

Since 1978, federal-provincial agreements with the provinces compensate for actual administrative costs of the firearms control provisions. These agreements must be considered an important commitment to the consultative process.

The Minister of Justice conveyed to Parliament the federal commitment to cover the provinces' actual cost of administering the firearms control program and has conveyed those assurances to the provinces in writing.

GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION—FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF
REGISTRATION PROGRAM—GOVERNMENT POSITION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Ron Ghitter on May 24, 1995)

The Minister of Justice reaffirmed to his provincial colleagues that the federal government is committed to the principle of cost recovery with respect to Firearms Control Program.

The "Financial Framework for Bill C-68" document tabled with Parliamentary Committee on April 24, 1995 details the cost and revenue estimates to support the development and implementation of the firearms legislation.

The continuing administrative costs of the registration system will be funded by revenues paid from fees for firearms licences, registration certificates and authorization permits.

The fees will be modest but sufficient to defray continuing costs to the provinces and police service involved in the administration of the Firearms Control Program. The actual fee levels will be set by regulations that will be subject to Parliament's review.

The federal government will fund the costs for the design, development and implementation of the Canadian Firearms Registration System.

The administrative costs actually incurred by provinces with respect to firearms licences, registration certificates, authorization permits and the operation of the Canadian Firearms Registration System will be recovered through the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Firearms Financial Agreements.

GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION—COMMENTS OF
PRIME MINISTER ON PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—
REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Gerry St. Germain on May 24, 1995)

The initial media reports seemed to interpret the Prime Minister's comments in Québec City on May 21, 1995 about the constitutional division of responsibilities for the criminal justice system as an assertion that the provinces alone would pay to administer the firearms registration system. That interpretation is incorrect. The Prime Minister did not make any reference to the costs of administering the program as he pointed out in a subsequent press conference.

In a recent letter to his provincial colleagues responsible for the administration of the Firearms Control Program, the Minister of Justice reaffirmed the federal government's commitment to the provinces to cover the cost of the design, development, and implementation of the Canadian Firearms Registration System.

The federal government is also committed to the principle of cost recovery with respect to the Firearms Control Program. The continuing administrative costs of the registration system will be funded from the revenues of the fees for the firearms licences, registration certificates and authorization permits.

The fees will be modest but sufficient to defray the operating costs of the firearms legislation. The actual fee levels will be set by regulation and subject to Parliament's review.

The administrative costs actually incurred by provinces with respect to processing firearms licences, registration certificates and authorization permits, as well as the operation of the Canadian Firearms Registration System will be recovered through the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Firearms Financial Agreements. The authority is set in legislation (section 93 of the *Firearms Act*, Bill C-68).

Every effort is being made in designing the registration system to achieve easy accessibility to the public and cost efficiency. Following the enactment of the legislation, federal officials will work with provincial counterparts to arrive at the final design: the provinces and territories will participate fully in this cooperative process.