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Buyback Program Awareness Campaign

Final Report

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Canada

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Prepared for Public Safety Canada by Environics Research

Supplier name: Environics Research

May 2023

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Executive summary

Background and objectives

The Minister of Public Safety's mandate letter outlined the Government's commitment to take action to further reduce firearms-related violence, including by banning assault-style firearms and implementing an amnesty and buyback program. On May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada announced the prohibition of over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms and certain components of some newly prohibited firearms. These models represent nine categories of firearms and two types identified by characteristic. To promote this mandate, Public Safety Canada will be launching a national marketing campaign targeting firearms owners to continue to raise awareness and understanding about their responsibilities to come into compliance with the law related to the ban on assault-style firearms, the buyback program, and to encourage participation in the program.

In support of this and future firearm-related campaigns, Public Safety Canada set out to conduct research with firearms owners. This research project was comprised of quantitative and qualitative phases, each with specific objectives:

- One round of eight success check online focus groups was conducted among firearm owners. These explored reactions to digital ads and social media posts aimed at raising awareness of the buyback program and preparing owners to participate in it.
- A tracking survey of 2,000 firearm owners in Canada to explore how awareness, perceptions and opinions about the buyback program have evolved from the previous survey of firearms owners conducted in the spring of 2022.

This research project had two key research objectives:

- A. Tracking research with firearms owners to help segment the audience and inform the public awareness campaign to meet the needs of the target audience of firearms owners and to measure how attitudes have changed over the past year. This study also explored attitudes towards the buyback program among the subset of firearms owners who could be eligible for the program.
- B. Qualitative focus group research with firearms owners to help understand how firearms owners perceive the buyback program, including their intent to participate, as well as their reactions to digital ads to help fine tune the direction of the campaign's concepts and messaging.

Methodology

Quantitative Phase – Survey of Firearm Owners: A 15-minute online survey of 2,000 firearms owners across Canada was conducted from March 16 to March 31, 2023. The survey included a diverse sample of current firearm owners (gender, geographic location, urban/rural split). NOTE: As the online survey uses an opt-in panel, this is a non-probability sample, and no margin of sampling error is calculated. More details on the methodology are provided in Appendix A.

Qualitative Phase – Success Check Focus Groups: Eight online focus groups were conducted in October 2022. The groups were conducted using the Zoom platform and were entirely composed of Canadians who own firearms. Each session consisted of 6 to 8 participants and lasted about 90 minutes. Environics recruited participants via industry-standard methods to ensure participation in all the sessions across all regions. Participants were offered a \$100 incentive to thank them for their time.

One-to-two sessions were conducted with gun owners from each of the following regions: Ontario (October 11 and 13), British Columbia (October 11), Atlantic Canada (October 12), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (October 12), Alberta (October 13), and Quebec (two on October 15).

Statement of Limitations: Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held as measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

Contract value

The contract value was \$158,856.08 (including HST).

Key findings

Quantitative phase

Firearms ownership

- About half of firearm owners currently own one firearm. Among those who report currently owning more than one firearm, over one quarter say they currently own two firearms.
- Six in ten firearm owners own a rifle; about half owns a shotgun. About two in ten own a revolver, handgun, or semi-automatic long gun.
- Half of firearm owners have owned their firearms for more than five years. Less than one in ten has owned their firearms for less than a year.
- Most firearm owners have obtained their firearms by purchasing from a retailer. One third inherited them from a family member or friend. Two in ten purchased their firearms from an individual.
- Most firearms owners use their firearms less than once a month and 13 percent never use them at all. One quarter are more frequent users.
- Three quarters of firearm owners currently have a valid up to date Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL); Over half of firearm owners previously had a valid Restricted Possession and Acquisition Licence (RPAL).
- The main reasons for owning firearms are target shooting for sport, hunting for food or sport, or for safety/protection/self-defence.
- Government websites are the main avenue firearm owners turn to for information or news, followed by family and friends, or firearms in-store sales outlets.

Perceptions of regulations

- The vast majority of firearms owners are at least somewhat familiar with firearms regulations, with half claiming to be very familiar.
- Three in ten firearm owners believe the regulations are too strict and almost two in ten report that regulations are not strict enough and about half say the regulations strike the right balance. Perceptions that regulations are too strict or not strict enough have both increased in the past year.
- Most firearm owners believe that almost all types of firearms should be legal in most cases. A plurality now believes that semi-automatic handguns should be illegal in all or most cases.
- Half of firearm owners have heard a lot about banning assault-style firearms, and a smaller proportion of less than four in ten has heard a lot about the buyback program. Across all eleven initiatives, about one-third or more firearm owners have heard at least a bit about them.
- Large majorities of firearm owners continue to support all eleven of the proposed measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada, though support for many policies has declined since 2022.

