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SELECTED FIREARMS. STATISTICS

-CANADA-

NO. 1986-42

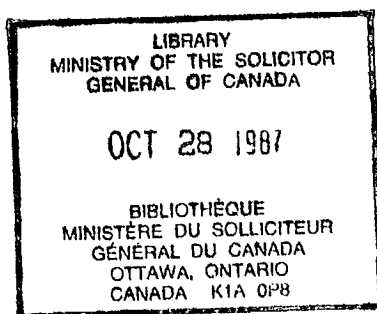
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Canada, Ministry of the Solicitor General, Statistics Division //



SELECTED FIREARMS, STATISTICS

-CANADA-

NO. 1986-42

This working paper was prepared by the Statistics Division, Programs Branch, Ministry of the Solicitor General. The views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada.

SUMMARY

This report provides statistical information on selected data and trends related to firearms ownership and use in Canada.

TRENDS IN SELECTED FIREARM INCIDENTS

Homicide

- The rate of firearm homicides has been declining since 1976.
- The proportion of homicides involving firearms has declined since 1978.

Robbery

- An increase in the rate of all types of robbery was observed in 1979. The rate of firearm robberies has subsequently decreased slightly to below 1978 levels.
- The proportion of robberies involving a firearm has declined to an all-time low in 1984.
- The rate of increase in firearm robberies has not been as great as that of all robberies.

Suicide

- Immediately following 1978 there was a sharp drop in the rate of firearm suicide. This rate has since shown an increasing trend, although it has not reached 1978 levels.

Accidents

- The incidence of accidents involving firearms has decreased each year since 1974.

ADMINISTRATION OF FIREARMS LEGISLATION

Firearm Acquisition Certificates

- The number of FAC's issued has declined over the years, most likely because these certificates are valid for a five year period.
- Regional differences were quite evident: Northwest Territories, Yukon, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Alberta rating relatively high on a per capita basis of FAC's issued.
- The number of **minor's permits** issued has remained fairly constant.

Restricted Weapons

- The number of restricted weapons registered each year has been fairly constant.
- The total number of registered weapons in Canada has increased moderately since 1978.

Permits

- **Permits to carry** have increased since 1978. Again, regional differences were observed, western provinces showing a higher issuance of such permits.
- **Permits to transport** have also increased since 1979. The western provinces and territories had the highest rates of these permits issued.

Business Permits

- The total number of permits issued to businesses dealing in non-restricted weapons has decreased almost by one half since 1979.
- The number of permits issued to businesses dealing in both restricted and non-restricted weapons has remained fairly constant.

Prohibitions

- The number of persons prohibited from possessing firearms has increased significantly since 1980. Western provinces and the Territories had the highest rates of prohibition.

Missing and Recovered Firearms

- The cumulative totals of firearms recorded as missing and recovered since 1974 have been increasing moderately each year.

INTRODUCTION

Gun control legislation, implementation, and regulation have been ongoing processes in Canada since the 19th Century. Over this time, firearm laws have developed from extremely selective prohibition and permit systems to the more encompassing legislation most recently enacted in 1977. Most of this recent legislation dealing with firearms control came into effect January 1, 1978 with the remaining sections pertaining to firearm acquisition certificates and business permits coming into force January 1, 1979.

The major goal was to "reduce the number of incidents involving firearms", through the following objectives:

- to reduce access to firearms by potentially dangerous and irresponsible users;
- to reduce or discourage the criminal usage of firearms; and
- to encourage responsible ownership, handling, storage, and usage of firearms (Scarff, Zarachuk, Jacques and McAuley, 1981)

A three-year evaluation of the firearms legislation was completed in 1983 (Scarff, 1983). The principal findings with respect to the impact of the legislation on criminal incidents indicated a decline in the proportion of violent crimes involving firearms and concurrently a moderate displacement of firearms by other weapons for some offences (robbery). The number of non-criminal incidents involving firearms also declined over the evaluation period. While that paper provides the most exhaustive analysis and evaluation of the firearms legislation its findings are based on a relatively short period (1978-1981).

The present report provides statistical information on data and trends related to firearms use in Canada from 1974 to 1985.

DATA SOURCES AND LIMITATIONS

Data were collected by province, and nationally, from various RCMP and Statistics Canada reports for the period 1969 to 1984. Not all data elements were available for all years. For example, most firearms data were not collected by the RCMP prior to 1978.

Data on crimes involving firearms (homicide and robbery) and deaths involving firearms (suicide and accidental) were obtained from the Statistics Canada publications, Canadian Crime Statistics (catalogue 85-205), Homicide in Canada (catalogue 85-209), and Causes of Death (catalogue 84-203). Homicide data collected from the latter two publications may not be consistent with each other because of different scoring methods and information sources.

Administrative data, such as firearm acquisition certificates (FAC) and firearm related permits issued, were drawn from the RCMP publication, Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada. These data are not available prior to 1978.

KEY STATISTICS

Criminal Use of Firearms

Homicide and Robbery

Table 1 presents data on homicide and robbery offences involving firearms. (Homicide offences include murder (first and second degree), manslaughter, and infanticide.) Prior to 1979 there was a gradual, sometimes fluctuating, increase in the homicide rate. Immediately following 1979, the total homicide rate decreased; the rate falling from 2.81 in 1978 to 2.66 in 1979. Annual homicide rates have been consistently lower than pre-1979 figures. These recent rates have remained fairly stable, with small fluctuations showing no clear trend.

Looking at only those homicides which involved firearms, there is a somewhat different trend. The firearms homicide rate has been declining since 1975. In addition, the proportion of homicides involving firearms have been declining since 1974.

