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# ***Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Public Awareness Campaign 2025***

## **Final Report**

### **Prepared for Public Safety Canada**

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**Canada**

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**Prepared for Public Safety Canada by Environics Research**

Supplier name: Environics Research

August 2025

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## Executive summary

### Background and objectives

On May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada announced the prohibition of over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms and certain components of some newly prohibited firearms, making it illegal to use, import or sell these firearms in Canada. As part of this ban, the Government of Canada is developing the Assault-style Firearms Compensation Program (ASFCP), previously known as the Buyback Program, to provide compensation for eligible businesses and individuals who possess these now-prohibited firearms.

To promote this mandate, Public Safety Canada (PS) will be launching a national advertising campaign targeting individual firearm owners to raise awareness and understanding of their responsibilities to come into compliance with the law, how the ASFCP works, and to encourage participation. In support of this campaign, PS set out to conduct research with firearms owners and the general public. The research program comprised qualitative and quantitative phases, each with specific objectives:

- A. Qualitative focus group research among firearms owners and among the general public serve to test the ASFCP creative campaign that will guide the direction of the campaign's concepts and messaging to evaluate what elements resonate well with the target audience.
- B. Pre- and post-campaign ACETs were planned to assess and track the ASFCP public awareness campaign but due to changes in campaign size, the post-campaign ACET will not be required.

### Methodology

**Quantitative Phase – pre-campaign ACET survey:** The ACET pre-campaign survey was conducted between February 26 and March 14, 2025, in advance of a communications campaign around the ASFCP to be launched later. This consisted of a seven-minute online survey of 2,027 Canadians 18 years of age and over, which conformed to the Government of Canada ACET template. The sample included 600 firearms owners.

The ACET findings are not reported here, but information on the methodology is provided in Appendix B. The research instrument is presented in Appendix D.

**Qualitative Phase – Success Check Focus Groups:** A series of 11 online focus groups took place between March 5 and 13, 2025. Six of the focus groups were conducted with non-firearm owning members of the general public in four regions - two in Ontario, two in Quebec, one in Atlantic Canada, one in western Canada, and were divided by gender. The other five focus groups were conducted with owners of firearms in five regions – one session in each of Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, western Canada and the territories. A total of 80 people took part in these 11 online focus groups, eight of whom were Indigenous. Participants were provided with a \$125 honorarium to thank them for taking the time. More information on the methodology for this phase is presented in Appendix A. The research instruments can be found in Appendix C.

**Statement of Limitations:** Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held as measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

## Contract value

The contract value was \$164,279.40 (including HST).

## About this report

This report begins with an executive summary outlining key findings of the qualitative phase, followed by a detailed analysis of the qualitative findings, and detailed methodologies of the two phases. A detailed set of “banner tables” presenting the results for all questions by subgroup segments is provided under a separate cover.

**Use of findings of the research.** With the information provided by this public opinion research program, it will be possible to develop and implement a public awareness campaign in an effective and efficient manner. Information obtained through public opinion research will allow Public Safety to optimize the impact of its marketing initiatives.

## Key findings – Qualitative Phase

### “Keeping Communities Safe” Audio Script

- General public participants tended to feel that the main message of the ad was that the government was taking steps to address safety through stricter gun laws. They frequently used terms such as “community safety,” “taking action on guns,” and “stopping illegal guns”. They tended to have a relatively favourable view of the ad and many said it made them feel hopeful. However, some were cynical that the ad was pre-election posturing.
- Firearms owners had a different reaction to the ad. They were more likely to only hear the content about gun control and about prohibited guns. Many reacted negatively and felt the ad was singling out lawful gun owners as being responsible for the increase in gun violence. They tended to be very cynical and skeptical about the aim of the ad. They also felt that the ad was aimed entirely at the non-firearm owning general public and not at firearm owners.
- Most participants had a good understanding of what was meant by “root causes of violence” and identified factors such as poverty, mental health, drug addictions, and gangs. There was some confusion as to whether the ad was referring to root causes of all forms of violence or specifically root causes of gun violence. The latter was seen as being caused by illegal guns from the US and/or on the black market. Some firearm owners felt the implication was that firearm owners were the root cause.
- There was a mixed reaction to the use of the term “community funding” with regard to root causes. Some thought it meant that communities would be left having to do the funding or that the burden of dealing with the root causes was being put on individual communities. Others assumed it meant government funding of community groups and social services. Some noted that the ad was already quite wordy and long and that perhaps leaving out the reference to community funding could work.
- About half of general public participants and almost all firearm owners had some familiarity with the ASFCP. Views were mixed on whether the ad could be improved by referring to it simply as the “buyback program.”

- Among the general public there was some concern that people would not know what “buyback” referred to and that it might leave the impression that all firearms were eligible for compensation. Others liked any change that would make the ad less “wordy.”
- Among firearm owners the program was already colloquially known as the “buyback program” so they were more comfortable with that potential modification.
- Some of the general public participants noted that while the message of the ads was about measures to make communities safer and to address violence in general, the URL only had the word “firearms” and this made them less interested in clicking on it.

## Social Media and Out of Home Concepts

### Option A – “Communities”

- Reaction was quite negative among both the general public and firearm owners. Participants did not appreciate the small, animated images of houses, trees and of a laptop and were often confused as to what they were supposed to signify or symbolize. Some felt they looked like stock photo images from online maps.
- Firearm owners felt the images had no connection at all to the subject matter of the ads and added nothing to the ad. They wondered why the symbols and icons had no relation to firearms.
- Some firearms owners also preferred the wording “to be ready to participate...” in this version as opposed to “be ready to participate...” in the other concepts which seemed more heavy-handed.
- Some participants appreciated the fact that the imagery in this concept was so unremarkable that it was less of a distraction from the headline message than in the other two options.
- The out of home version of the concept with big yellow icons depicting specific measures or steps was seen as attention grabbing and this led many to prefer this concept over the others.

### Option B – “Canadian mosaic”

- This concept elicited mixed reactions from the general public. Some appreciated the presence of people in the ad even if they could not always identify whether the collage of faces was supposed to symbolize people in general or victims of gun violence.
- Women in Quebec in particular appreciated this concept. Some related the imagery to the victims at Ecole Polytechnique.
- Many felt the imagery was not suited to the subject matter. They felt it looked more like an ad for a college, for a dating app or about mental health. Some remarked that the faces all looked to be younger women and did not seem to have any connection to firearm owners.

- Firearm owners reacted quite negatively to this concept and felt that it had no connection to the message about participating in the ASFCP. Many of them felt it was implying that firearm owners were responsible for the people in the ad being victims of gun violence.
- They also felt that this ad was very much aimed at the non-firearm-owning members of the general public to make them feel safer and did not see themselves as the audience.
- The use of checkmarks rather than pictograms or icons for the bullets was seen by most as a weakness in this concept.
- Most firearm owners appreciated the language here about “more than 2,000 makes and models of firearms” having been banned and would like to see that included in the ad.

### **Option C – “Across this land”**

- Reaction to the use of landscape or cityscape images in this ad was also quite negative. Many participants saw no connection between the images and the subject matter of either community safety or of the ASFCP.
- A few people saw the image of a neighbourhood as representing a safe community they would like to keep safe. Otherwise, people felt the images were a distraction from the message about community safety or about the ASFCP.
- The image of a farm in a rural area elicited a particularly negative reaction. It was seen as misrepresenting where most gun violence occurs and is also seen as feeding into a stereotype that gun violence is caused by people in rural areas who own hunting rifles as a necessity and as part of their way of life.
- The image of a residential neighbourhood was seen to be preferable since it could be almost anywhere – though participants in the Far North noted that none of the images bore any resemblance to where they live.
- The reference to “fair compensation” here and in the other options elicited a skeptical reaction from firearm owners. They doubted anyone would receive anything close to the replacement value of their prohibited firearms.

## **Political neutrality statement and contact information**

I hereby certify as senior officer of Environics that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

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## Detailed findings – Qualitative research

### A. General Public Reaction to Concepts

#### 1. Keeping Communities Safe Script

General public participants were twice read the script of an audio version of an ad that could potentially play on the radio and were asked to identify the main message.

*Every Canadian should feel safe in their community. That's why the government is addressing gun violence with...*

- *Stricter gun control*
- *Investments in law enforcement and border security*
- *Serious action taken against crime*
- *Community funding to take on the root causes of violence*
- *And the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities*

*Learn more at [Canada.ca/firearms](https://Canada.ca/firearms). A message from the Government of Canada.*

Most understood the ad's main message as the government taking steps to enhance public safety through stricter gun laws. Many felt the message was straightforward, emphasizing efforts to prevent gun violence. Commonly mentioned themes included "community safety," "taking action on guns," and "stopping illegal guns."

Overall, participants leaned toward a favourable view of the ad, with many describing feelings of comfort, relief, and hope. Some said the message would encourage them to visit the website to learn more about the measures being taken. A smaller number expressed skepticism about the ad and wonder if it was politically motivated. Many also felt the script was vague, lacking important details on how the measures would be implemented. As the discussion progressed, some participants noted that script was too "wordy" and could be streamlined while providing more clarity. This observation about the wordiness of the script was amplified among French participants who noted that the French wording was lengthy.

Most participants understood the reference to "root causes of violence," citing poverty, mental health, drug addiction, and gangs as key factors. However, there was some confusion over whether the ad addressed the root causes of violence in general or specifically gun violence. Some questioned whether the mention of illegal guns referred to firearms from the U.S. or black-market sources. Despite this, participants generally appreciated the inclusion of "root causes" in the messaging.

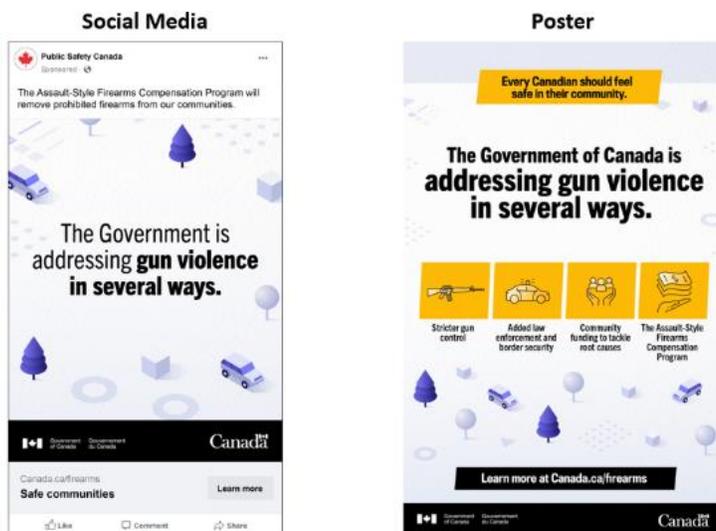
The term "community funding" sparked mixed reactions. Some were unclear whether it meant communities would be responsible for funding efforts themselves or if it referred to government support for local initiatives. While some were skeptical about shifting responsibility to individual communities, others saw funding as necessary and welcomed—provided it was allocated effectively. Participants agreed more detail was needed to clarify this aspect while also simplifying the ad's wording.