Attitudes towards firearms violence

- Most firearms owners are at least somewhat concerned that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in their local community, however, this concern has declined over the past year. Firearm owners are more likely to believe that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety outside of their local community, than within it.
- Most firearms owners think inner cities have the highest rate of firearms violence in Canada. Just ten percent think small towns and rural areas have the highest rates.
- Firearm owners feel the biggest causes of gun violence are gang violence, organized crime and general criminal activity. They increasingly also mention mental health and accidents.
- There has been a significant decline over the past year in firearm owners' rating of the performance of the government's performance on introducing measures to address gun-related violence. One half now rates it as good or excellent.

Attitudes towards participation in the buyback program

- Six in ten find it at least somewhat clear which firearms are eligible for compensation in the buyback program. One third find it unclear.
- One third of firearm owners report that they probably or definitely own any of the newly prohibited firearms that could qualify for the buyback program. This is a significant drop since 2022.
- Almost half of those who may own prohibited firearms currently own just one; two in ten own two.

- Less than half of those owners with prohibited firearms would now willingly participate in a buyback program—a sharp decline over the past year. Another third would participate, but only because it was mandatory; one in ten would refuse to participate at all.
- The main motivations for taking part in the buyback program are the financial compensation and wanting to comply with the law and avoid legal penalties.
- The small number who would refuse to participate in the buyback program give a variety of reasons for their refusal.

Implementation of the buyback program

- The two elements that owners of prohibited firearms consider to be the most important to include in a buyback program are direct deposit payments, and convenient drop-off options for returning firearms.
- Most owners of prohibited firearms would prefer to register for a buyback program completely online, though an increasing minority would prefer to do so over the phone.
- A large majority would prefer to turn in their prohibited firearms in person. Just two in ten would prefer a virtual online process.
- Most would prefer to dispose of their newly prohibited firearms by surrendering them for compensation or returning them to the manufacturer.
- Those turning in their prohibited firearms as part of a buyback program would prefer to do so in a local police station or a local RCMP station.

Profile of firearms owners - values

- Firearm owners have a mix of views on a series of statements that measure core values. Agreement is highest on the importance of protecting traditional values, but most also agree that post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone, and that climate change is an important issue and that we need to do more to protect the environment. Two thirds believe that owning a firearm is a privilege, not a right.

Qualitative phase

Introduction of assault-style firearms ban and buyback program

- Most firearms owners had at least a passing familiarity with the ban on assault-style firearms and the buyback program, however, those who used their guns infrequently were less likely to know about these regulatory changes.
- Many participants were also aware of more recent new regulations and restrictions around handguns in Canada.

Reaction to creatives

- Participants found all forms of advertising they were shown (digital, print, and social media) to be clear and easy to understand. They had no difficulty interpreting the messages being conveyed by the ads.
- Some words and phrases in the ads were found to be objectionable or stigmatizing to firearms owners. Ads with wording like “Coming soon” or “Buyback is coming” seemed ominous to some firearms owners, often tying back to an underlying concern about future expansion of the ban to include other types of firearms.
- Some participants objected to phrasing about “disposing” of weapons, feeling that this was disrespectful to firearms owners who invest in and care for these personal possessions. For some, the directive to “take part” was bothersome because the ban is not voluntary.
- Participants strongly preferred messages that were more direct and factual. For example, participants tended to favour the headline “Do you own a firearm? Get the facts.” They often interpreted other messages to be judgmental towards firearms owners.
- The clear black-on-white style of the ads in all formats was found to be visually effective, and recognizable as government messaging.
- Participants had little to say about the specific imagery or iconography in the ads, and often did not recognize the gun components used for visual effect in the ads.
- Participants had many suggestions for content they would like to see or would expect to see on the buyback program’s website. Frequent suggestions included robust search capability to help firearms owners check to see if their guns are eligible for buyback, information about buyback compensation amounts, instructions for participating in the program, and details about the penalties for not abiding by the ban on assault-style firearms.

Opinions about buyback

- Most firearms owners in the focus groups held a negative opinion towards the ban on assault-style firearms and were sceptical about the buyback program. Despite this general negativity, most indicated that they would comply with the ban if it affected them, because they would not want to risk their ability to legally own and use other firearms.
- Preference for participating buyback or disabling prohibited firearms was largely personal. Those who frequently used their firearms tended to favour the idea of buyback if the compensation would help them buy a new legal firearm, while those who owned their firearms for more sentimental reasons were more open to the idea of decommissioning them.
- Though most of the firearms owners in the groups did not own any guns affected by the ban, many had sympathy for affected owners and felt it was unfair to target people who had initially acquired their guns legally. Often, the ban and the buyback program were seen as wasteful because the policy isn’t aimed at stopping illegal gun smuggling and sales. Most firearms owners did not see themselves or their peers as a major factor in gun crimes in Canada—this perception was tied to a common assessment that the program would be ultimately ineffective at reducing gun crime.