The frequency and rate of total robberies and robberies involving firearms are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

TABLE 1

NUMBER, RATE AND PROPORTION OF SELECTED OFFENCES INVOLVING FIREARMS, 1974-1984

YEAR	HOMICIDE			ROBBERY						
	All offences No.	Rate ⁽¹⁾	Firearms involved No.	% ⁽²⁾	All offences No.	Rate	Firearms involved No.	Rate	% ⁽²⁾	
1974	600	2.68	283	1.27	47.2	16,955	75.8	5861	26.2	34.6
1975	701	3.09	292	1.29	41.7	21,299	93.8	8962	39.5	42.1
1976	668	2.91	258	1.12	38.6	20,050	87.2	7908	34.4	39.4
1977	711	3.06	260	1.12	36.6	19,491	83.8	7507	32.3	38.5
1978	661	2.81	250	1.06	37.8	19,673	83.7	7203	30.6	36.6
1979	631	2.66	207	0.87	32.8	20,899	88.0	7439	31.3	35.6
1980	593	2.47	195	0.81	32.9	24,581	102.2	8594	35.8	35.0
1981	648	2.66	199	0.82	30.7	26,292	108.0	9040	37.1	34.4
1982	670	2.72	248	1.01	37.0	27,257	110.7	8954	36.4	32.9
1983	682	2.74	224	0.90	32.8	24,274	97.5	7505	30.2	30.9
1984	667	2.65	229	0.91	34.5	23,310	92.8	6886	27.4	29.5

-- Not available

(1) Rate per 100,000 Canadian population

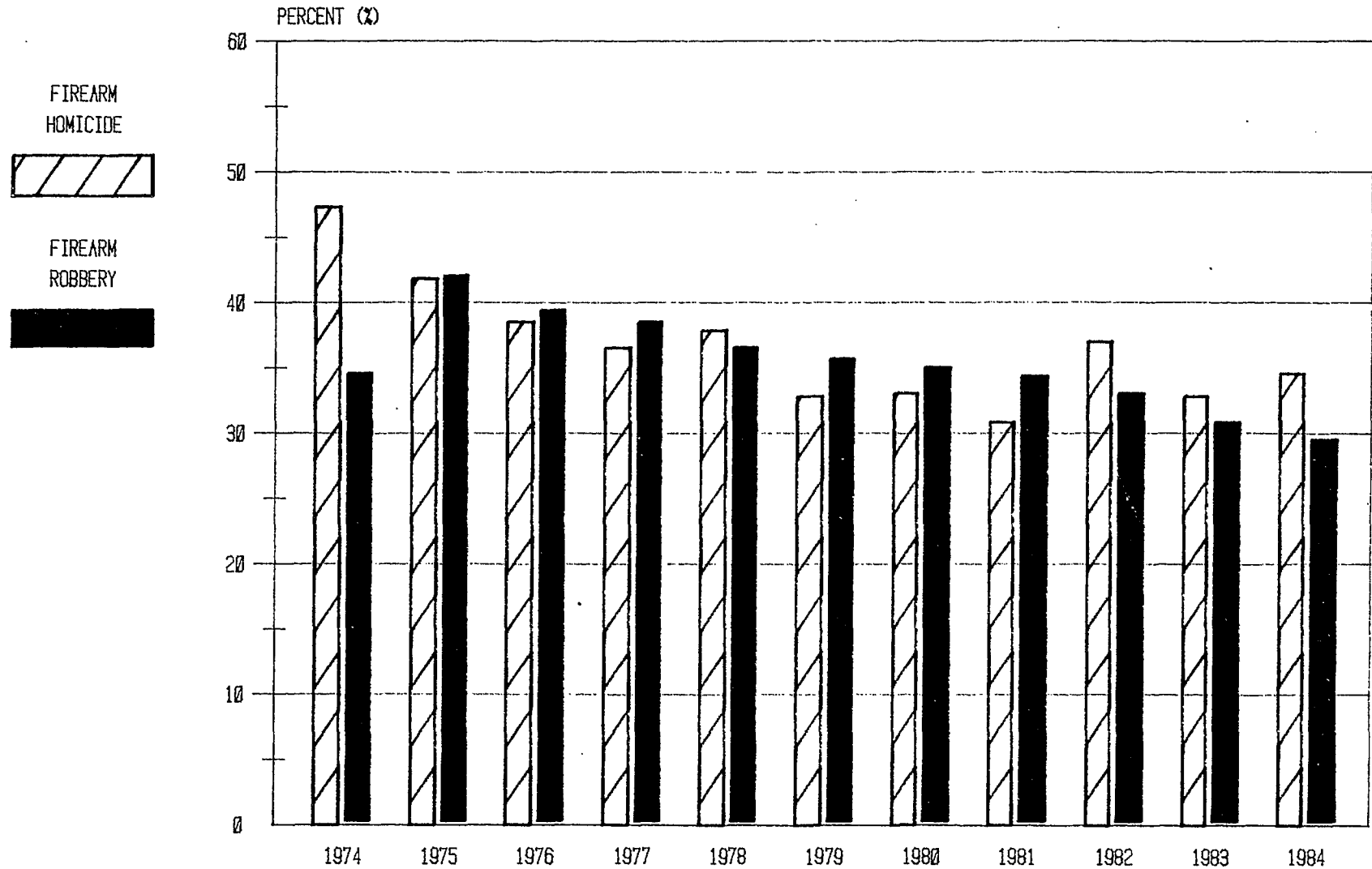
(2) Percentage of total offences (homicide or robbery)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Crime Statistics, Catalogue 85-205
 Statistics Canada, Homicide Statistics, Catalogue 85-209

FIGURE 1

PERCENT OF OFFENCES INVOLVING FIREARMS

HOMICIDE AND ROBBERY



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Crime Statistics, Catalogue 85-205
Statistics Canada, Homicide Statistics, Catalogue 85-209

The rate of all robberies, including robberies involving firearms, declined from 1976 to 1978. In 1979 there was an increase in the rate of all robbery offences (again, including armed robbery) which persisted until 1983. The rate then started to decline once more. The last column in Table 1 shows the proportion of robberies involving firearms. The decline which began in 1976 has continued, indicating that the growth in robbery rates has outpaced the growth of firearm robberies.

Methods Used to Commit Homicide and Robbery

Tables 2 and 3 present data on methods used to commit homicide and robbery. Since 1978, the proportion of homicides committed by stabbing and "other" methods increased slightly, while the percentage of shooting homicides decreased.

This same shift developed for firearm robbery. Since 1978 a 19% drop in the rate of firearm robbery has occurred, while there has been a 47% increase in the use of other weapons.

