm is a semi-automatic centre-fire calibre rifle, for example, then the capacity for the magazines has been limited to five shots since 1993. However, common hunting firearms use many other action types, like lever actions, bolt actions and so on, and the magazine size for those firearms is not limited at present.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** What I was getting at was that the question that Mr. Noormohamed asked was specific to the firearms that fit the definitions here, and for the guns now that have a five-round maxi-

mum magazine capacity, that magazine, if you have more than five rounds for that firearm, is already prohibited in this country.

• (1245)

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Again, I'm still not sure exactly what kinds of firearms you're referring to. Are you referring to the firearms in the schedules?

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Yes, the ones that are already prohibited under law.

**The Chair:** I think we're getting into debate here. I'll let Mr. Noormohamed clarify, if he wishes.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm talking about more than five rounds. Ms Damoff and I went to the Vancouver Police Department. They showed us clips that held 30 or 40 rounds, but that had actually been modified to only allow you to shoot five at a time. How easy is it to modify those to go back to being able to fire 30 shots?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It depends on how the magazine was modified, but the most common way of modifying magazines is to install a pin. I'm using the word "pin" very large. It could be a pop rivet. It could be an actual pin, or it could be a screw that's welded in. There are a variety of ways of putting in what would amount to a pin.

They are relatively easy to remove. They can be simply drilled out, and the magazine in most cases will function normally at that point. The hole on the side of the magazine does not impair its operation.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why is that problematic?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The law is intended to limit magazine capacity to five cartridges, so if a magazine is modified to hold only five cartridges to be compliant with the law and is easily reversed back to its original state, then it would be relatively easy for someone to defeat the intent of that particular regulation.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Which would mean it's prohibited....

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I apologize, sir, but when my microphone is on, I can't hear a thing you're saying.

**The Chair:** That's okay. Mr. Noormohamed will clarify if he needs to.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm running out of time, and I have quite a few more things I'd like to ask you. I'm hoping this won't bleed into the next meeting as well.

I'd like to talk a little bit about hunting licences and what it takes to become a hunter in this country. We've talked about a PAL, but there's a lot of misinformation. I think there's confusion about what sorts of licences a Canadian hunter would need to be out in the woods, like when Mr. Shipley and I decided we're going to go hunting.

Take us through the process you'd need to go through to legally hunt.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I can only speak to that very broadly, because that's really out of my lane. Broadly speaking, hunters are required to take a course and to pass a test in order to get a hunting licence.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay.

I received a couple of pieces of correspondence about black powder firearms. Can you describe to us what black powder firearms are?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Black powder is a generic term these days, and it refers to propellants that were used in historical firearms, so those before the existence of cartridges. These are the muzzle-loading firearms, where the hunter, or the shooter in general, had to manually load the powder, which was a separate element of the loading process. Ordinarily it would be a small container commonly called a powder horn, where a measured amount of the propellant powder would be poured into the bore of the firearm and then the bullet would be manually seated. The ignition system would be primed and then the firearm could be fired.

Black powder is a very generic term referring in one sense to the original kind of propellant that was black in colour, which was a chemical combination of saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal. We're talking about a "days of the pirates" type of propellant powder. However, that term being generic now also refers to more modern formulations that don't involve the same chemical substances but which perform in a similar way. They're used almost exclusively in muzzle-loading firearms.

• (1250)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** How would black powder firearms be affected by Bill C-21?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** There would be no impact.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Mr. Smith, I'm sorry, but I didn't hear your answer.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Broadly speaking, there would be no impact. It's theoretically possible that someone could make a muzzle-loading variant of an AR-15, which would be captured as a variant, but that's highly unlikely. Generally speaking, no, they would not be affected.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Therefore, folks at home who have black powder firearms can rest easy.

**Mr. Murray Smith:** They're still subject to all the other rules and regulations for firearms, but this particular series of amendments that are before the committee would not impact muzzle-loading firearms in any significant fashion.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Switching gears a little bit, recognizing we don't have a lot of time left, I want to get a couple of things out there that I think are important for folks to understand. We've heard terms like rimfire and centrefire. Those of us who have taken the time to understand this law, understand this legislation, understand what "centrefire" and "rimfire" mean. I think we have a good understanding of why some things are banned and some things are not.

Can you explain what these two terms mean?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Sure, the terms "rimfire" and "centrefire" refer to how a cartridge is constructed. In the case of centrefire ammunition, the primer is located in the centre of the cartridge base, hence centrefire, and the primer consists of a small capsule of shock-sensitive explosive that is ignited when struck by the firearm pin of the firearm. There's a small hole between the pocket that the primer sits in that connects it with the interior of the cartridge,

which contains the propellant powder. When the cartridge is fired, the firing pin strikes the primer, and the blow to the primer causes the propellant inside that to ignite, which produces a flame that goes through the small hole—that's called a flash hole—connected to the interior of the cartridge case, which ignites the main powder charge, which then propels the bullet down the bore.