- Some firearms owners also expressed fears that bans would expand over time and eventually impact their firearms outside of the ban. These concerns were most prominent among avid owners who frequently use their firearms for recreational purposes and see these activities as an important aspect of their lifestyle.
- Another common point of criticism was a general assumption that the amounts offered for the buyback program would not fairly compensate owners who may have spent large amounts of money acquiring and personalizing their firearms.
- A minority of firearms owners in each group did express moderate support for the ban and the buyback program. For these owners, the banned firearms were seen to be unnecessary for normal use.

Political neutrality statement and contact information

I hereby certify as senior officer of Environics that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

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Introduction

Background

Issues relating to the regulation of firearms have been ongoing in Canada for the past 40 years. Many Canadians possess firearms for legitimate purposes (i.e., sport or hunting), particularly in rural areas. As gun-related violence has increased across Canada, there has been more demand to find ways to restrict illicit use of firearms and regulate current firearms and their usage. In the late 1990s, the federal government established a now scrapped national long gun registry; more recently, there have been calls to restrict various types of assault-style weapons.

The Minister of Public Safety's mandate letter outlined the Government's commitment to take action to further reduce firearms-related violence, including by banning assault-style firearms and implementing an amnesty and buyback program. On May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada announced the prohibition of over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms and certain components of some newly prohibited firearms. These models represent nine categories of firearms and two types identified by characteristic.

A baseline study conducted by Environics Research in December 2020 found that only one in ten Canadians had heard anything about any new measures by the government to address gun violence. Public Safety Canada (PS) is currently developing and implementing a national marketing campaign that will take a phased approach to raise awareness and educate Canadians and firearm owners of the need to reduce violent crime by limiting illicit access to firearms. Campaign messages will focus on raising awareness of the ban on assault-style firearms, of safe and legal firearms practices (such as secure storage, legal purchasing, permit requirements, etc.), and of the buyback program among firearms owners.

- In support of this and future firearm-related campaigns, PS commissioned Environics to conduct a tracking survey of firearm owners to better understand their attitudes toward the proposed buyback program and how it has evolved over the past year, and
- a series of focus groups with firearms owners to explore their attitudes toward the buyback program, and to test their reactions to creatives to be used in an advertising campaign.

Objectives

This research project involved two key research objectives:

- A. Tracking research with firearms owners to profile the audience and inform the public awareness campaign to meet the needs of the target audience of firearms owners and to measure how attitudes have changed over the past year. This study also explored attitudes toward the buyback program among the sub-set of firearms owners who could be eligible for the program.
- B. Qualitative focus group research with firearms owners to help understand their awareness and perceptions of the buyback program, including their intent to participate, as well as their reactions to digital ads designed to inform them about the program, which would be used to inform the direction of the campaign's concepts and messaging.

About this report

This report begins with an executive summary outlining key findings, followed by a detailed analysis of the survey data and of the qualitative findings. Provided under a separate cover is a detailed set of “banner tables” presenting the results for all questions by subgroup segments. These tables are referenced by the survey question in the detailed analysis. Please note that the question numbering referenced in this report, including in the questionnaire document and statistical tables, is not sequential for ease of comparison with tracking questions from past surveys.

In this report, quantitative results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the tables due to rounding.

Use of findings of the research

With the information provided by this public opinion research program, it will be possible to develop and implement a public awareness campaign in an effective and efficient manner. Information obtained through public opinion research will allow Public Safety Canada to optimize the impact of its marketing initiatives.

I. Detailed findings – Quantitative Phase

A. Firearms ownership

1. Number of firearms owned

Around half of Canadian firearms owners currently own one firearm. Among those who report currently owning more than one firearm, around one quarter say they currently own two firearms.

Just under half (47%) of firearms owners report owning just one firearm, and a similar proportion indicate they own more than one, which is largely unchanged from 2022. Over one quarter (28%) say they own two firearms and one in ten (12%) say they own three. Smaller proportions say they own either four firearms (4%) or five (2%). Slightly under one in ten (7%) report owning more than five firearms.