Around half of the general public participants were at least somewhat familiar with the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program (ASFCP) or at least that there was some sort of program designed to take assault-style firearms out of circulation. Views were mixed on whether referring to it in the ad script as the “buyback program” would improve the ad. Some worried the term “buyback” might cause confusion, making it unclear whether all firearms were eligible for compensation. Others supported any change that would make the ad more concise.

Lastly, some participants noted a disconnect between the ad’s broader message on community safety and the website URL, which only included the word “firearms.” This reduced their interest, as non-firearm owners, in clicking on the link, as it seemed too narrowly focused and not relevant to them.

## 2. Keeping Communities Safe – Visual Concepts

### a) Option A – Communities



### Strengths

- While general reaction to this concept was negative, participants appreciated the fact that the imagery was simple enough that it was less of a distraction from the core messages than in the other two options presented. Some described the imagery as “calming.”
- The yellow icons in the poster version depicting specific measures were well-received, making key points clearer and attracting attention. The clean and simple design with white space tended to help readability.
- Some felt this concept could benefit from multiple versions addressing different aspects of the government’s strategy to address gun violence separately and felt that the ad contained too many points and too much information for one poster or social media post.

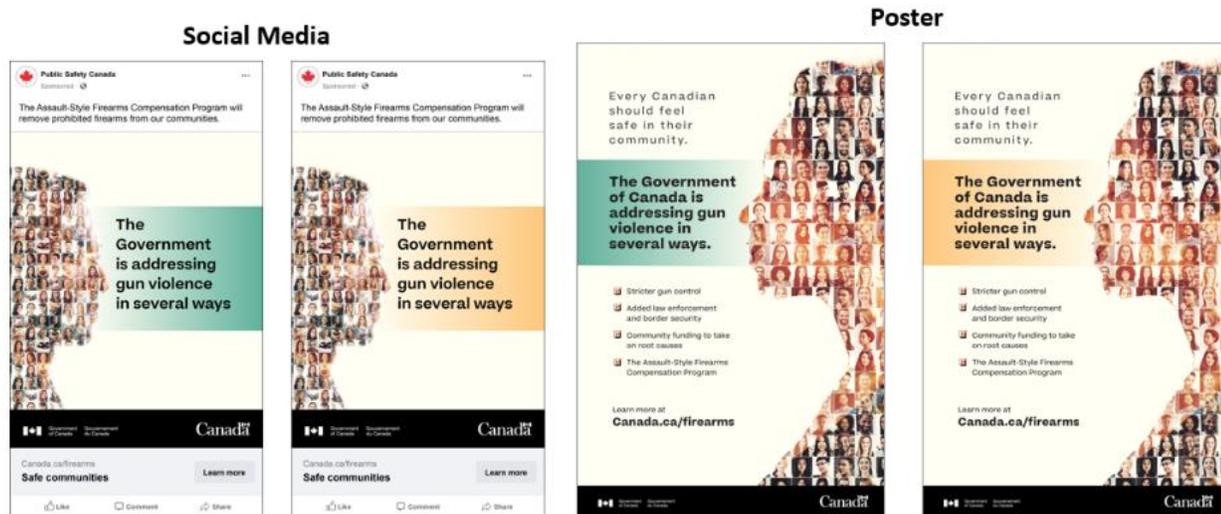
**Weaknesses**

- Many participants felt that imagery in this ad concept did not seem to relate to the issues of community safety or gun violence. The small cartoon-like images of trees, cars, and balls seemed random and disconnected from the message. They felt the imagery was not relatable, since the visuals were described as being too generic or cartoon-like, which made the concept less impactful and less likely to draw their attention.
- Most felt that the overall style of the imagery failed to draw them in and was aesthetically unappealing —some noted that they felt it reminded them of a game on a mobile phone, stock image or poster from the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some said they would not notice this concept, particularly the social media version which would be competing with much more engaging content people see on their phones.
- Many noted that the concept lacked any human presence and also lacked any topical firearm-related imagery. Some noted that it would be much more impactful if faces and people were included to reinforce the impact of gun violence on communities.
- Some found the use of the colour purple in this concept to be ineffective as it evokes peace rather than urgency or action.

**Other suggestions**

- Some participants suggested using more attention-grabbing imagery that more accurately connoted the feeling of a community or, using images of actual firearms being prohibited.
- Some suggested using stronger colours and more inclusive and assertive wording to grab different audiences' attention. For example, phrasing like "The Government of Canada" could be replaced with "we" or "Canadians" for a stronger emotional connection.

## b) Option B – Canadian mosaic



## Strengths

- Some participants, particularly women and Quebecers, appreciated how the use of a collage of faces added meaning to the ad and appreciated the human presence and made them wonder what the people in the ad are thinking or are supposed to symbolize.
- With actual individuals on the advertisement, people felt they could relate more to the message and feel some sort of emotional connection. Some noted that it reminded them of images they had seen showing victims of violence such as when the shootings at the École Polytechnique have been memorialized.
- Some felt that this layout looked more interesting and had a cleaner look. Some commented on liking the use of the colour green, which they associated with peace, calm and environment.

## Weaknesses

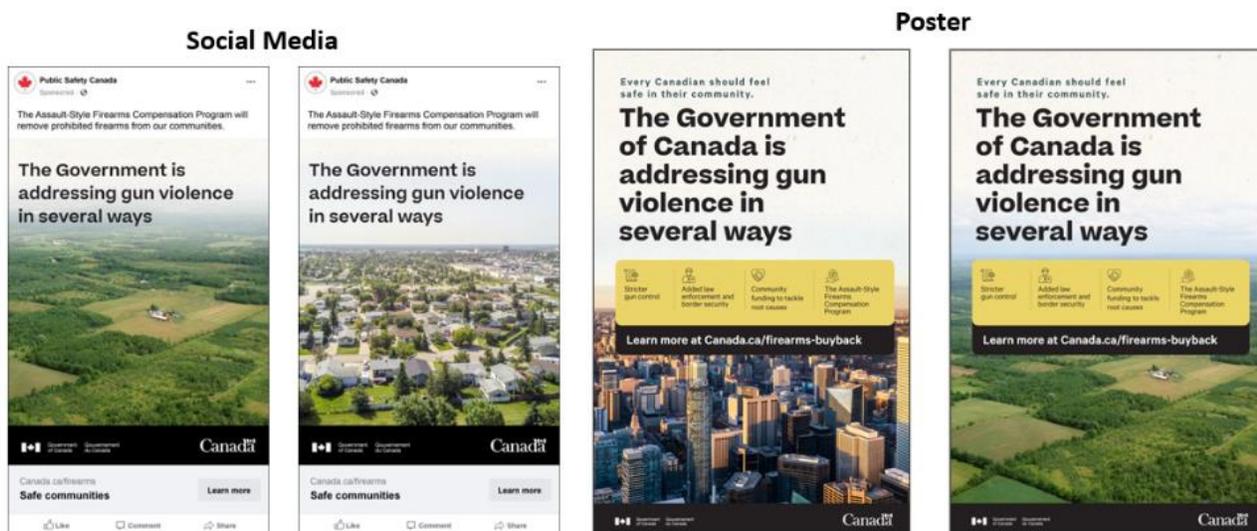
- Many felt that the imagery of this concept was confusing and noted a lack of connection between the people's faces and the topic of gun violence. Some felt the image of seemingly happy faces was too positive for the topic.
- Many participants felt that the collage of smiling individuals looked more like an ad for a dating app, something health-related or for a college as opposed to addressing gun violence. They felt the faces and the silhouette of a face did not match the message of the ad or reflect the severity of the issue.
- Some noted that there was nothing in the imagery that adequately communicated anything about gun violence. They felt that there was also too much text and imagery that communicated no urgency, making it potentially ineffective for high-traffic areas.
- The imagery of faces was also seen as ineffective on social media, where it would not stand out in a fast-moving environment. The concept might be better suited to being used as a poster in a government office or a health care clinic or hospital.

- There was some discussion that the checklist of bullets was too small, causing important details to get lost, leaving no compelling reason to visit the website. Many noted that they preferred how the other concepts had pictograms or icons rather than just a checklist.

**Other suggestions**

- Some participants suggested that the imagery of this concept needed to match the seriousness of the topic and that this could be done with more emotional or thought-provoking expressions rather than generic smiles. If using faces, they should reflect the impact of gun violence rather than appearing disconnected. A note could be added explaining, if for example, they are supposed to be victims of gun violence.
- Some suggested simplifying the text so the message would be clearer and to use a bolder approach whether through colour, imagery, or a more gripping headline.
- Several participants suggested that this concept as well as the other ought to include a QR code to encourage engagement and direct people to more information.

**c) Option C – Across this land**



**Strengths**

- While most participants were critical of the use of landscapes or cityscapes as a background in this concept, they felt that the image of a residential neighbourhood would be the most relatable to the most people. Using a suburban residential image could make gun violence feel like everyone’s issue rather than being targeted at a specific type of rural or urban area. The suburban residential setting also evoked protection and some noted that this might make people feel protective of their own neighborhood.
- Some were under the impression that gun violence happens mostly in bigger cities and that it would make more sense to use a more urban image as a background.
- Many liked the use of pictograms with a green background on the poster version as it drew attention to the variety of actions being taken.

