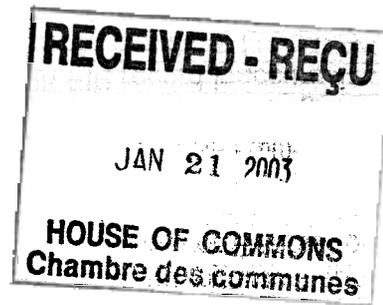


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JAN 17 2003

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz, MP
Yorkton-Melville
Room 452D, Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Breitkreuz:

This is further to Dennis Young's e-mail of January 9, 2003 seeking my views about continued errors in the gun registry's FIP database, as reported by the Auditor General of Canada in December of 2002.

I have reviewed Chapter 11 of the Auditor General's Report, which dealt with the Firearms Interest Police (FIP) database operated by the RCMP for the Firearms Program. Many of the systemic problems noted by the Auditor General with FIP record inaccuracies were previously outlined in my "Firearms Report" of August 2001. At that time, I had noted problems of individuals being improperly flagged in FIP, while other individuals who should have been flagged were not.

For FIP to be an effective early warning flag for potential violence, it is vital that police officers keep their incident reports accurate and up-to-date regarding the status of persons responsible for incidents covered by section 5 of the *Firearms Act*. Moreover, the *Privacy Act* requires that information collected for an administrative purpose be up to date and as accurate as possible.

The problem as I see it is that the responsibility for FIP data quality is dispersed among the some 900 law enforcement and Firearms Program contributors across the country. There is no one department or agency that effectively ensures the coordination and enforcement of common FIP data entry standards for all municipal, provincial and federal partners.