

Canadian Department of Justice. Canadian officials are able to draw upon their experience with a new "Firearms Act" that has become law in Canada and is in the process of implementation. The intent of this law is public safety, which depends not only on tracking firearms currently inside the country and controlling who owns fire arms, but on controlling the illicit flow of firearms into the country. How the challenge of stopping illicit and controlling legal firearm flows are being met could provide useful examples on processes and procedures in stemming the illegal international flow of light weapons. Controlling the export of both military weapons and non-military firearms is a function of the Export Controls Division of Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

LIGHT WEAPONS PROLIFERATION: TERMINOLOGY AND ISSUES – A LITERATURE REVIEW

While light weapons as an arms control and non-proliferation issue is a relatively recent phenomena, one anthology has determined that there are well over 80 publications on the subject.⁴ It has been the subject of some 12 UN resolutions and documents and is a significant study area for several security research organizations and academic institutions⁵. Numerous presentations on the subject have been given in official and unofficial forums.⁶ The literature; both academic and official, and theoretical and applied, is attempting to grapple with a number of conceptual and operational issues concerning light weapons proliferation. This section will highlight what much of the literature believes are some of the more important issues pertaining to light weapons proliferation. Where required, a working definition or an assumption will be offered to provide a framework for the analysis and recommendations in this study. A review of much of the available literature detects a difficult struggle in coming to terms with the complexities of the problem. As a result, there is often a tautological drift in the literature, not surprising given the extensive nature of the problem and the relatively recent focus on it as an arms control issue.

Arms Control/Non-Proliferation and Domestic Lawlessness

Arms control⁷ has always sought to deal with controlling the weapons endemic to interstate conflict. It attempts to diminish the likelihood of war and constrain its

⁴ Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. *Small Arms and Light Weapons: An Annotated Bibliography*. Ottawa, November 1996

⁵See Joel Johnston, *Current Projects on Light Weapons* London: BASIC, February 1996 also numerous UNIDIR publications on small arms and micro-disarmament.

⁶ Several unpublished papers and presentations have been given in, for example, *The Pretoria Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Southern Africa*. September, 1996

⁷In this paper arms control and non-proliferation will be used interchangeably as both concepts are involved in the issue of light weapons proliferation.