**Weaknesses**

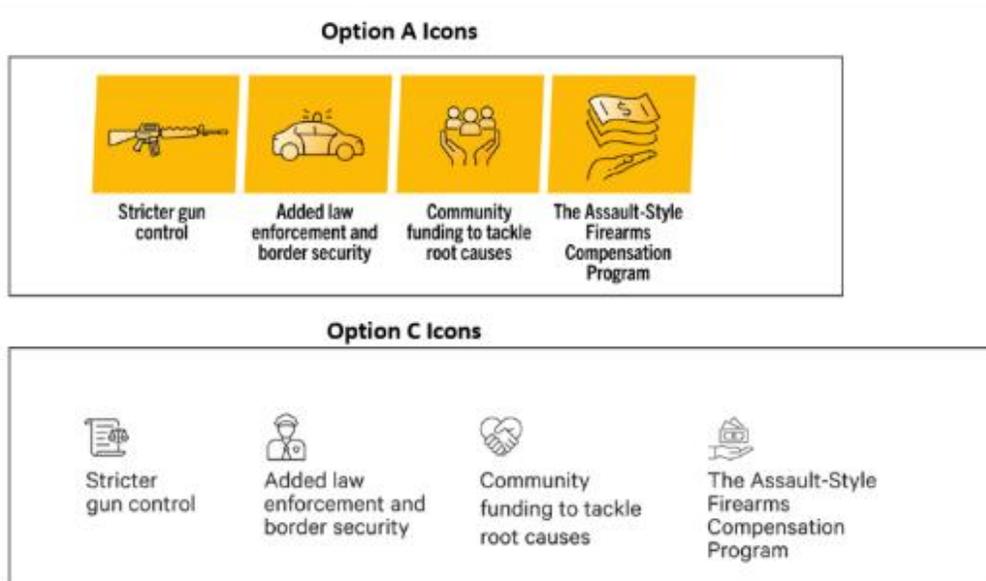
- The use of different landscape options in this concept led to many criticisms for different reasons. For many, the rural farm image did not connect as many don't associate rural farmland with gun violence, making the ad feel disconnected from reality. Participants who were from more rural areas felt it was trying to stigmatize them. Others felt that the image of an urban downtown core felt too polished and unreflective of the reality of urban gun violence.
- The consensus was that there was no obvious connection between images and the message about gun violence and community safety. They did not see how any of these images related to the topic and they did not make people want to read the text. Some said that if they saw this concept they would assume it was advertising something related to real estate.
- The lack of any gun-related visuals made many question why the ads don't actually include images of guns or their consequences (e.g., shattered glass, crime scenes). Some recommended showing a shattered bus shelter near a playground or places popularly associated with real gun violence (e.g., strip malls, dodgy looking neighbourhoods etc.). Participants considered the aerial views to be ineffective. They felt that this type of photography should be street-level, showing real people in their communities to feel more engaging.

**Other suggestions**

- Use a variety of regionally tailored backgrounds—to ensure each community sees itself in the ad. Participants in the territories noted that none of the options they were shown bore any resemblance to how people live in the Far North.
- Make gun violence the focus of the images by including more gun-related imagery (e.g., crime scenes, shattered glass, memorials) or by showing victims or real-life consequences of gun violence. Avoid overly polished, unrealistic visuals—instead, opt for street-level shots with real Canadians in everyday environments.

d) **Preferred Icons & Pictograms**

As noted earlier, participants preferred any use of icons or pictograms to illustrate the ad over simply using a checklist as was the case in Option B.



- The style and size of the icons in Option A were seen to be far preferable to those in Option C. The use of a yellow background made them more vibrant and eye-catching, making them stand out visually.
- Participants appreciated more straightforward pictograms, such as the gun icon in Option A representing 'stricter gun control,' which makes the connection more direct, compared to a confusing image of a piece of paper and scale in Option C.
- Many preferred the icon of an officer from Option C for 'added law enforcement and border security' as opposed to the image of a squad car in Option A, which some felt looked more like a taxi.

## B. Firearm Owner Reaction to Concepts

### 1. Keeping Communities Safe Script

Participants owning firearms were read the script of an audio version of the ad that could potentially play on the radio and were asked to identify the main message.

*Every Canadian should feel safe in their community. That's why the government is addressing gun violence with...*

- *Stricter gun control*
- *Investments in law enforcement and border security*
- *Serious action taken against crime*
- *Community funding to take on the root causes of violence*
- *And the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities*

*Learn more at [Canada.ca/firearms](http://Canada.ca/firearms). A message from the Government of Canada.*

Firearm owners tended to perceive the message of the ad as being entirely about gun control and the prohibition of guns. Many reacted negatively and felt the ad was singling out lawful gun owners as being responsible for the increase in gun violence in Canada. Skepticism was high, especially among participants who believe the focus should be on illegal firearms and crime prevention rather than stricter laws on legal gun owners. Many felt that this ad script was all political spin with an eye to an upcoming election. They described the message as “recycled” with little or nothing new being proposed.

Many questioned the effectiveness of the listed measures, feeling they don't address the true causes of gun violence such as illegal firearms from south of the border, smuggling or crime networks. Though the ad script made mention of investments in border security and law enforcement, this was rarely noticed without prompting.

There was an underlying feeling that the ad was aimed entirely at the non-firearm owning general public and not at firearm owners, to reassure and comfort them rather than discussing and solving the issues at hand. At times, the overall message was “fear-based” and overblown, making guns appear like the sole cause of violence.

To improve this script, firearm owners felt it needed to address potential confusion by being clearer. For example, a clear definition of what an “assault firearm” is or differentiating between legal and illegal firearms. Some also felt it was too vague, missing specifics about how measures would actually improve safety, weakening the overall message of the ad.

Practically all firearm owners were familiar with the ASFCP, but most were more used to hearing it described as the “buyback program.” Since the program was already colloquially known as the “buyback program” among firearm owners, they were more comfortable with that language compared to having to hear “Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program.”

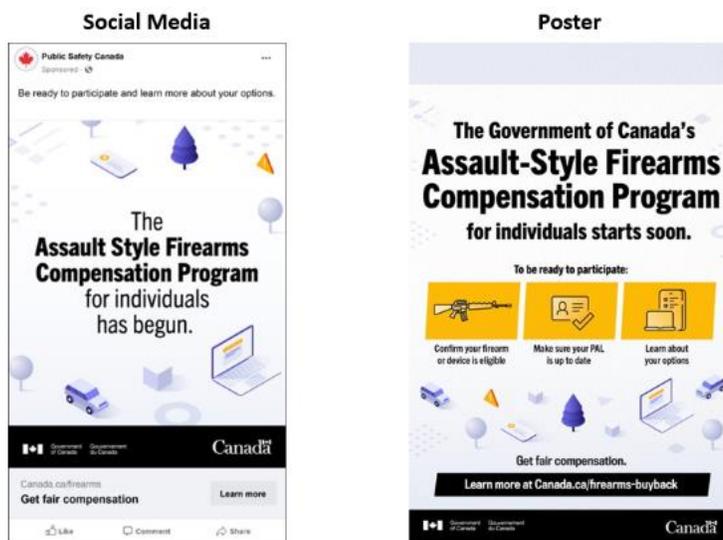
Firearm owners well understood the use of the term “root causes.” When asked for examples, some mentioned the judicial system, social economic issues, substance abuse, poverty, gangs, mental health and so on. They generally took a favourable view to discussing root causes. Some emphasized that gun violence is typically associated with illegal weapons, not with law-abiding individuals who possess registered, legal firearms. Many felt this distinction was an important aspect of the discussion on root causes.

The concept of ‘community funding’ was less clear to firearm owner participants. Several did not understand what it meant in this context, or what actions or programs it might refer to. There were different interpretations about what it might mean; some assumed such a model would shift responsibility to communities rather than being a national effort while others believe it meant that each community could allocate funds differently – raising concerns about inconsistency. A few thought it could involve educational initiatives at schools with youth or funding for RCMP services – which would be a positive consideration.

All in all, participants felt that the script attempted to cover too many topics at once, diluting the impact of this specific message.

## 2. Keeping Communities Safe – Visual Concepts

### a) Option A – Communities



### Strengths

- This concept ad was considered to be simple, minimalistic and direct, which some found appealing. The message was seen to be clear, despite some confusion around the imagery. The blandness of the images meant the viewer had nothing to look at except the headline message about the ASFCP.
- The use of bright yellow around the icons symbolizing the steps around participating in the compensation program was seen to be very eye-catching.

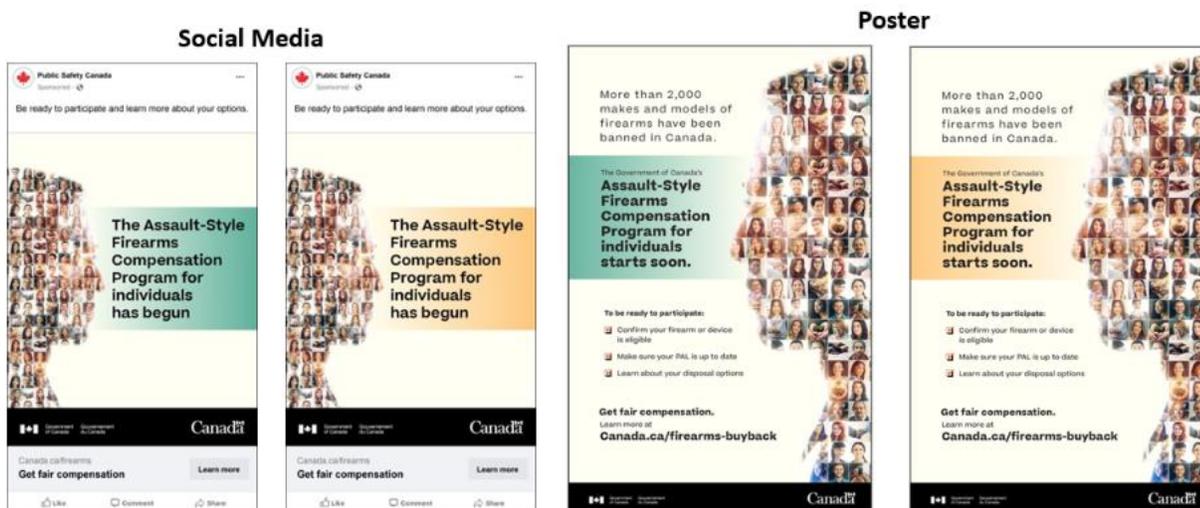
**Weaknesses**

- Participants felt the images had no connection at all to the subject matter of the ads. They wondered why the symbols and icons had no relation to firearms. Rather than including relevant imagery, they questioned the use of symbols such as trees, cars and laptops, which do not help connect to the message of buyback or compensation.
- It was noted that this concept was dry and lacked any attention-grabbing elements and failed to draw the viewer’s attention.
- Some noted that this ad concept felt cluttered and that the cartoon-like images of trees, cars and laptops served no purpose and only took up space and detracted from the main message. The images were described as unengaging and simplistic, trivializing the topic and message of the ad.