Finally, Table 4 shows selected offences involving firearms by region. Some regional disparity is evident for both homicide and robbery offences. Specifically, for Quebec the percentage of homicides and robberies committed by firearm, 43% and 44% respectively, are much higher than the national averages. British Columbia also experiences a relatively high proportion of firearm homicides. Nationally, approximately one-third of both robbery and homicide offences involve firearms.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF METHODS USED TO
COMMIT HOMICIDE, CANADA, 1972-1983

YEAR	SHOOTING		BEATING		STABBING		OTHER(1)		TOTAL HOMICIDES	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1972	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	521(2)	100.0
1973	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	546(2)	100.0
1974	283	47.2	132	22.0	93	15.5	92	15.3	600	100.0
1975	292	41.7	163	23.3	124	17.7	122	17.4	701	100.0
1976	258	38.6	148	22.2	136	20.4	126	18.9	668	100.0
1977	260	36.6	152	21.4	149	21.0	150	21.1	711	100.0
1978	250	37.8	151	22.8	146	22.1	114	17.3	661	100.0
1979	207	32.8	132	20.9	162	25.7	130	20.6	631	100.0
1980	195	32.9	117	19.7	138	23.3	143	24.1	593	100.0
1981	199	30.7	155	23.9	176	27.2	118	18.2	648	100.0
1982	248	37.0	124	18.5	182	27.2	116	17.3	670	100.0
1983	224	32.8	149	21.9	173	25.4	136	19.9	682	100.0

-- Not available

(1) Includes strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning, etc.

(2) Infanticide not included.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Homicide Statistics, Catalogue 85-209.

TABLE 3
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WEAPONS USED TO COMMIT ROBBERY, 1974-1984

YEAR	FIREARM		OTHER WEAPON		UNKNOWN/ NO WEAPON		TOTAL ROBBERIES	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1974	5,861	34.6	2,809	16.6	8,285	48.9	16,955	100.0
1975	8,962	42.1	3,503	16.5	8,834	41.5	21,299	100.0
1976	7,908	39.4	3,371	16.8	8,771	43.8	20,050	100.0
1977	7,507	38.5	3,350	17.2	8,634	44.3	19,491	100.0
1978	7,203	36.6	3,338	17.0	9,132	46.4	19,673	100.0
1979	7,439	35.6	3,806	18.2	9,654	46.2	20,899	100.0
1980	8,594	35.0	4,763	19.4	11,224	45.7	24,581	100.0
1981	9,040	34.4	5,455	20.8	11,797	44.9	26,292	100.0
1982	8,954	32.9	6,161	22.6	12,142	44.5	27,257	100.0
1983	7,505	30.9	5,789	23.9	10,980	45.2	24,274	100.0
1984	6,886	29.5	5,826	25.0	10,598	45.5	23,310	100.0

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Crime Statistics, Catalogue 85-205

TABLE 4
 PROPORTION OF SELECTED OFFENCES INVOLVING FIREARMS
 BY REGION, 1983

REGION	HOMICIDE			ROBBERY		
	No. Involving Firearms	Total	%	No. Involving Firearms	Total	%
Atlantic	9	30	30.0	103	683	15.1
Québec	81	190	42.6	4,671	10,748	43.5
Ontario	53	202	26.2	1,144	5,824	19.6
Prairies	37	148	25.0	808	3,529	22.9
British Columbia	42	108	38.9	772	3,445	22.4
Yukon/N.W.T.	2	4	50.0	7	45	15.6
Canada	224	682	32.8	7,505	24,274	30.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Crime Statistics,
 Catalogue 85-205
 Statistics Canada, Homicide Statistics,
 Catalogue 85-209

Non-Criminal Firearm Deaths

Table 5 presents data on all firearm deaths.

Suicides represent approximately 75% of all firearm deaths. As for the rate of firearm suicides, a steady increase is observed until 1979 after which a substantial decrease occurs. After this initial decline the firearm suicide rate has shown a small but steady increase, though it has not risen to the high recorded in 1978.

The proportion of suicides committed with a firearm shows a somewhat different trend. Again, a sharp decrease in 1979 resulted in a lower proportion of suicides being committed with a firearm. The proportion of firearm suicides stayed at this low level after 1979.

Figure 2 shows the number and rate of total suicides and firearm suicides by province. Generally, the number and rate of firearm suicides seems to be fairly consistent across provinces with the exception of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. (The rates for these regions should be interpreted with caution because of the very small absolute numbers.)

Total firearm accidents account for a decreasing proportion of all firearm deaths. From 1969 to 1983 there has been a 75% decrease in the rate of these incidents.

Figure 3 presents the number and rate per 100,000 general population of accidental firearm deaths in comparison with other accidental deaths by province for 1983. The findings indicate that Manitoba has the greatest rate of fatal firearm accidents. In comparison with other types of accidental deaths, the rate of accidental firearm deaths is relatively low.

TABLE 5
TOTAL FIREARM DEATHS
1969-1983

YEAR	HOMICIDES ⁽¹⁾			SUICIDES			ACCIDENTS		LEGAL INTERVENTION		UNDETERMINED		TOTAL	
	No.	% ⁽²⁾	Rate ⁽³⁾	No.	% ⁽²⁾	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
1969	156	41.6	0.74	749	32.7	3.57	133	0.63	5	.02	19	.09	1062	5.06
1970	184	43.7	0.86	796	33.0	3.74	129	0.61	11	.05	16	.08	1136	5.33
1971	190	41.5	0.88	924	36.1	4.28	143	0.66	14	.06	27	.13	1298	6.02
1972	203	40.2	0.93	935	35.2	4.29	102	0.47	7	.03	21	.10	1268	5.82
1973	213	40.3	0.97	950	34.3	4.31	123	0.56	10	.05	35	.16	1331	6.04
1974	269	49.5	1.20	1021	35.2	4.57	122	0.55	8	.04	47	.21	1467	6.56
1975	263	43.5	1.16	1053	37.5	4.64	111	0.49	8	.04	87	.38	1522	6.71
1976	220	39.6	0.96	1095	37.3	4.76	89	0.39	7	.03	70	.31	1481	6.44
1977	229	38.4	0.98	1271	38.3	5.46	100	0.43	10	.04	93	.40	1703	7.32
1978	229	40.2	0.97	1287	37.0	5.47	90	0.38	16	.07	94	.40	1716	7.30
1979	183	31.4	0.77	1085	32.3	4.57	71	0.30	15	.06	62	.26	1416	5.96
1980	184	37.2	0.77	1114	33.2	4.63	74	0.31	6	.02	43	.18	1421	5.91
1981	180	32.1	0.74	1169	34.4	4.80	62	0.25	7	.03	55	.23	1473	6.05
1982	213	36.0	0.86	1195	33.9	4.85	56	0.23	6	.02	58	.24	1528	6.20
1983	198	33.5	0.80	1235	32.9	5.00	41	0.16	11	.04	33	.13	1518	6.10

(1) These figures may not correspond to those provided by the Homicide Program of Statistics Canada because of different scoring rules and data sources.

