

rights of its citizens to bear arms differs significantly from Canada. The illicit transfer of firearms into Canada may be seen as a microcosm of what is happening in some parts of the world on a much grander scale. Firearms smuggling was of such concern that the government formed a "Firearms Smuggling Work Group" to produce recommendations on coping with the problem. Its work was published in May 1995.⁶¹ Representation on the Work Group came from various provincial police forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Revenue Canada (Customs and Excise), Department of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Department of Justice. All members of the group agreed that smuggling is dynamic and a strategy was required to reduce all forms of smuggling. Key recommendations, some relevant to this study, state that:

- a national task force to complement current criminal intelligence and enforcement at all levels of government should be formed. It would be responsible for promoting national coordination, policy development and information-sharing to strategically target the illegal importation, circulation and criminal use of firearms. Of special note the task force would develop and maintain cooperative working relationships with enforcement agencies in other countries to establish coordinated strategies in dealing with the smuggling problem;
- the proposed national task force and the law enforcement community should focus on certain smuggling "hot spots" such as certain border areas;
- all firearms must be subject to a rigorous review and control process at point of entry/exit including in-transit shipments in Canada;
- all firearms should be recorded (uniquely identify each firearm and store the information indefinitely in a retrievable context) at the border whether, leaving, arriving or transiting;
- firearms smuggling violators must be subject to severe penalties and police and customs should be able to seize conveyances and other instruments used in trafficking; and
- a national comprehensive database on all firearms is required.

Many of the foregoing recommendations have or will be implemented. Administering and enforcing firearms regulations in all their manifestations is costly from both a government and an individual basis. While this is perhaps not a significant factor for Canada, it certainly is for many of the states that desperately need enhanced legislation and enforcement. In the case of Canada much of the infrastructure is already in place. The

⁶¹ Canada. *The Illegal Movement of Firearms In Canada*. Report of the Firearms Smuggling Work Group, May 1995