**Other suggestions**

- Some firearm owners preferred the wording “to be ready to participate...” in the poster version as opposed to “be ready to participate...” which seemed more of an order and to be heavy-handed.
- Participants recommended simplifying and focusing the imagery by using straightforward, bold visuals that clearly depict the intent of the advertisement. Additionally, to increase visibility of key elements such as making the "Get Fair Compensation" text larger and more prominent to draw attention.

**b) Option B – Canadian mosaic**



**Strengths**

- Some firearm owners considered the imagery in this concept to be more attention-grabbing, with the colours effectively catching the eye.
- Some appreciated how the poster version of this concept included a line about how over 2,000 makes and models of firearms have been banned.

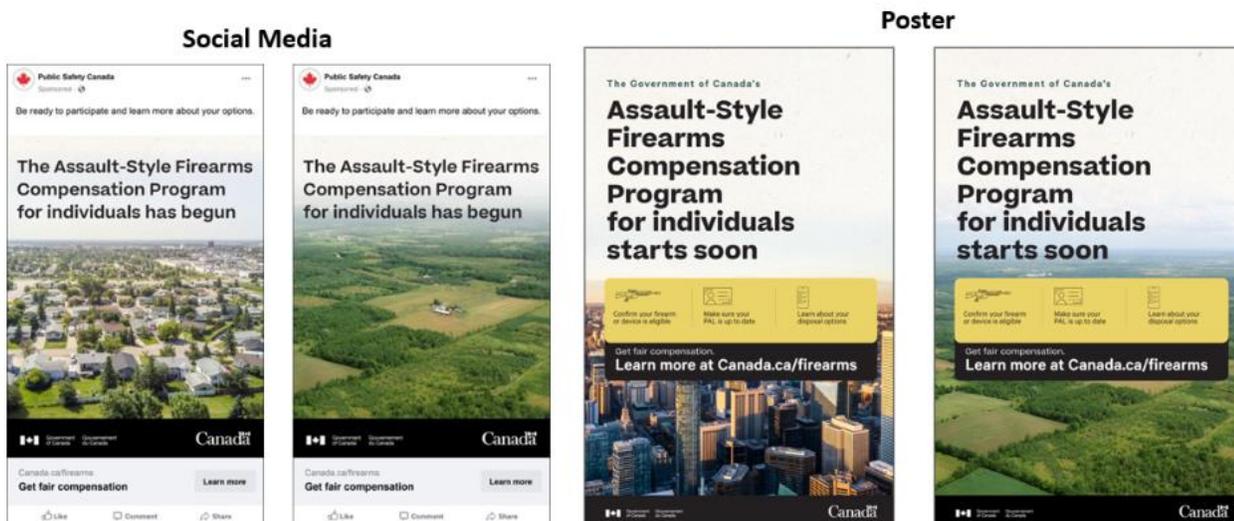
**Weaknesses**

- Participants were confused about the mosaic of people’s faces in the image and how they related to gun violence or the compensation program. This added confusion to the overall message.
- The focus on smiling faces without clear context made the imagery feel out of place, especially since it did not appear to address victims or gun violence. The smiling faces gave some the impression of a "feel-good" campaign, which was deemed inappropriate given the topic.
- Firearm owning participants were uncertain whether the people in the ad concept were supposed to be those giving up their guns or potential victims of gun violence.
- Some felt the overall concept was misleading. The cheerful portrayal may mislead viewers into thinking the program is simply about making people feel safer, which some feel underrepresents the seriousness of the gun violence.
- Rather than addressing the target audience of gun owners about the ASFCP, participants felt the ad imagery seemed more focused on people in general and did not communicate the core message of the ad.
- There was a lot of skepticism as to whether anyone taking part in the program would actually get fair compensation for their assault-style firearm.

**Other Suggestions**

- Use more relevant imagery by replacing the smiling faces with visuals of actual gun violence victims or individuals involved in the gun buyback program to strengthen the message.
- Be more direct by clearly communicating that this is a call to action for gun owners to participate in the ASFCP and focus heavily on the compensation aspect.

**c) Option C – Across this land**



**Strengths**

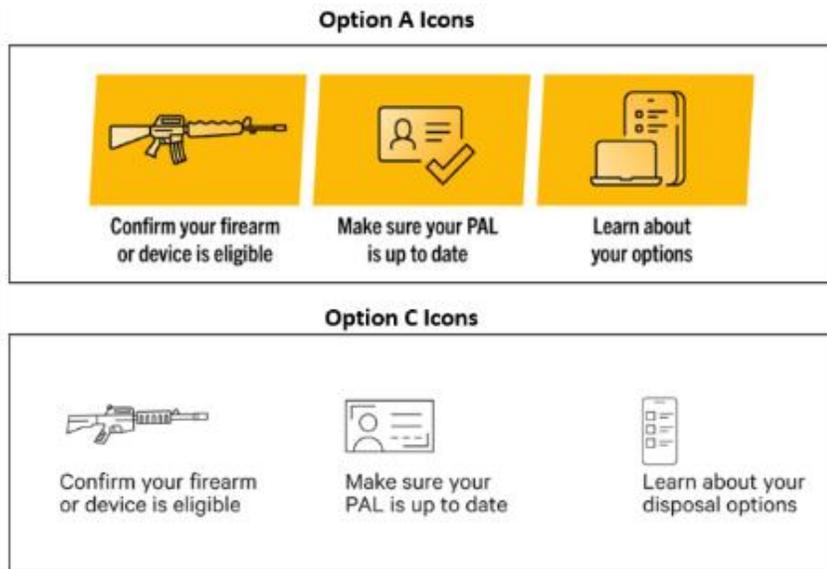
- The cityscape image of a downtown core resonates with the idea that gun violence is mainly a major concern in urban areas. Many of the firearm owner participants were from smaller communities and did not want to see rural areas or farms stigmatized by being the main image used in the ad.
- Firearm owners felt that the inclusion of both rural and urban images attempts to reflect the broad nature of the issue, suggesting that gun violence affects various communities.

**Weaknesses**

- The rural landscape image, especially in the context of targeting law-abiding gun owners, creates confusion. Some participants felt it stigmatized farmers and hunters rather than addressing the bigger issue of urban gun violence.
- The serene and calm images, particularly in the rural setting, do not convey the urgency or seriousness of the message. Some felt the ad came across as too passive or almost like a commercial for a real estate company.
- The absence of actual firearm imagery reduces the ad's impact and fails to communicate what the ASFCP specifically targets.

**Other Suggestions**

- Consider simplifying the design and using relevant visuals. This might mean removing all landscape images and instead incorporating actual images of firearms or items related to the program.
- Embolden tone by replacing serene, calm visuals with something that better reflects the urgency and seriousness of the gun violence issue.
- Use the right imagery and wording to ensure the ad is directed toward the specific group it aims to reach to avoid confusion.

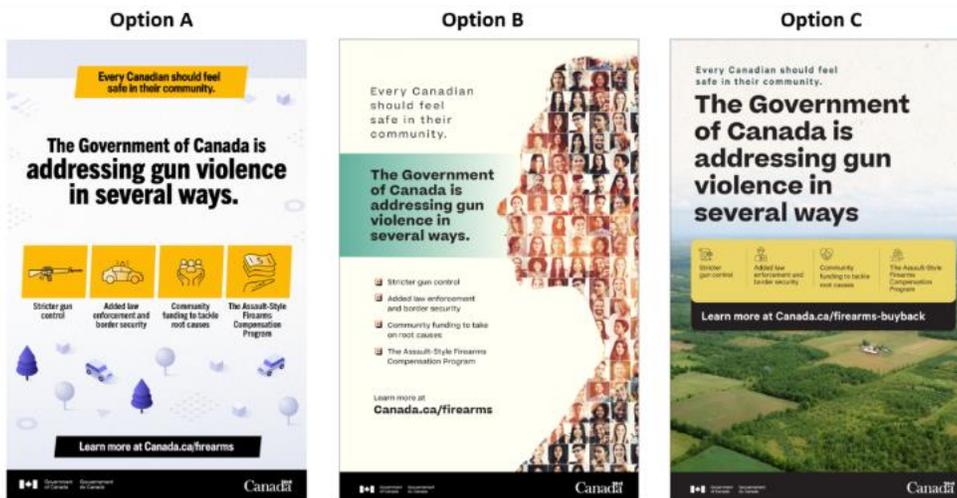
d) *Icons & Symbols – Opinions*

As was the case with the general public, participants who own firearms prefer to see the use of icons or pictograms to illustrate the steps involved in talking part in the ASFCP as opposed to just having a checklist as is the case in Option B.

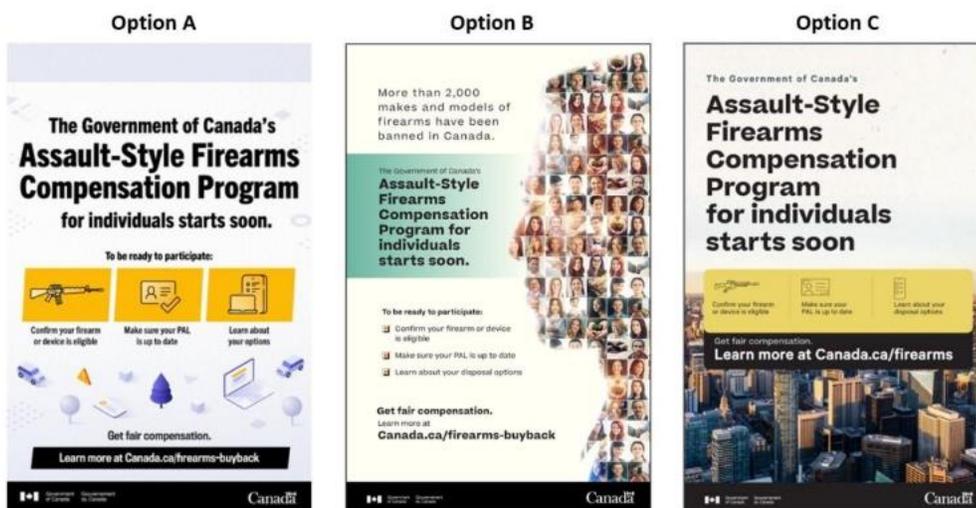
The style of icons in Option A were seen to be far preferable to those in Option C, for being more obvious and direct. The use of yellow made them were seen as more vibrant and eye-catching, making them stand out visually. The image of the firearm in Option A was seen as being bolder and more easily recognized. Most had little difficulty identifying the icon symbolizing “learn about your options” in Option A as being a laptop and a smartphone.