(2) Percentage of total homicides or suicides

(3) Rate per 100,000 Canadian population.

Source: Statistics Canada, Causes of Death, Catalogue 84-203

FIGURE 2

TOTAL SUICIDES & SUICIDES BY FIREARMS

Number and Rate By Provinces 1983

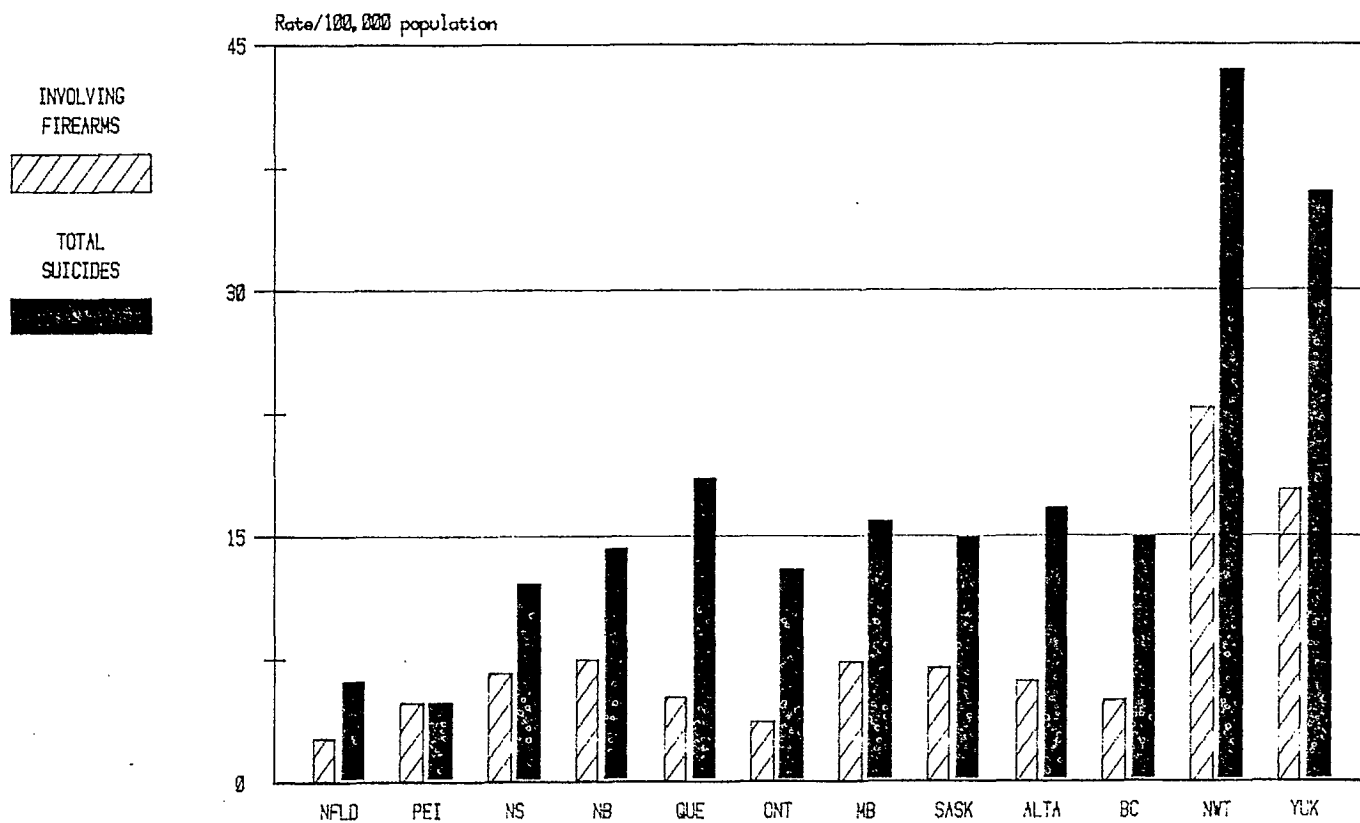
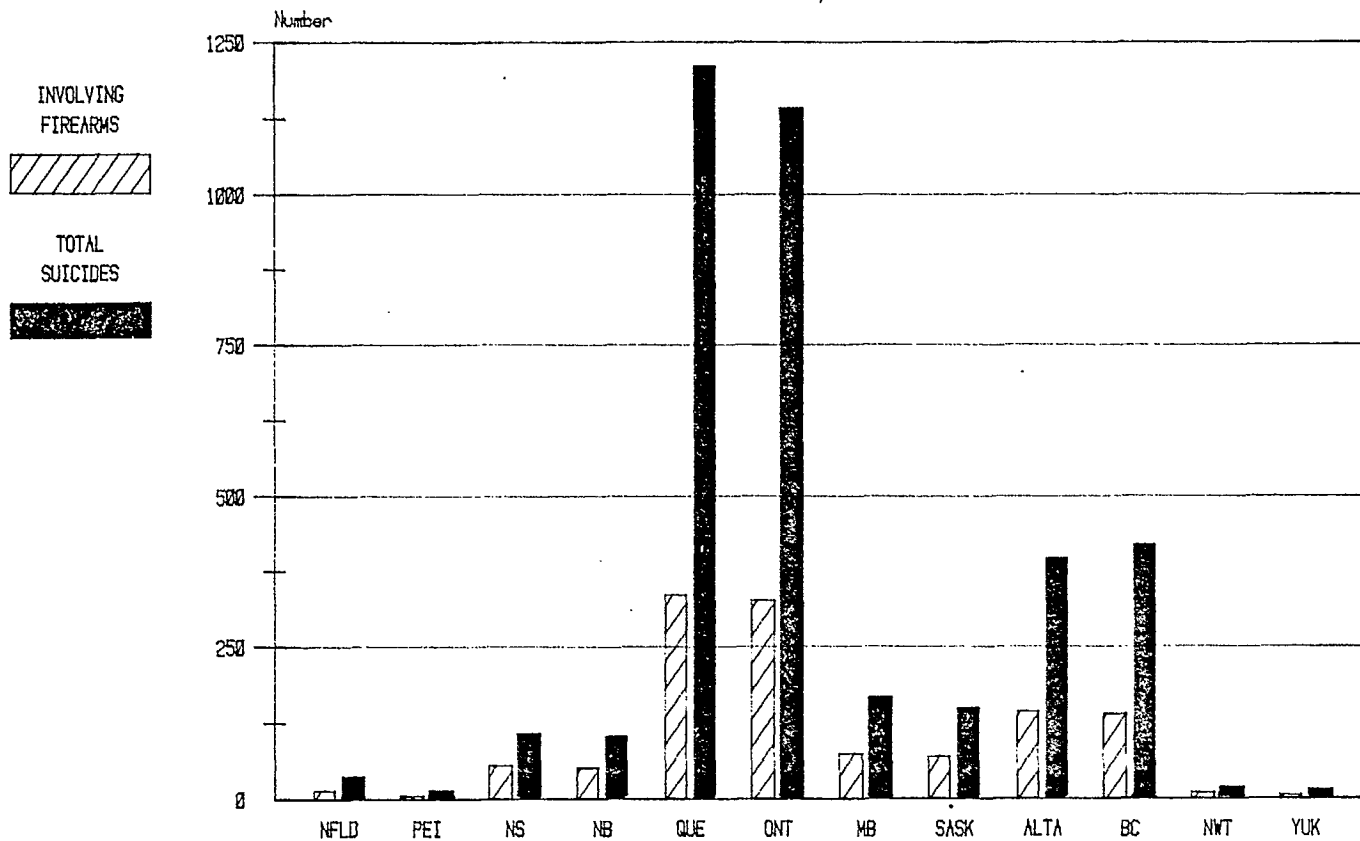
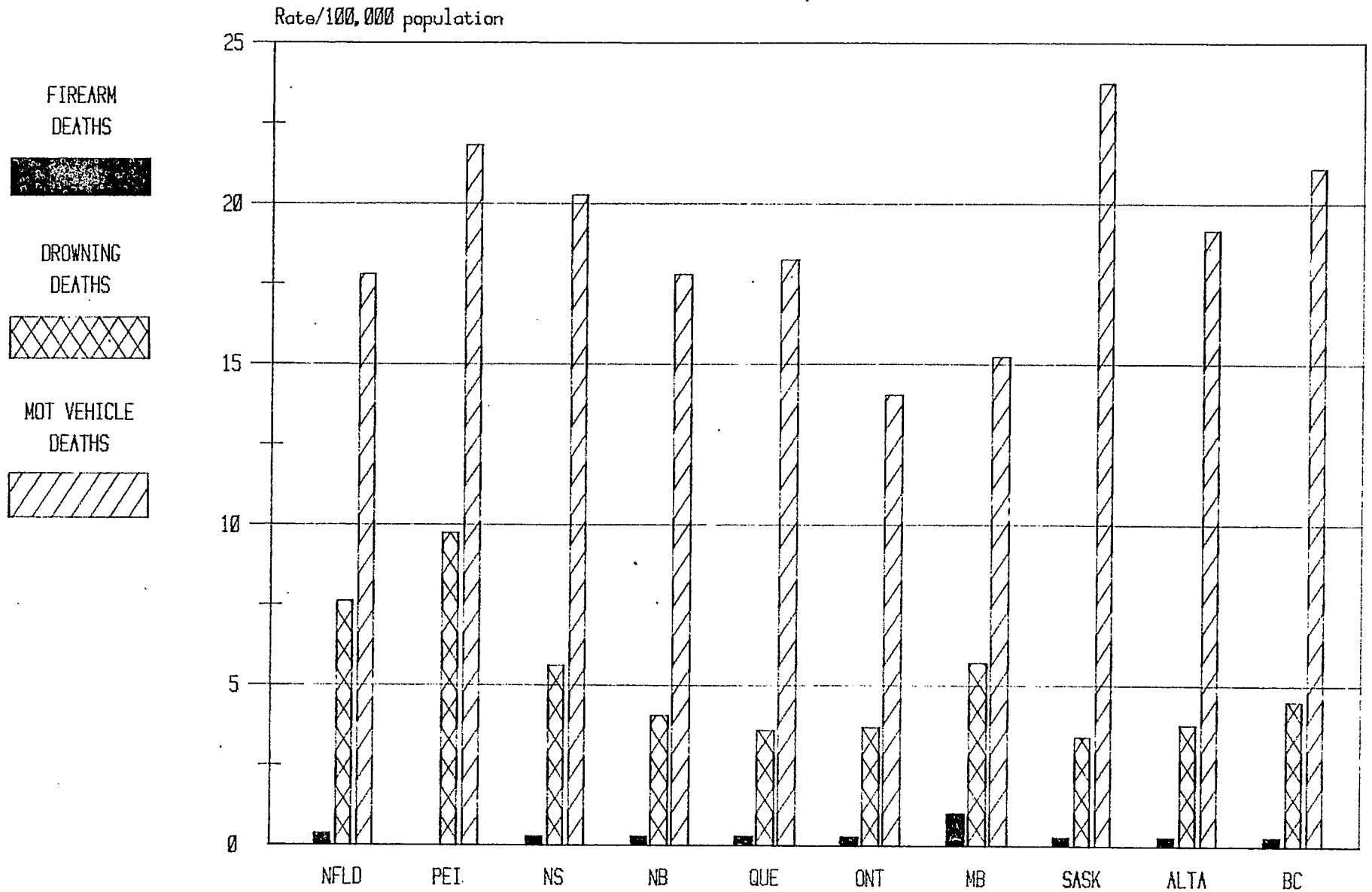


FIGURE 3

ACCIDENTAL FIREARM & OTHER DEATHS: 1983

Rates By Province



Source: Statistics Canada, Causes of Death, Catalogue 84-203

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

The 1977 firearms legislation introduced a new certificate system. Part of this legislation package instituted the requirement that persons wishing to acquire firearms must first obtain a firearms acquisition certificate (FAC) for newly acquired firearms. Legislation concerning minors possessing firearms, transportation of firearms, and carrying of firearms was also introduced or modified.

