

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Special Committee further recommends that in those cases where the renewal application was made after the expiration of the FAC, but within a reasonable period thereafter, the firearms officer would also have the discretion to require the applicant to demonstrate competency on a basis similar to that applying to transitional applicants.

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Special Committee recommends that the fee for a renewal be set at \$10, subject to confirmation by the Canadian Advisory Council on Firearms that this figure is appropriate.

4. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

The Special Committee believes that special transitional provisions will be needed to deal with existing firearms owners. The FAC system being recommended should apply with full force to all those who have not yet entered the present system. As noted earlier, however, the Committee believes that those who have been using firearms legitimately and responsibly for some time should not have to go through the full screening process recommended for first-time FAC applicants. These present firearms users would essentially break down into two distinct groups: 1) those in possession of a valid FAC when the new system was implemented and 2) those in possession of firearms but who did not have an FAC when the new system was implemented.

Those who are in the possession of valid FACs upon the implementation of a new FAC system should, in the interests of fairness, be dealt with on the same basis as renewals. Therefore, as long as the FAC was renewed before its expiration, the holder would only be subject, under the new system, to a \$10 fee and a current records check. As noted earlier, however, where the renewal application was made after the expiration of the FAC, but within a reasonable period thereafter, the firearms officer would have the discretion to require the applicant to demonstrate firearms competency on a basis similar to that set out below with respect to transitional applicants.

There are thousands of people who currently do not possess an FAC either because their firearms were acquired before 1979, when no FAC was required, or they have let their FACs lapse because they have had no reason to acquire a new one. While the Special Committee is opposed to requiring everyone to obtain an FAC, we would prefer to see as many firearms owners as possible enter the new system. The Committee therefore suggests that an express transitional period of two years be set out in the legislation with its own set of rules to deal with those firearms owners not in possession of a current FAC at the time of the implementation of a new system.

The transitional rules would be designed to act as an incentive for those without FACs to enter the new system without having to complete the mandatory national competency and safety course, which may not be necessary given their previous experience. They would, however, still be subject to the other new FAC requirements, including a photo, provision of references, a 28-day mandatory waiting period, and the increased fee.

The competency requirement for transitional applicants might be satisfied in one of several ways. As all provinces now require hunters to undergo a hunter safety education course, which includes firearms training, a hunter could simply present an existing hunting license, or even an