### C. Preferred Concept – All Participants

#### General Public



#### Firearm Owners



Participants were asked to vote on which of the three options they felt was the most attention-grabbing and most likely to make them want to know more. There was no clear consensus, with about one third of participants opting for each.

Option A “Communities” was the narrow winner – not because of any affinity for the animated imagery but more because people appreciated the big yellow icons in the poster version of the concept. Some noted that they chose Option A because it was the one they disliked the least. It did not have the collage of faces that many found distracting and it also did not feature the landscape images which were seen to detract from the core message of the ad.

Option B tended to resonate somewhat more with the general public, especially among women and Quebecers, but was the least well-received among firearm owners.

Concept	Total (n75)	Group type		Language	
		Gen pop (n40)	Firearm owners (n35)	English (n58)	French (n17)
Option A	29	12	17	22	7
Option B	24	18	6	15	9
Option C	22	10	12	1	1

## Appendix A: Qualitative methodology

This qualitative focus group phase of the research included eleven sessions aimed at exploring reactions to advertisement concepts designed to communicate two key messages: the government's actions to address gun violence and information for firearm owners on participating in the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program.

For firearm owners, the campaign focused on encouraging them to visit the program website to determine whether they own prohibited firearms, verify their Possession and Acquisition License (PAL), and understand key preparation steps. For the general public (Canadians aged 18 and older), the advertising highlighted the government's efforts to combat gun violence.

During each discussion, participants reviewed multiple ad formats, including audio scripts, social media content, and out-of-home advertisements. The ads varied in layout and thematic approach. Participants provided feedback on the overall effectiveness of the ads, their preferred formats, likes and dislikes, the clarity and sufficiency of the information presented, and the ads' ability to inform and prompt action among firearm owners.

### Group composition

The Public Safety Canada commissioned Environics Research to conduct a series of 11 online focus groups, which took place between March 5 and 13, 2025. Six of the focus groups were conducted with non-firearm owning members of the general public in four regions - two in Ontario, two in Quebec, one in Atlantic Canada, one in western Canada, and were divided by gender. The other five focus groups were conducted with owners of firearms in five regions – one session in each of Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, western Canada and the territories. A total of 80 people took part in these 11 online focus groups, eight of whom were Indigenous. The groups were conducted using the Zoom conferencing platform. Each session consisted of between six (6) to nine (9) participants who were thanked with an honorarium of \$125.

The primary objective of testing was to explore reactions to advertisement concepts designed to communicate two key messages: the government's actions to address gun violence and information for firearm owners on participating in the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program. The sessions were distributed as follows:

Dates	Participant Locations and Times
Wed., Mar 5, 2025	5pm EST – Group #1 (Ontario-Men) 7 pm EST – Group #2 (Ontario-Women)
Thurs., Mar 6, 2025	5pm EST (6pm AST) – Group #3 (Atlantic-Men) 7pm EST (6pm CST) – Group #4 (Western Canada-Women)
Mon., Mar 10, 2025	5pm EST – Group #5 (Ontario firearm owners) 7pm EST (5pm MST) – Group #6 (Western Canada firearm owners)
Tues., Mar 11, 2025	5pm EST – Group #7 (Quebec-Men) 7pm EST – Group #8 (Quebec-Women)
Wed., Mar 12, 2025	4pm EST (5pm AST) – Group #9 (Atlantic firearm owners) 7pm EST – Group #10 (Territories firearm owners)
Thurs, Mar 13, 2025	5pm EST – Group #11 (Quebec firearm owners)

**NB: Groups 7, 8 and 11 were conducted in French. All other focus groups were conducted in English.**

**Recruitment**

Environics developed the recruitment screener and provided it to Public Safety Canada for review prior to finalizing. While qualitative research does not give every member of the target population of firearm owners a chance to participate, and its results are not intended to be statistically representative of target population of firearms owners, it does aim to collect information that is broadly reflective of the target population. Potential participants were screened to reflect a distribution of factors to ensure a wide variety of perspectives. Factors included gender; age; ability to attend the online focus group session; and willingness to read, assess, and share feedback on the creative materials. Participants were screened to ensure all exclusions and specifications required by Public Safety Canada were followed. All participants were offered a \$125 honorarium to encourage participation and to thank them for their time.

Environics subcontracted Trend Research to recruit the focus group participants. In total, 80 participants took part in the 11 focus groups sessions.

**Moderation and conduct**

Derek Leebosh, Vice President – Public Affairs at Environics Research, moderated all sessions. Each focus group session lasted approximately 90 minutes and was conducted according to a discussion guide developed in consultation with Public Safety Canada. All qualitative research work was conducted in accordance with professional standards and applicable government legislation (e.g., PIPEDA).

All groups were video- and audio-recorded for use in subsequent analysis by the research team, and during the recruitment process, participants provided consent to such recording and were given assurances of anonymity. Environics arranged for the screener and discussion guide to be translated into French. Industry and Government of Canada standards for qualitative research were followed.

## Appendix B: ACET quantitative methodology

Environics conducted a baseline survey prior to the campaign, using the Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET) developed by the Government of Canada for evaluating campaigns over \$2,000,000. Due to changes to the size of the campaign size, the post-campaign ACET will not be required and only the pre-campaign ACET was conducted.

### Sample design and weighting

Respondents to the online survey were Canadian members of an online panel 18 years of age and older (n=2,027) including an oversample to ensure that 600 respondents indicated they personally own a firearm. The sample included all provinces, and the survey was administered in English and French, as well as with an accessible link for those using a mobile phone or screen reading technology.

Because respondents are recruited from a panel, this is a non-probability survey and no formal estimates of sampling error can be calculated. Although opt-in panels are not random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys provided they are well-designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel.

The survey obtained the following regional distributions:

Region	Actual share of population (Census 2021)	Unweighted sample
Atlantic Canada	7%	132
Quebec	23%	466
Ontario	39%	780
Prairies	18%	369
B.C.	14%	280
CANADA	100%	2,027

### Questionnaire design

The survey used the standard Government of Canada ACET survey questionnaire, with additional questions approved by Public Safety Canada to accommodate specific analysis objectives.

Environics' data analysts programmed the questionnaires, then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured that the data entry process conformed to the surveys' basic logic. The data collection system handles sampling invitations, quotas and questionnaire completion (skip patterns, branching and valid ranges).

The final survey questionnaires are included in Appendix D.

### Fieldwork

The survey was conducted by Environics using a secure, fully featured web-based survey environment located in Canada. The survey field period was from February 26 to March 14, 2025 (average length seven minutes).

All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the surveys in their official language of choice. Each survey was registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's Research Verification Service, so respondents validate its authenticity. Survey data collection adhered to Government of Canada standard for public opinion research as well as all applicable industry standards as set out by the Canadian Research Insights Council, of which Environics is a founding member. Environics informed respondents of their rights under the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act* and ensured that those rights were protected throughout the research process. This included: informing respondents of the purpose of the research; identifying both the sponsoring department and the research supplier; informing respondents that their participation in the study is voluntary, and that the information provided would be administered according to the requirements of the *Privacy Act*.

The data from this survey are statistically weighted to ensure the sample is as representative of this population as possible, according to the most recently available Census information.

### Completion results

The completion results are presented in the following table.

#### Contact disposition

Disposition		Pre-campaign ACET (N)
Total invitations	(c)	53,285
Total completes	(d)	2,027
Qualified break-offs	(e)	389
Disqualified	(f)	2,820
Not responded	(g)	45,966
Quota filled	(h)	2,083
Contact rate = (d+e+f+h)/c (%)		13.74%
Participation rate = (d+f+h)/c (%)		13.01%

### Non-response bias analysis

The table below presents a profile of the final sample, compared to the actual population of Canada (2021 Census information). The final sample underrepresents those with high school or less education, which is a typical pattern for public opinion surveys in Canada (e.g., those with more education are more likely to respond to surveys). Due to the oversample of firearms owners, the survey also underrepresented those age 55 and over.

#### Sample profile

Sample type	Survey*	Canada (2021 Census)
<b>Gender (18+)</b>		
Male	53%	49%
Female	47%	51%
<b>Age</b>		
18-34	27%	27%
35-54	41%	31%
55+	31%	42%
<b>Education level <sup>α</sup></b>		
High school diploma or less	29%	35%
Trades/college/post-sec no degree	35%	36%
University degree+	36%	29%

\* Data are unweighted and percentaged on those giving a response to each demographic question

<sup>α</sup> Actual Census categories differ from those used in this survey and have been recalculated to correspond.  
Statistics Canada figures for education are for Canadians aged 25 to 64 years and over

## Appendix C: Qualitative research instruments

February 2025

**Environics Research Group  
ASFCP – Concept Test with Firearm Owners/General Public  
Public Safety Canada  
PN12245  
Recruitment for online group discussion**

Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_

Business #: \_\_\_\_\_

Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter: \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP 1 Gen Pop (English) Ontario Men Wednesday, March 5 5:00-6:30 pm EST	GROUP 2 Gen Pop (English) Ontario Women Wednesday, March 5 7:00-8:30 pm EST	GROUP 3 Gen Pop (English) Atlantic Men Thursday, March 6 5:00-6:30 pm EST (6:00-7:30 pm AST)	GROUP 4 Gen Pop (English) Western Women Thursday, March 6 7:00-8:30 pm EST (6-7:30pm CST; 5-6:30pm MST; 4-5:30pm PST)
GROUP 5 Firearms owners (English) Ontario Monday, March 10 5:00-6:30 pm EST	GROUP 6 Firearms owners (English) Western Canada Monday, March 10 7:00-8:30 pm EST (6-7:30pm CST; 5-6:30pm MST; 4-5:30pm PST)	GROUP 7 Gen Pop (French) Quebec Men Tuesday, March 11 5:00-6:30 pm EST	GROUP 8 Gen Pop (French) Quebec Women Tuesday, March 11 7:00-8:30 pm EST
GROUP 9 Firearms owners (English) Atlantic Wednesday, March 12 4:00-5:30 pm EST (5:00-6:30 pm AST)	GROUP 10 Firearms owners (English) Territories Wednesday, March 12 7:00-8:30 pm EST (potential four time zones)	GROUP 11 Firearms owners (French) Quebec Thursday, March 13 5:00-6:30 pm EST	

**Eight recruits per session for Groups 1 to 9 and 11 – Ten recruits for Group 10. \$125 incentive.**

**NB: Group 3 and 9 (Atlantic) – mix from all four provinces. Group 4 and 6 – mix from all four western provinces.**

**Group 10 – Recruit 10 with a mix of Yukon, Nunavut and Northwest Territories. 5 out of 10 must be Indigenous firearm owners (i.e., Inuit, First Nation or Metis)**

**Each session with firearm owners to have at least three participants from rural areas and all to have a mix of people from various parts of each province/region.**

**NB: Any francophones from other provinces may be invited to group 7, 8 or 11 and any Quebec anglophones may be invited to one of the Ontario sessions (Group 1, 2 or 5).**

**All in groups 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11 must currently own at least one firearm and be over 18 years of age.**

Hello/Bonjour, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from Trend Research, a partner of Environics Research. Would you like to continue this discussion in English? / Voulez-vous continuer cette conversation en français?