Firearm Acquisition Certificates

Data on the administration of these procedures are presented in Table 6 through 8 for the years 1979 to 1985. Table 6 presents information on the issuance of these certificates and permits. Firearm acquisition certificates are issued for a five year period and it is therefore difficult to find any meaningful trend in this short time. In 1979, 251,207 FAC's were issued, or approximately to one person out of every one hundred in Canada. A smaller number were issued in subsequent years as would be expected because of the five year validation period. During 1985, a total of 175,979 FAC's were issued. Over the seven year period, an average of 179,412 FAC's were issued.

Table 7 shows the distribution of firearm acquisition certificates, by province, for 1985. Regional differences are evident with respect to the number and rate of FAC's issued. Ontario and Quebec account for the highest number (50% of total FAC's); however, these provinces show relatively low rates of certificates issued per capita. The highest number of FAC's issued per 100,000 population were in the Northwest Territories (3,625), Yukon (3,123) and New Brunswick (1,383). Saskatchewan and Alberta also showed relatively high numbers of FAC's issued. (The rates for the first two regions should be interpreted with caution because of the small absolute numbers.)

TABLE 6
NUMBER AND RATE OF FIREARM CERTIFICATES AND PERMITS ISSUED 1979-1985

YEAR	FIREARM ACQUISITION CERTIFICATES		REGISTRATION ⁽¹⁾ CERTIFICATES		MINOR'S PERMITS		PERMITS TO CARRY		PERMITS TO TRANSPORT	
	Number	Rate ⁽²⁾	Number	Rate ⁽²⁾	Number	Rate ⁽³⁾	Number	Rate ⁽²⁾	Number	Rate ⁽²⁾
1979	251,207	1057.8	30,422	128.1	3,998	229.7	19,119	80.5	28,121	118.4
1980	209,757	872.4	9,243	38.4	3,918	236.6	21,223	88.3	29,117	121.1
1981	167,537	688.2	14,479	59.5	3,075	194.7	22,226	91.3	38,989	160.2
1982	146,353	594.2	32,123	130.4	2,891	187.6	31,114	126.3	40,900	166.1
1983	133,515	536.4	30,121	121.0	2,897	189.0	32,586	130.9	44,204	177.6
1984	171,537	682.7	30,815	122.6	3,238	213.6	36,327	144.6	47,704	189.8
1985	175,979	694.0	33,685	132.8	2,979	199.7	38,254	150.9	49,735	196.2

- (1) Restricted weapons registered for the first time.
(2) Rate per 100,000 Canadian total population.
(3) Rate per 100,000 Canadian population aged 12-15 years.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

TABLE 7
NUMBER AND RATE OF FIREARM ACQUISITION CERTIFICATES AND PERMITS ISSUED BY PROVINCE
1985

PROVINCE	FIREARM ACQUISITION CERTIFICATES		MINOR'S PERMITS		PERMITS TO CARRY		PERMITS TO TRANSPORT	
	Number	Rate ⁽¹⁾	Number	Rate ⁽²⁾	Number	Rate ⁽¹⁾	Number	Rate ⁽¹⁾
NEWFOUNDLAND	4,311	742.8	0	0.0	296	51.0	349	60.1
NOVA SCOTIA	7,922	899.5	545	947.8	748	84.9	1,694	192.4
NEW BRUNSWICK	9,947	1383.1	0	0.0	286	39.8	560	77.9
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	680	535.0	140	1590.9	80	62.9	175	137.7
QUEBEC	36,310	551.8	40	11.2	7,315	111.2	12,869	195.6
ONTARIO	49,529	546.3	1,185	221.3	12,751	140.6	8,269	91.2
MANITOBA	8,128	759.9	45	68.5	1,654	154.6	1,503	140.5
SASKATCHEWAN	11,707	1148.3	859	1340.1	2,189	214.7	2,915	285.9
ALBERTA	25,633	1091.3	147	106.1	6,210	264.4	12,547	534.2
BRITISH COLUMBIA	19,255	665.7	0	0.0	6,421	222.0	8,626	298.2
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES	1,845	3624.8	5	-	81	159.1	136	267.2
YUKON	712	3122.8	13	866.7	223	978.1	92	403.5
CANADA	175,979	694.0	2,979	199.7	38,254	144.6	49,735	196.1

(1) Rate per 100,000 total Canadian population.

(2) Rate per 100,000 Canadian population aged 12-15 years.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada

Minor's Permits

Any person, aged between 12 and 16 years, wishing to possess a firearm is required to obtain a minor's permit. The number and rate of permits issued has decreased slightly over the six year period (see Table 6). Table 7 presents the number and rate of minor's permits issued by province. Saskatchewan reports the highest issuance of these permits, while Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and British Columbia report no permits being issued during 1985.

Restricted Weapons Registration Certificates

A registration certificate is required for each restricted firearm. Restricted firearms have been controlled to some extent, in Canada, since 1879 (Scarff, Zaharchuk, Jacques and McAuley, 1981). The new legislation changed little with regard to these firearms.

Table 8 presents data on restricted firearms for an eight year period. Each year, with the exception of 1980 and 1981, the number of new registration certificates issued has been around thirty thousand. The lows recorded in 1980 and 1981 may have been partially influenced by the amnesty period in 1978. The number of transfers has stabilized in recent years to approximately twenty thousand a year. Overall, transfer of registration certificates account for approximately 85% of all registered certificates issued during this time period.

Table 8 also gives the number of registrations withdrawn each year from 1978 to 1985. Restricted weapon registration certificates may be withdrawn from the registry in cases of exportation or destruction of a firearm. The number increased in the three years following the amnesty program, but has since levelled off to about ten to eleven thousand each year. In 1985, only a small fraction (1%) of the total number of restricted weapons were withdrawn.

TABLE 8
NUMBER OF RESTRICTED WEAPONS REGISTERED, 1978-1985

YEAR	NEW REGISTRATION Number	REGISTRATIONS TRANSFERRED ⁽¹⁾ Number	REGISTRATIONS WITHDRAWN ⁽²⁾ Number	TOTAL RESTRICTED WEAPONS REGISTERED ⁽³⁾ Number
1978	18,974	53,515	5,507	725,421
1979	30,422	80,784	2,790	751,775
1980	9,243	87,092	11,018	750,000
1981	14,479	35,408	7,930	756,549
1982	32,123	18,066	12,349	776,323
1983	30,121	21,340	11,375	795,069
1984	30,815	18,738	9,313	816,571
1985	33,685	20,433	9,611	840,645

1. Previously registered restricted weapons registered to new registrants.
2. Restricted weapon registration certificates withdrawn from registry (weapons destroyed, exported, forfeited by law).
3. As of each year end.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

Finally, Table 8 provides the total number of restricted weapons registered. This number has increased steadily from 1978. Overall, the total number of restricted weapons registered in Canada, as of the end of 1985, was 840,645, a 16% increase since 1978.

