

A guideline that would assist in implementing the OAS Convention called "Model Regulations For the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition" was developed within the context of work carried out under the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission.⁵⁹ Canada was one of 19 countries involved in its development. It provides detailed procedures for exporting and importing ammunition. Of significance is the requirement to obtain the agreement of transit countries and to include ports of entry and exit on the documentation. While information on exports and imports is available to the relevant agencies of participating countries, there is no transparency in the arms control sense with regard to the public at large, due in part to commercial privacy concerns. While a country such as Canada may release such information as it pertains to its own exports and imports, no such obligation rests with other signatories.

It will be some time before it can be determined whether the OAS Convention will achieve its objectives. The signatory countries reflect disparate resources for enforcement, differing histories of bureaucratic efficiency and honesty, differing legal and legislative systems, and differing political priorities. As well, there is a general vagueness to some of the requirements in the Convention. If the Convention is even partially successful it will serve as a model for other regional and perhaps a global agreement.

Codes of Conduct

While not strictly speaking controls or regulations, codes of conduct do offer guidelines for the sales or export of arms.⁶⁰ Ammunition and ammunition components should form part of such codes. Care will be required in defining certain items within the context of military versus civilian: for example, propellant and primers could be designated for "sporting" use or certain explosives for mineral extraction purposes. Generally speaking quality, quantity and type should determine the likely end use. Again, as this is by-and-large a supply-side control, the possibility of encouraging more diffusion in production is always a consideration. It is easier for a state to start manufacturing ammunition as opposed to tanks or fighter aircraft.

Cartridge Marking

Almost all new cartridge casings used for producing ammunition by major commercial and state ammunition manufacturers are base stamped to identify the manufacturer and the caliber.⁶¹ It would be difficult but not impossible to add more information using a stamp process. Considering various new technologies such as laser and bar code marking, it might be possible to

⁵⁹ Draft copy obtained from DFAIT. *Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition*. dated September 15, 1997.

⁶⁰ For a good discussion of Codes of Conduct see: <http://www.gn.apc.org/sworld/code.html>

⁶¹ For details on various base stamps see : Janes, *Ammunition Handbook*. 1997-98.