We are conducting a series of online video-conference focus group discussions across Canada on behalf of Public Safety Canada. This study is a research project, not an attempt to sell or market anything. Your participation in the research is completely voluntary, confidential and your decision to participate or not will not affect any dealings you may have with the Government of Canada.

The format will be a video-conference call discussion using the Zoom platform led by a research professional from Environics that will involve you and some other Canadians from your region. May we have your permission to ask you or someone else in your household some further question to see if you/they fit in our study? This will take about 5 minutes.

The session will last a maximum of 1.5 hours and you will receive a cash gift of \$125 as a thanks for attending the session.

A recording of the session will be produced for research purposes. The recording will be used only by the research professional to assist in preparing a report on the research findings and will be destroyed once the report is completed. All information collected, used and/or disclosed will be used for research purposes only and administered as per the requirements of the Privacy Act. Environics Research has a privacy policy which can be consulted at <https://environicsresearch.com/privacy-policy/>.

If you have questions about the legitimacy of the research, you can e-mail Public Services and Procurement Canada at [questions@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:questions@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca). Environics is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and adheres to all its standards; the project is registered with the CRIC with the number 20250120-EN519.

NB: If a participant asks for information on the research company conducting the research they can be told: Environics Research is located at 366 Adelaide Street West, Suite 101, Toronto, Ontario and can be reached at 416-920-9010.

1. Are you or is any member of your household or your immediate family employed in:

Type	No	Yes
A market research, communications or public relations firm, or an advertising agency	1	2
Media (Radio, Television, Newspapers, Magazines, etc.)	1	2
Public Safety Canada	1	2
Law enforcement (i.e., police, RCMP)	1	2
A political party	1	2

**IF YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE – THANK AND TERMINATE**

2. Do you personally own a firearm of any kind (i.e., handgun, hunting rifle, long gun etc.)?

- 01 – Yes, I do
- 02 – No, I do not

**CONTINUE**  
**SKIP TO Q. 4**

3. The Government of Canada has prohibited approximately 2,000 models of assault-style firearms. Do you currently own any firearms that have been prohibited (e.g. AR-15 style, Ruger Mini 14, Vz58 rifle, etc.)?

- 01 - Yes, definitely do
- 02 - Yes, probably do
- 03 – Not sure if I do or not
- 04 - No, definitely do not

**TRY TO GET AS MANY PARTICIPANTS AS POSSIBLE WHO HAVE PROHIBITED FIREARMS**

4. What province and city do you currently live in?

**SEE REGIONAL BREAKS FOR GROUPS**

5. INDICATE:

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Male   | <b>1 GEN POP GROUPS 1, 3 OR 7 AND ALL FIREARMS GROUPS</b>          |
| Female | <b>2 GEN POP GROUPS 2, 4 OR 8 AND AT LEAST 2 PER FIREARM GROUP</b> |

**NB: FIREARM OWNERS SKEW MALE BUT TRY TO GET AT LEAST 2 WOMEN IN EACH OF GROUPS 5, 6 and 9-11**

6. What is your ethnic or racial background? **DO NOT READ**

- 01 – White/European/Caucasian
- 02 – First Nation
- 03 – Métis
- 04 – Inuit
- 05 – Other (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

**AN EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO INCLUDE ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN ALL GROUPS. FOR GROUP 10 (TERRITORIES) AT LEAST 5 OUT OF 10 MUST BE INUIT, FIRST NATION OR METIS**

7. Which of the following best describes where you live

- 01 – An urban area
- 02 – A suburban area
- 03 – A small town, rural or remote area

**MINIMUM 3 PER GROUP FOR FIREARMS GROUPS 7-11**

**TRY TO GET MIX OF URBAN, SUBURBAN AND RURAL PARTICIPANTS**

8. Which official language do you speak most often at home, English or French?

- |         |   |                         |
|---------|---|-------------------------|
| English | 1 | <b>ALL OTHER GROUPS</b> |
| French  | 2 | <b>GROUP 7, 8 or 11</b> |

9. We have been asked to speak to participants from all different ages. So that we may do this accurately, may I have your exact age please? **(GET MIX)**

\_\_\_\_\_. WRITE IN

- |                    |   |                  |
|--------------------|---|------------------|
| Under 18           | 0 | <b>TERMINATE</b> |
| 18-24 years of age | 1 |                  |
| 25-34 years of age | 2 |                  |
| 35-44 years of age | 3 |                  |
| 45-54 years of age | 4 |                  |
| 55-64 years of age | 5 |                  |
| 65-74 years of age | 6 |                  |
| 75 years or more   | 7 | <b>TERMINATE</b> |

10. Could you please tell me what is the last level of education that you completed? **(GET MIX)**

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Some High School only    | 1 |
| Completed High School    | 2 |
| Trade School certificate | 3 |
| Some Post-secondary      | 4 |
| Completed Post-secondary | 5 |
| Graduate degree          | 6 |

11. Participants in group discussions are asked to voice their opinions and thoughts, how comfortable are you in voicing your opinions in front of others? Are you... (read list)?

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Very comfortable     | 1- <b>MIN 5 PER GROUP</b> |
| Fairly comfortable   | 2                         |
| Not very comfortable | 3 - <b>TERMINATE</b>      |
| Very uncomfortable   | 4 - <b>TERMINATE</b>      |

12. Have you **ever** attended a focus group or a one-to-one discussion for which you have received a sum of money, here or elsewhere?

- |     |   |                            |
|-----|---|----------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | <b>MAXIMUM 4 PER GROUP</b> |
| No  | 2 | -> <b>(SKIP TO Q.14)</b>   |

**IF Q11 YES ASK:**

13. When did you last attend one of these discussions?

\_\_\_\_\_

**(TERMINATE IF IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS)**

14. How many focus groups or one-to-one discussions have you attended in the past 5 years?

\_\_\_\_\_(SPECIFY)

**IF 5 OR MORE, TERMINATE**

**ASK ALL**

15. This focus group will require participants to join a videoconference using the Zoom platform using a desktop or laptop computer or a tablet. You will need internet access in a private and quiet location to take part in the study. We cannot provide this technology for you. Will you be able to access the Internet for a 1-hour audio-visual discussion using a desktop or laptop computer or tablet?

Yes	1	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	2	<b>TERMINATE</b>

**NOTE: A MOBILE PHONE WILL NOT WORK FOR THIS EXERCISE**

**ASK ALL**

16. The focus group will take place using a video-conference platform called Zoom. If you are not already a user, Zoom may request you to install some software at the site <https://zoom.us/download> . You can delete it after the focus group if you wish. How experienced and comfortable are you with using Zoom videoconferencing?

Very comfortable	1	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Somewhat comfortable	2	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Somewhat uncomfortable	3	<b>THANK AND TERMINATE</b>
Very uncomfortable	4	<b>THANK AND TERMINATE</b>

17. Sometimes participants in the focus group are also asked to type out their responses in the “chat” function. Is there any reason why you could not participate? If you need glasses to read or a hearing aid, please remember to bring them.

Yes	1	<b>TERMINATE</b>
No	2	

18. I would like to invite you to attend the focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated discussion with other Canadians. The session will be recorded, and some other members of the research team may also observe the session, but your participation will be confidential. If you attend the session you will receive \$125 to thank you for your time. It will be sent to you electronically. Do you consent to take part in the focus group? By agreeing to participate you are giving your consent to these procedures.

Yes	1	<b>TERMINATE</b>
No	2	

19. We will contact you again before the date of the session to confirm your attendance. Note that this invitation is to you personally and you cannot have anyone else substitute for you. Do you consent to this?

Yes	1	<b>TERMINATE</b>
No	2	

20. The session will last a maximum of 90 minutes, but we are asking that all participants log into the Zoom online meeting 5 minutes prior to the start of the session. Are you able to log-in about 5 minutes prior to the start time?

Yes	1	<b>TERMINATE</b>
No	2	

21. Could you please confirm your email address so I can send you login details for the Zoom web conference application?

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RE-READ THE FULL ADDRESS BACK TO CONFIRM CORRECT SPELLING.**

(NB: We will send the links to you early next week)

**PLEASE ENSURE PARTICIPANTS ARE TOLD THE TIME OF SESSION IN THEIR TIME ZONE  
SEE TIMES AND DATES ON PAGE 1**

**INTERVIEWERS:** Tell respondent that it is a small group and anyone who does not show or cancels at the last minute will compromise the project. Make sure they know we feel their opinions are valuable and we are serious about finding out what they have to offer.

**NOTE:** PLEASE TELL ALL RESPONDENTS THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION CALL AND/OR E-MAIL THE DAY PRIOR TO THE SESSION. IF FOR SOME REASON THEY HAVE NOT HEARD FROM US THEY SHOULD CONTACT US AT \_\_\_\_\_. IF THEIR NAME IS NOT ON THE ATTENDANCE FORM THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE GROUP. IF A RESPONDENT HAS ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH, THEY SHOULD ALSO CONTACT US AT THIS NUMBER.

February 27, 2025

**Environics Research Group Limited**  
**Focus Groups on ASFCP Creatives – General Public**  
**Public Safety Canada**  
**PN12245**

**1.0 Introduction to procedures (10 minutes)**

Hello everyone, my name is [NAME] and I work for Environics Research, a public opinion research company. Welcome to this online focus group. I will be moderating the session.

This is one of a series of online focus groups we are conducting on behalf of Public Safety Canada with people from across the country. The session should last no more than 90 minutes.

We want to hear your opinions so please feel free to agree or disagree with one another. For the most part I will be showing you materials and asking you questions.

I want to inform you that we are recording this session to help me write my report. The recording will only be used internally to analyse the research and will not be released to anyone else. **MODERATOR TO PRESS "RECORD" ON ZOOM SCREEN**

There are also some observers from the research team and from Public Safety Canada who are observing the session and taking notes while muted. I would also like to remind you that anything you say here will remain confidential and anonymous and any comments you make will not be linked to you by name in any reporting we do on this project.