Permits Issued

Permits to Carry

These permits allow the holders to carry a restricted weapon "elsewhere than at the place at which he is otherwise entitled to possess it" (Criminal Code, Section 106.2). Permits to carry are usually issued to persons who require firearms for lawful occupational or target shooting purposes. The individual circumstances and restrictions are specified in the permit.

Table 6 presents the number and rate of permits to carry issued since 1978. The provisions of these permits were modified in 1978, although the permit system has existed for many years prior to 1978. The major change in 1978 was that the permit would no longer be issued for the protection of property. The per capita issuance of this permit almost doubled over the seven year period.

Table 7 shows the regional distribution of permits to carry. The Western provinces exhibit a higher rate of issuance of permits to carry restricted weapons.

Permits to Transport

Finally, permits to transport restricted weapons are issued on a temporary basis for reasons such as a change of residence and gun shows. Table 6 reveals an increase in the issuance of transport permits since 1979. Table 7, again, shows Western Canada as having the highest rates of issuance of transport permits.

Business Permits

All persons carrying on business related to firearms sales, manufacturing, ammunition or pawning must have a business permit. Table 9 shows the number of business permits issued for restricted and non-restricted sales for 1979 to 1985. Overall, the total number of permits issued to businesses dealing in non-restricted sales has decreased by over 40%.

The number of business permits issued for businesses dealing in both restricted and non-restricted sales has remained relatively stable since 1979 (see Table 9).

Table 10 shows the regional distribution of the total number of business permits issued in 1985. Overall, Quebec and Ontario have the greatest number of firearm businesses, although the western provinces have a large number relative to their population size.

Firearms Prohibitions

The legislation enacted in 1977 introduced stricter firearm prohibition orders as another avenue of ensuring that dangerous and irresponsible persons do not possess firearms. Prohibitions are court orders preventing an individual from owning, possessing or having control of a firearm, ammunition or explosive substances for a specified number of years.

TABLE 9

NUMBER OF BUSINESS PERMITS ISSUED FOR NON-RESTRICTED SALES, 1979-1985

YEAR	RETAIL				WHOLESALE	MANUFACTURING	GUN- SMITH	PAWN- BROKER	AMMUN- ITION	TOTAL
	1-15(1)	16-50	51-100	100+						
1979	4,906	1,865	631	510	182	8	84	45	6,882	15,113
1980	3,376	1,025	281	195	80	5	76	27	4,505	9,570
1981	3,333	1,127	372	203	104	6	102	29	4,929	10,205
1982	2,971	1,010	295	145	114	7	94	22	4,664	9,322
1983	2,988	824	252	142	92	7	139	32	4,606	9,082
1984	2,914	711	226	139	84	7	131	34	4,609	8,855
1985	2,889	716	260	169	86	9	137	31	4,356	8,653

NUMBER OF BUSINESS PERMITS ISSUED FOR RESTRICTED AND NON-RESTRICTED SALES
1979-1984

YEAR	RETAIL				WHOLESALE	MANUFACTURING	GUN- SMITH	PAWN- BROKER	TOTAL
	1-15(1)	16-50	51-100	100+					
1979	410	230	137	242	176	25	84	3	1,307
1980	360	118	91	136	93	15	46	5	864
1981	372	145	108	218	88	21	48	3	1,003
1982	384	187	103	209	79	18	58	3	1,041
1983	453	181	121	178	88	11	53	13	1,098
1984	485	185	122	210	76	18	61	1	1,158
1985	552	192	130	235	94	15	62	2	1,282

(1) For the sale of 15 firearms or less.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

TABLE 10
NUMBER OF BUSINESS PERMITS ISSUED, BY PROVINCE, 1985

	RETAIL	WHOLE- SALE	MANU- FACTURING	GUN- SMITH	PAWN- BROKER	AMMUN-(¹) ITION	TOTAL NUMBER	%
Newfoundland	207	7	0	11	2	563	790	8.0
Prince Edward Island	20	2	0	5	0	16	43	0.4
Nova Scotia	331	2	0	1	0	113	447	4.5
New Brunswick	238	5	0	64	0	295	602	6.1
Québec	1,114	59	6	30	0	1,139	2,348	23.6
Ontario	1,390	61	15	15	4	839	2,324	23.4
Manitoba	409	10	0	2	4	280	705	7.1
Saskatchewan	375	3	2	19	8	415	822	8.3
Alberta	451	12	0	10	8	387	868	8.7
British Columbia	477	19	1	42	7	290	836	8.4
Northwest Territories	113	0	0	0	0	8	121	1.2
Yukon	18	0	0	0	0	11	29	0.3
CANADA	5,143	180	24	199	33	4,356	9,935	100.0

(1) Manufacturing, wholesale and retail

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

Table 11 presents data on the number of persons prohibited from possession of firearms by province, as recorded by the RCMP, Canadian Police Information Centre. Over the five year period shown, the total rate per 100,000 Canadians prohibited from owning firearms has doubled.

The western provinces, with the exception of British Columbia, exhibit high rates of prohibitions relative to the eastern and central regions. Also, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon have an extremely high number of prohibitions per capita. Again, these rates may reflect the level of gun-ownership within these regions and do not necessarily indicate a greater misuse of firearms.

Missing and Recovered Firearms

Table 12 shows the cumulative total number of firearms reported as lost, stolen or missing, and the total cumulative number that were reported recovered as of each year end. The data indicate that the number of firearms missing has increased. As of December 31, 1985, a total of 42,794 firearms were recorded as missing, while 1,839 were reported recovered and an additional 1,344 were found in pawn shops.

CONCLUSION

The proportion of incidents involving firearms has decreased over the past seven years examined. Western provinces and the Territories had relatively high rates of firearm acquisition certificates, permits and registration certificates issued. Since 1979 there has been a decline in the number of businesses dealing in non-restricted firearms. The judicial system has steadily increased the number of prohibition orders handed down.

