



(*) Successive Ministers of Justice have declared that they were responsible for all aspects of the Firearms Program, but have failed to effectively resolve the serious problem of inaccurate FIP records. The RCMP, while managing the FIP database for the other firearms partners, claims responsibility for the data quality of only those records that it enters in the system. CFOs are responsible to ensure that all FIP hits against a firearms client are thoroughly reviewed; however, FIP entries are created by police agencies and are not controlled by the CFOs. This situation has left the control of data quality to each individual police agency and has contributed to inconsistencies in FIP entries among the various agencies.

To resolve these FIP problems I made the following recommendations in my "Firearms Report" of 2001:

- 1) Since DOJ's Canadian Firearms Centre is responsible for issues respecting data quality on FIP and in conformity with section 6(2) of the *Privacy Act* (accurate, complete and up-to-date information), there should be an auditing framework to verify the validity and accuracy of FIP records.
- 2) The Canadian Firearms Centre FIP Project Team should continue to work towards establishing and implementing common police agency extract standards and procedures, and a copy of the report(s) of improvements should be provided to the Privacy Commissioner.

(*) To date, the department has not implemented my recommendations, nor has it provided any of the progress reports I have requested. I do not have the power under the *Privacy Act* to order DOJ to implement these and my other recommendations concerning this initiative. However, I will continue to express my concerns to the Minister of Justice and urge him to quickly take appropriate measures with his stakeholders to bring the Program into compliance with the *Privacy Act*.

The Auditor General's report has underlined the vital importance of introducing controls immediately to ensure the accuracy of all FIP records. It serves to underscore the critical importance of implementing the recommendations I made some 18 months ago regarding the issue of data integrity.

Yours sincerely,


George Radwanski
Privacy Commissioner of Canada