For the most part we will be video chatting, but I will also be sharing my screen to show you some materials and we will also use the "chat" function from time to time when I ask you to react to things in writing. Please send any chat messages to "everyone" unless you feel you need to send me a private message.

Before we get started, I just wanted to also say that if you think there may be a lot of noise at your end (i.e., kids, dog barking etc.) please click the "mute" button and just "unmute" when you want to say something. You will get the cash compensation gift we promised you electronically in the next week or two.

Let's go around the imaginary table and introduce ourselves. Tell us your name and a bit about yourself such as where you are calling from, what sort of work you do and how you would describe the composition of your household (family, pets etc.).

**2.0 Keeping Communities Safe – reaction to script (25 minutes)**

We are going to be looking at some ad concepts in this session that Public Safety Canada is currently developing. These are at a draft stage and will require some imagination. You might see these ads on Facebook, Instagram or Google, or hear them on the radio or they could be posters or signs.

First, I am going to read you a script. This could be the script for the radio ad, and some of the wording would be used in the ads on social media. I'm going to read it twice and maybe just imagine you were listening to this on the radio. Afterwards we will discuss your impressions and what you took away from it. **MODERATOR TO RECITE TWICE**

*Every Canadian should feel safe in their community. That's why the government is addressing gun violence with...*

- *Stricter gun control*
- *Investments in law enforcement and border security*
- *Serious action taken against crime*

- *Community funding to take on the root causes of violence*
- *And the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities*

Learn more at [Canada.ca/firearms](https://Canada.ca/firearms). A message from the Government of Canada.

OK, I am going to type a question in the chat that I'd like you all to answer. "What was the main message you got from this ad?"

Let's go around the group and I'd like you to elaborate on why you felt that was the main message.

**PROBE:** Were there specific details in the ad I read that stood out to you? Which ones?

How did the ad make you feel? (e.g., relieved, angry, comforted, curious etc.)

I'm going to share my screen now so we can look at this radio ad script in more detail. **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN – SLIDE 1**

The script at one point says, "**community funding** to take on the **root causes** of violence." What is your reaction to that?

What does "root causes of violence" mean to you? What would be some examples?

What do you think "community funding" means here? Does the ad need to mention it or could it just say, "taking on the root causes of violence"?

At one point in the ad script I mentioned "the **Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program** that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities." Does anyone know what this refers to?

What if instead we just said, "the **Buy-Back Program** that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities"? How many of you would prefer "Buy Back Program"? How many prefer "Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program"? What are the pros and cons?

### **3.0 Keeping Communities Safe – preferred concept (20 minutes)**

Next I'd like to share three different visual options for the ads. The text remains the same across all three and is based on the script we just discussed. Let's look at them one at a time and then we can discuss your preferences.

**NB: MODERATOR WILL ROTATE ORDER OF PRESENTATION**

*Option A = Communities*

*Option B = Canadian mosaic*

*Option C = Across this land*

Let's start with Concept A. Here is what the social media ad could look like with this representation.

**MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION A – SLIDE 2.** And, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS POSTER OPTION A – SLIDE 3**

What do you think of this imagery of animated elements of a community? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

Now let's look at Option B, **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION B - SLIDE 4** and, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS POSTER OPTION B - SLIDE 5**

What do you think of this imagery of people from all walks of life? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

Now let's look at Option C. **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION C - SLIDE 6** and, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS POSTER OPTION C – SLIDE 7**

What do you think of this imagery of different landscapes? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

In Option C the poster shows a photo of a rural landscape. But it could show a big city instead. **SHOW OPTIONS ON SLIDE 7**. How many prefer the rural image? How many prefer the city image? Why?

Now that we have looked at the three visual options, what are your thoughts on the difference between the three approaches to the imagery?

Which imagery would be most likely to make you stop and listen or read the ad and find out more?

I will show the three posters just to remind you of what each option consisted of. **SHOW SLIDE 9 WITH THE THREE POSTERS SIDE BY SIDE**. Now I will run a little poll and I'd like you to each type in the chat which visual option attracts you the most.

Let's go around and I'd like you to each explain why you preferred this visual option. What did you like or not like about the other options?

All the versions mention four ways the government is addressing violence. Do you understand what each of these mean?

- Stricter gun control
- Investments in law enforcement and border security
- Community funding to take on the root causes of violence
- Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities

You may have noticed that in a couple of the posters there are icons to symbolize these measures. **SHOW SLIDE 8 WITH TWO VERSIONS OF ICONS SIDE BY SIDE**

Do the icons adequately symbolize what they're meant to represent? What would be better? Which of these versions do you like better?

#### 4.0 Wrap up (5 mins)

We have discussed a lot of things today. Let's go around the room one last time and you can each give us any final comments you might have on all the materials we looked at.

On behalf of Public Safety Canada, I would like to thank you for taking part in this focus group discussion. The cash incentive we promised you will be sent electronically in the coming week. The report on this project will be available on the Library and Archives Canada website shortly.

February 27, 2025

**Environics Research Group Limited**  
**Focus Groups on ASFCP Creatives – Firearm Owners**  
**Public Safety Canada**  
**PN12245**

### 1.0 Introduction to procedures (10 minutes)

Hello everyone, my name is [NAME] and I work for Environics Research, a public opinion research company. Welcome to this online focus group. I will be moderating the session.

This is one of a series of online focus groups we are conducting on behalf of Public Safety Canada with people from across the country. The session should last no more than 90 minutes.

We want to hear your opinions so please feel free to agree or disagree with one another. For the most part I will be showing you materials and asking you questions.

I want to inform you that we are recording this session to help me write my report. The recording will only be used internally to analyse the research and will not be released to anyone else. **MODERATOR TO PRESS**  
**“RECORD” ON ZOOM SCREEN**

There are also some observers from the research team and from Public Safety Canada who are observing the session and taking notes while muted. I would also like to remind you that anything you say here will remain confidential and anonymous and any comments you make will not be linked to you by name in any reporting we do on this project.

For the most part we will be video chatting, but I will also be sharing my screen to show you some materials and we will also use the “chat” function from time to time when I ask you to react to things in writing. Please send any chat messages to “everyone” unless you feel you need to send me a private message.

Before we get started, I just wanted to also say that if you think there may be a lot of noise at your end (i.e., kids, dog barking etc.) please click the “mute” button and just “unmute” when you want to say something. You will get the cash compensation gift we promised you electronically in the next week or two.

Let’s go around the imaginary table and introduce ourselves. Tell us your name and a bit about yourself such as where you are calling from, what sort of work you do and how you would describe the composition of your household (family, pets etc.). Also, we invited you to this session because you each indicated that you own firearms. Could you each tell us about what types and how many firearms you own, how long you have owned guns, and what are the main things you use your guns for and how often do you use them. (e.g., hunting, sport shooting etc.)

### 2.0 Keeping Communities Safe – reaction to script (25 minutes)

We are going to be looking at some ad concepts in this session that Public Safety Canada is currently developing. These are at a draft stage and will require some imagination. You might see these ads on Facebook, Instagram or Google, or hear them on the radio or they could be posters or signs.

First, I am going to read you a script. This could be the script for the radio ad, and some of the wording would be used in the ads on social media. I'm going to read it twice and maybe just imagine you were listening to this on the radio. Afterwards we will discuss your impressions and what you took away from it. **MODERATOR TO RECITE TWICE**

*Every Canadian should feel safe in their community. That's why the government is addressing gun violence with...*

- *Stricter gun control*
- *Investments in law enforcement and border security*
- *Serious action taken against crime*
- *Community funding to take on the root causes of violence*
- *And the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities*

*Learn more at [Canada.ca/firearms](https://Canada.ca/firearms). A message from the Government of Canada.*

OK, I am going to type a question in the chat that I'd like you all to answer. "What was the main message you got from this ad?"

Let's go around the group and I'd like you to elaborate on why you felt that was the main message.

**PROBE:** Were there specific details in the ad I read that stood out to you? Which ones?

How did the ad make you feel? (e.g., relieved, angry, comforted, curious etc.)

I'm going to share my screen now so we can look at this radio ad script in more detail. **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN – SLIDE 1**

The script at one point says, "**community funding** to take on the **root causes** of violence." What is your reaction to that?

What does "root causes of violence" mean to you? What would be some examples?

What do you think "community funding" means here? Does the ad need to mention it or could it just say, "taking on the root causes of violence"?

At one point in the ad script I mentioned "the **Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program** that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities." Does anyone know what this refers to?

What if instead we just said, "the **Buy-Back Program** that will remove prohibited firearms from our communities"? How many of you would prefer "Buy Back Program"? How many prefer "Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program"? What are the pros and cons?

### 3.0 Keeping Communities Safe – preferred concept (20 minutes)

Next I'd like to share three different visual options for the ads. The text remains the same across all three and is based on the script we just discussed. Let's look at them one at a time and then we can discuss your preferences.

#### **NB: MODERATOR WILL ROTATE ORDER OF PRESENTATION**

*Option A = Communities*

*Option B = Canadian mosaic*

*Option C = Across this land*

Let's start with Concept A. Here is what the social media ad could look like with this representation.

**MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION A – SLIDE 2.** And, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS POSTER OPTION A – SLIDE 3**

What is the main message you get here?

What do you think of this imagery of animated elements of a community? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

What do you think of the icons that represent steps in participating in the compensation program?

Do any words or phrases stand out in this ad? **PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED:** What about "get fair compensation"?

Now let's look at Option B, **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION B – SLIDE 4** and, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS OOH OPTION B – SLIDE 5**

What is the main message you get here?

What do you think of this imagery of people from all walks of life? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

What do you think of having a checklist of steps in participating in the compensation program?

Do any words or phrases stand out in this ad? **PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED:** What about "get fair compensation"? What about "More than 2,000 makes and models of firearms have been banned..."?

Now let's look at Option C. **MODERATOR TO SHARE SCREEN AND SHOW SOCIAL MEDIA OPTION C – SLIDE 6** and, how this could look in a poster, or in a magazine. **MODERATOR SHOWS POSTER OPTION C – SLIDE 7**

What is the main message you get here?

What do you think of this imagery of different landscapes? Does it go well with the subject matter of the ad? Why or why not?

What do you think of the icons representing the steps in participating in the compensation program?

Do any words or phrases stand out in this ad? **PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED:** What about "Assault-style Firearms Compensation Program for individuals starts soon"?