TABLE 11

NUMBER AND RATE OF PERSONS PROHIBITED FROM POSSESSION
OF FIREARMS⁽¹⁾, BY PROVINCE 1981-1985

	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985	
	No	Rate ⁽²⁾	No	Rate	No	Rate	No	Rate	No	Rate
Newfoundland	39	6.9	57	10.0	80	13.8	101	17.5	119	20.5
Prince Edward Island	13	10.6	8	6.5	14	11.3	4	3.2	12	9.4
Nova Scotia	100	11.8	125	14.7	115	13.4	131	15.1	99	11.2
New Brunswick	96	13.8	96	13.7	113	16.0	96	13.5	95	13.2
Quebec	838	13.0	1,030	15.9	1,334	20.5	1,276	19.5	1,205	18.3
Ontario	944	11.0	1,312	15.1	1,506	17.1	1,910	21.4	2,625	29.0
Manitoba	301	29.3	405	39.2	473	45.2	493	46.7	493	46.1
Saskatchewan	152	15.7	185	18.9	280	28.2	454	45.2	692	67.9
Alberta	390	17.4	461	19.9	670	28.5	876	37.3	1,068	45.5
British Columbia	320	11.7	391	14.0	506	17.9	526	18.3	579	20.0
Northwest Territories	21	46.0	14	29.7	51	105.4	50	101.2	75	147.4
Yukon	14	60.3	31	130.8	18	80.7	20	91.7	22	96.5
CANADA	3,228	13.3	4,115	16.7	5,160	20.7	5,937	23.6	7,084	27.9

(1) Total number of persons prohibited from possessing firearms, ammunition, or explosive substances recorded by the Canadian Police Information Centre during the calendar year.

(2) Rate per 100,000 population by province.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

TABLE 12

FIREARMS REPORTED LOST/STOLEN/MISSING AND RECOVERED,
1978-1985

YEAR	MISSING ⁽¹⁾			In Pawn ⁽²⁾ Shops	Recovered Found ⁽³⁾
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total		
1978	15,911	13,079	28,990	1,809	1,012
1979	16,353	13,701	30,054	901	947
1980	17,185	15,810	32,995	1,199	1,083
1981	17,327	18,242	35,569	1,590	1,269
1982	16,309	17,569	33,878	1,404	1,648
1983	17,551	19,415	36,966	1,432	2,105
1984	18,441	21,368	39,809	1,103	1,818
1985	19,475	23,319	42,794	1,344	1,839

1. These figures represent cumulative totals of reported lost, stolen or missing firearms recorded in the Canadian Police Information Centre Property File since 1974, and which were still in that state as of December 31st of each year.
2. These figures represent a cumulative total of firearms in Pawn Shops recorded since 1974 and which were still in that state as of December 31st of each year.
3. These figures represent a cumulative total of firearms recorded by police agencies as outstanding recovered/found firearms for which ownership had not been established as of December 31st of each year.

Source: R.C.M.P., Annual Firearms Report to the Solicitor General of Canada.

APPENDIX

**CANADIAN POPULATION BY PROVINCE
1969-1985**

**Total Canadian Population by Province
(thousands)**

	Nfld	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta	B.C.	Yuk.	NWT	Canada
1969	514.0	111.0	775.0	628.0	5985.0	7385.0	979.0	958.0	1559.0	2060.0	16.0	31.0	21001.0
1970	517.0	110.0	782.0	627.0	6013.0	7551.0	983.0	941.0	1595.0	2128.0	17.0	33.0	21297.0
1971	522.1	111.6	789.0	634.6	6027.8	7703.1	988.2	926.2	1627.9	2184.6	18.4	34.8	21568.3
1972	530.0	112.6	794.6	640.1	6053.6	7809.9	991.2	914.2	1657.3	2241.4	19.5	37.3	21801.5
1973	537.3	114.0	804.3	647.1	6078.9	7908.8	996.2	904.5	1689.5	2302.4	20.5	39.4	22042.8
1974	541.5	115.2	811.5	653.6	6122.7	8054.1	1007.5	899.7	1722.4	2375.7	20.5	39.6	22363.9
1975	549.1	117.1	819.5	665.2	6179.0	8172.2	1013.6	907.4	1778.3	2433.2	21.3	41.2	22697.1
1976	557.7	118.2	828.6	677.2	6234.4	8264.5	1021.5	921.3	1838.0	2466.6	21.8	42.6	22992.6
1977	559.8	119.3	833.4	684.1	6284.0	8353.1	1027.4	934.9	1912.7	2499.4	21.8	42.8	23272.8
1978	561.5	121.0	837.5	688.1	6302.4	8439.6	1032.0	943.5	1983.1	2542.3	22.5	43.6	23517.0
1979	563.5	122.0	841.8	691.9	6338.9	8501.3	1028.0	951.3	2052.8	2589.4	22.3	44.0	23747.3
1980	565.6	122.8	845.1	695.4	6386.1	8569.7	1024.9	959.4	2140.6	2666.0	22.3	44.7	24042.5
1981	567.7	122.5	847.4	696.4	6438.2	8624.7	1026.2	968.3	2237.3	2744.2	23.2	45.7	24343.1
1982	568.5	122.7	851.7	698.9	6479.8	8716.1	1034.5	979.1	2318.5	2791.1	23.7	47.2	24631.8
1983	577.9	124.0	859.3	706.7	6521.6	8815.9	1047.2	992.7	2350.0	2823.9	22.3	48.4	24889.8
1984	579.5	125.3	869.9	713.3	6549.0	8937.4	1056.5	1006.2	2348.8	2870.7	21.8	49.4	25127.9
1985	580.4	127.1	880.7	719.2	6580.7	9066.2	1069.6	1019.5	2348.8	2892.5	22.8	50.9	25358.5

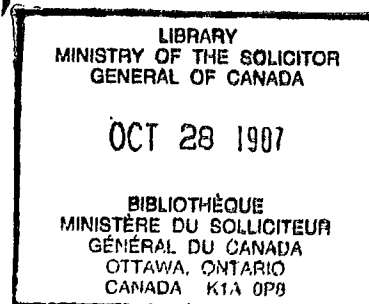
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