In contrast, rimfire cartridges are manufactured with the shock-sensitive priming composition located around the rim of the cartridge. When the cartridge is fired, the firing pin crushes the priming composition between the two sides of the rim, which causes ignition. After that, it works the same as for centrefire.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What kinds of firearms would employ rimfire?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** Rimfire cartridges are, for practical reasons, these days limited to what are ordinarily called .22s, so a .22 long, .22 short, .22 long rifle, .22 Magnum, and perhaps a few other cartridges as well. There's a .17 calibre rimfire, for instance. There are a handful of cartridges that are in common use today. Historically, there was a broad range of rimfire calibres, but today the market forces have compressed them to a relatively small number. These are generally lower power cartridges, the reason being that the design of the rimfire cartridge case is not as strong as a centrefire cartridge case and cannot withstand pressures as high. The nature of the design limits the rimfire calibres to relatively low energies.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What about centrefire? What kinds of guns would use centrefire?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** For centrefire there is no limit, really. The centrefires range from very small calibres to huge military calibres.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay. Just turning to schedules 1 and 2, are any of the new firearms that have not previously been prohibited rimfire firearms?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** I believe you are referring to schedule 2 and clause 97 onwards. Yes, there are some rimfires mentioned in those sections.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Why would they be there?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** The firearms that are in that list are based on the same criteria as the May 2020 list, except that the conditions of modern manufacture or modern design and large quantities present in Canada have been removed. Those criteria from May 2020 do not draw a distinction between firearms that are chambered for rimfire calibres versus centrefire calibres. It's only happenstance that the nine families prohibited in May 2020 were all centrefire.

• (1255)

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** What does that mean in common language?

**Mr. Murray Smith:** It means that the selection of firearms for the new schedule, in clause 97 onwards, are based on the characteristics of the firearm, of which the calibre is but one factor, and that a firearm may merit inclusion on the list even though it is chambered for a rimfire calibre.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Ms. Clarke, then, as you...

I'm sorry. You thought you were off the hook.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Mr. Smith has been very generous with his wisdom. He just talked a little bit about the definitions and how and why certain of these rimfires have ended up on the list. Going back to the list, and going back to the list that we're hoping to see today, what degree of confidence and comfort does your team have that indeed everything on that list meets the criteria that were outlined by you?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** I think that's probably a question for the Canadian firearms program.

We have confidence that with that additional list in schedule 2 it meets the main criteria from May 1, which, again, was semi-automatic sustained rapid fire, of military or tactical design, and capable of accepting a large-capacity magazine. We've used the exact same criteria that was given to us from May 1. The only difference in schedule 2 is that the elements or the criteria of modern design have been removed, and the volume or prevalence in the Canadian market has also been removed. Essentially, the list was designed based on the same first criteria.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** In the main, if people were looking at the 2020 criteria and made decisions accordingly.... You mentioned a couple of additional criteria, but the fundamental nature of the criteria is exactly what was proposed and utilized in the OIC from two and a half years ago. Is that correct?

**Mr. Rob Daly:** That's correct.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Okay.

I do struggle, then, with the idea that somehow this is something that's been much more conflated, but I think today, in terms of where we are so far in this conversation, has been very useful. I think we have learned—

**Mr. Glen Motz:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** Thank you, Mr. Motz. I appreciate that. Yes, I have learned, as I'm sure many of us have. I've also learned that you're not going to go hunting with me and Mr. Shipley, and that's totally okay.

I think it's important for us to have, similar to what you've said.... Many of us—those of us who don't have the extensive experience that Mr. Motz has with firearms—have taken the time to review and be able to learn through this process. I think what you have done today, and what we may have to continue next week, is to provide those who have been misinformed a little bit of the very important context that you have given us today.

I want to acknowledge that the Prime Minister and others have taken the effort to try to clarify some of this. We have said from the outset that we are committed to trying to improve this legislation—

**Ms. Raquel Dancho:** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, that's incorrect. From the outset, they said that these are weapons of war that should be banned. Just to be clear, that's on the record from when it was introduced.

**The Chair:** That's not a point of order, so we'll let Mr. Noormohamed finish.

I'm going to have to cut you off in seconds here in any case.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** As I have said, and despite what others may think—and I've had this conversation with many on this committee—we are looking to make this good legislation even better. There is an openness, a willingness and a desire to ensure that not only do we hear from voices that may not have been heard but also from others, to work together to try to do this. This is being done to help keep Canadians safe, to ensure that hunters' rights are protected, to ensure that farmers' rights are protected, to ensure that indigenous communities are not affected, but most importantly, to ensure that we are keeping Canadian families safer.

Mr. Chair, I know I'm probably running out of time.

• (1300)

**The Chair:** You are out of time.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm going to pause and turn it back to you.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We'll pause your time there.

I want start by saying how much in awe I am of Mr. Smith's encyclopaedic knowledge of firearms.

**Voices:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair:** It's thoroughly amazing.

I don't know about you guys, but I think we've had a crash course in firearms. We could probably challenge the exam for a PAL ourselves after this. I don't know if the rules would allow that.

Anyway, thank you all for joining us once again today. We will resume this debate when we next sit on clause-by-clause.

With that, we are adjourned.





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