In Option C the poster shows a photo of a rural landscape. But it could show a big city instead. **SHOW OPTIONS ON SLIDE 7.** How many prefer the rural image? How many prefer the city image? Why?

Now that we have looked at the three visual options, what are your thoughts on the difference between the three approaches to the imagery?

Which imagery would be most likely to make you stop and listen or read the ad and find out more about the program?

I will show the three posters just to remind you of what each option consisted of. **SHOW SLIDE 9 WITH THE THREE POSTERS SIDE BY SIDE.** Now I will run a little poll and I'd like you to each type in the chat which visual option attracts you the most.

Let's go around and I'd like you to each explain why you preferred this visual option. What did you like or not like about the other options?

All the versions mention three steps to take part in the compensation program. Do you understand what each of these mean?

- Confirm your firearm or device is eligible
- Make sure your PAL is up to date
- Learn about your disposal options

You may have noticed that in a couple of the posters there are icons to symbolize these measures. **SHOW SLIDE 8 WITH TWO VERSIONS OF ICONS SIDE BY SIDE**

Do the icons adequately symbolize what they're meant to represent? What would be better? Which of these versions do you like better?

#### **4.0      Wrap up (5 mins)**

We have discussed a lot of things today. Let's go around the room one last time and you can each give us any final comments you might have on all the materials we looked at.

On behalf of Public Safety Canada, I would like to thank you for taking part in this focus group discussion. The cash incentive we promised you will be sent electronically in the coming week. The report on this project will be available on the Library and Archives Canada website shortly.

## Appendix D: ACET questionnaire

February 13, 2025

### ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN EVALUATION TOOL Public Safety Canada – Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Campaign Baseline Questionnaire

Baseline sections should be asked before the ads have run in the media.  
All sections should be asked after the ads have run in the media.

#### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this survey on current issues that matter to Canadians. Si vous préférez répondre à ce sondage en français, veuillez cliquer sur français [SWITCH TO FRENCH VERSION].

**Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept entirely confidential.** The survey takes about [BASELINE: 7 minutes / ] to complete. This survey is being directed by Environics Research and is being administered according to the requirements of the *Privacy Act* and is registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's (CRIC) Research Verification Service.

#### START SURVEY

Click here [INSERT LINK: <https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/rvs/home/>] if you wish to verify the authenticity of this survey.

To view our privacy policy, [click here](https://environics.ca/about/privacy-policy/). [https://environics.ca/about/privacy-policy/]

If you require any technical assistance, please contact: [Survey Support](mailto:SurveySupport@Environics.ca). [INSERT LINK: [ergonlinesurveysupport@Environics.ca](mailto:ergonlinesurveysupport@Environics.ca)]

a) Does anyone in your household work for any of the following organizations?

#### SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 a marketing research firm
- 02 a magazine or newspaper
- 03 an advertising agency or graphic design firm
- 04 a political party
- 05 a radio or television station
- 06 a public relations company
- 07 the federal or provincial government
- 08 none of these organizations

IF "NONE OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS" CONTINUE, OTHERWISE THANK AND TERMINATE.

b) Do you own a firearm of any kind (i.e., handgun, hunting rifle, long gun, etc.)

#### SELECT ONE

- 01 Yes, I own a firearm
- 02 No, I do not own a firearm

REFER TO QUOTAS FOR NON-FIREARM AND FIREARM OWNERS

c) What is your gender?

- 01 Male
- 02 Female
- 03 Other
- 04 Prefer not to answer

d) In what year were you born?

YYYY

ADMISSIBLE RANGE 1920-2006  
IF > 2006, THANK AND TERMINATE

## Public Safety Canada Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Public Awareness Campaign

### ASK E IF “PREFER NOT TO SAY” IN QD

e) In which of the following age categories do you belong?

#### SELECT ONE ONLY

- |    |                        |                  |
|----|------------------------|------------------|
| 01 | less than 18 years old | <b>TERMINATE</b> |
| 02 | 18 to 24               |                  |
| 03 | 25 to 34               |                  |
| 04 | 35 to 44               |                  |
| 05 | 45 to 54               |                  |
| 06 | 55 to 64               |                  |
| 07 | 65 or older            |                  |

### IF “LESS THAN 18 YEARS OLD” OR “BLANK”, THANK AND TERMINATE

f) In which province or territory do you live?

#### SELECT ONE ONLY

- |    |                           |
|----|---------------------------|
| 01 | Alberta                   |
| 02 | British Columbia          |
| 03 | Manitoba                  |
| 04 | New Brunswick             |
| 05 | Newfoundland and Labrador |
| 06 | Northwest Territories     |
| 07 | Nova Scotia               |
| 08 | Nunavut                   |
| 09 | Ontario                   |
| 10 | Prince Edward Island      |
| 11 | Quebec                    |
| 12 | Saskatchewan              |
| 13 | Yukon                     |

### CORE QUESTIONS

#### ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

##### Q1:

Over the past three weeks, have you seen, read or heard any advertising from the Government of Canada?

- |    |     |                        |
|----|-----|------------------------|
| 01 | Yes |                        |
| 02 | No  | <b>=&gt; GO TO T1A</b> |

##### Q2:

Think about the most recent Government of Canada ad that comes to mind. What do you remember about this ad?

### CAMPAIGN SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

#### ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

##### T1A:

Over the past three weeks, have you seen, read or heard any Government of Canada advertising about the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program or a similar “buy-back” program for prohibited firearms?

- |    |     |                        |
|----|-----|------------------------|
| 01 | Yes |                        |
| 02 | No  | <b>=&gt; GO TO T1D</b> |

**Public Safety Canada      Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Public Awareness Campaign**

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**T1B:**

Where have you seen, read or heard this ad about the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program or a similar “buy-back” program for prohibited firearms?

**RANDOMIZE...SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**

- 01 - Cinema
- 02 - Facebook
- 03 - Internet website
- 04 – Print magazine
- 05 – Print newspaper (daily)
- 06 – Print newspaper (weekly or community)
- 07 - Outdoor billboards
- 08 - Pamphlet or brochure in the mail
- 09 - Public transit (bus or subway)
- 10 - Radio
- 11 - Television
- 12 - Twitter
- 13 - YouTube
- 14 - Instagram
- 15 - LinkedIn
- 16 - Snapchat
- 17 - Twitch
- 98 - Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 99 - Don't remember

**T1C:**

What do you remember about this ad?

**ASK ALL**

**T1D: To what extent do you support or oppose the federal government’s banning of the possession of “assault-style” firearms in Canada?**

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 Strongly support
- 02 Somewhat support
- 03 Somewhat oppose
- 04 Strongly oppose
- 05 Don't know

**T1E: Before today, to what extent were you aware of the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program or of a similar “buy-back” program whereby the federal government will provide compensation for the collection of banned “assault-style” firearms?**

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 Very aware
- 02 Somewhat aware
- 03 Not aware

**T1F: To what extent do you support or oppose the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program whereby the federal government will provide compensation for the collection of banned “assault-style” firearms?**

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 Strongly support
- 02 Somewhat support
- 03 Somewhat oppose
- 04 Strongly oppose
- 05 Don't know

## Public Safety Canada Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Public Awareness Campaign

**ASK ALL WHO OWN A FIREARM IN Q. B, OTHERS SKIP TO Q. T1P**

**T1G: Do you currently own any prohibited firearms (e.g. AR-15 style, Ruger Mini 14, Vz58 rifle, etc.) which you think could qualify for the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program?**

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- |    |   |              |
|----|---|--------------|
| 01 | Yes, I definitely own firearms that could qualify           | ASK QT1I     |
| 02 | Yes, I probably own firearms that could qualify             | ASK QT1I     |
| 03 | I am unsure if I own any firearms that could qualify        | SKIP TO QT1H |
| 04 | No, I definitely do not own any firearms that could qualify | SKIP TO T1P  |

**T1I: [ASK ALL WHO ANSWERED YES, DEFINITELY OR PROBABLY CODES 1 OR 2 IN T1G] How many prohibited firearms do you own that could qualify for the Assault Style Firearms Compensation Program?**

- 01 – One
- 02 – Two
- 03 – Three
- 04 – Four
- 05 – Five or more
- 06 – Don't know

**T1H: [ASK ALL WHO ANSWERED YES OR UNSURE CODES 1, 2 OR 3 IN T1G] To help Canadians comply with the law and not possess prohibited assault-style firearms, the federal government intends to implement the Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program. Do you plan to participate in the program?**

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**T1P: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Assault-style Firearms Compensation Program helps make communities safer in Canada?**

- 01 Strongly agree
- 02 Somewhat agree
- 03 Somewhat disagree
- 04 Strongly disagree
- 05 Don't know

### DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

**D1:**

Which of the following categories best describes your current employment status? Are you...

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 working full-time (30 or more hours per week)
- 02 working part-time (less than 30 hours per week)
- 03 self-employed
- 04 unemployed, but looking for work
- 05 a student attending school full-time
- 06 retired
- 07 not in the workforce (Full-time homemaker or unemployed but not looking for work)
- 08 other employment status

**D2:**

What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 grade 8 or less
- 02 some high school
- 03 high school diploma or equivalent
- 04 registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma
- 05 college, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma

## Public Safety Canada Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program Public Awareness Campaign

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- 06 university certificate or diploma below bachelor's level
- 07 bachelor's degree
- 08 postgraduate degree above bachelor's level

**D3:**

Are there any children under the age of 18 currently living in your household?

- 01 yes
- 02 no

**D4:**

Which of the following categories best describes your total annual household income, including income from all household members, before taxes are deducted?

**SELECT ONE ONLY**

- 01 under \$20,000
- 02 between \$20,000 and \$40,000
- 03 between \$40,000 and \$60,000
- 04 between \$60,000 and \$80,000
- 05 between \$80,000 and \$100,000
- 06 between \$100,000 and \$150,000
- 07 between \$150,000 and \$200,000
- 08 \$200,000 and above
- 09 prefer not to say

**D5:**

Where were you born?

- 01 born in Canada
- 02 born outside Canada

↳ Specify the country:

**ASK IF D5=BORN OUTSIDE CANADA****D6:**

In what year did you first move to Canada?

**ADMISSIBLE RANGE: 1900-2024**

**D7:**

What is the language you first learned at home as a child and still understand?

**SELECT UP TO TWO**

- 01 English
- 02 French
- 03 Other language, specify \_\_\_\_\_

**That concludes the survey. This survey was conducted on behalf of Public Safety Canada. In the coming months the report will be available from Library and Archives Canada. We thank you very much for taking the time to answer this survey, it is greatly appreciated.**

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