Number of firearms owned

Q3. How many firearms do you currently own?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
One (1)	47%	49%
Net: more than 1	53%	51%
2	28%	26%
3	12%	11%
4	4%	5%
5	2%	2%
More than 5	7%	6%

There are higher proportions of Canadian firearms owners with more than one firearm who reside in the Atlantic region, followed by those in Manitoba/Saskatchewan. Ownership decreases in Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta, with Ontario having the lowest proportion of citizens who own more than one firearm.

Those most likely to own more than one firearm additionally include those aged 60 years or older (59%), living in rural communities (58%), household incomes of \$150k or more and whose past jobs involved firearms (64%).

2. Types of firearms owned

Six in ten firearms owners own a rifle; about half say they own a shotgun. Similar proportions of about two in ten say they own a revolver or handgun.

Of those who own a firearm in Canada, 62 percent report owning a rifle (up four points from 2022). About half (47%) owns a shotgun (down four points from 2022). Smaller proportions own a revolver (19%), handgun (18%) or semi-automatic long gun (16%, down three points from 2022). Note that in the 2022 survey, the answer categories for this question were different with a single category for “handgun” that was replaced this year with prompts for revolver and semi-automatic handgun.

Types of firearms owned

Q4. Which of the following types of firearms do you own? Check all that apply.*	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2021 Total (n=2,001)
Rifle (manual action)	62%	58%
Shotgun (manual action)	47%	43%
Revolver	19%	-
Semi-automatic handgun	18%	-
Handgun	-	42%
Semi-automatic long gun	16%	19%
Other	3%	1%
Don't know	2%	1%

**Wording of question slightly modified since 2022.*

Ownership of rifles is higher among those in Atlantic Canada (72%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (69%), and Alberta (68%). Ownership of a rifle is also higher among those living in rural communities (73%), those aged 60 years or older (73%), and men (64%).

Ownership of shotguns is higher among those in Quebec (55%), Atlantic Canada (54%), and rural communities (54%). This type of gun owner is also higher among those 60 or older (56%), French speakers (66%), and who are not currently working (53%).

Canadians who own revolvers are more likely to live in urban (22%) or suburban (19%) communities than in rural areas. They are also more likely to be younger at 18 to 29 years old (24%), have a university degree (22%), are English speakers (19%), and have a current or past job that involves firearms (27%).

3. Length of time owning firearms

Half of firearms owners have owned their firearms for more than five years. Less than one in ten has owned their firearms for less than a year.

Half of Canadians who own firearms (51%) say they have owned one for more than five years, up seven points since 2022. About two in ten (21%, down eight points from 2022) have been owners for two to five years; another two in ten have been owners for one to two years (19%) and less than one in ten (7%) have owned their firearms for less than a year.

Length of time owning firearms

Q5. How long have you owned any firearms? Has it been...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Less than a year	7%	8%
One to two years	19%	18%
Two to five years	21%	29%
More than five years	51%	44%
Don't know	2%	1%

Length of firearm ownership is generally similar across subgroups, with some exceptions among age groups, gender, and community size. Canadian firearms owners who have possessed their firearms for more than five years are likely to live in small towns or rural communities, be 60 years of age or older, male, and earn a household income of \$150k or more. French speakers are also more likely to have had their firearms for more than five years, in addition to those with less than a university degree, and those who do not have a job that involves firearms.

In terms of those who qualify as “newer” firearms owners, those living in Ontario are more likely than other regions to have only owned their firearms for two years or less. This is also true of younger people aged 18 to 29 years, female firearms owners, and those whose household income is \$80k or less.

4. How firearms are obtained

Most Canadians have obtained their firearms by purchasing from a retailer or by inheriting them from a family member or friend.

Most firearms owners (68%, down six points from 2022) have obtained their firearms through purchases from a retailer and another three in ten (32%, up one point from 2022) have inherited their firearms from family or friends. Less common ways of obtaining firearms include purchasing them from an individual (19%, down five points from 2022), receiving them as a gift (13%, unchanged), or imported their firearms from another country (2%, first time prompted).

How firearms are obtained

Q6. How have you obtained your firearm(s)? Check all that apply.*	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Purchased from retailer	68%	74%
Inherited from family member or friend	32%	31%
Purchased from individual	19%	24%
Received as gift	13%	13%
Imported from another country	2%	-
Issued by my employer for work	-	<1%
Other	-	<1%
Don't know	1%	<1%

**Wording of question slightly modified since 2022.*

Purchasing firearms from a retailer is the most common method of obtaining across all regions of Canada. This purchasing method is particularly more common, however, among those living in urban (72%) or suburban (69%) communities, aged 44 years or younger (71%), as well as those who possess more than five firearms (84%).

Having inherited their firearm(s) from a family member or friend is more common in Atlantic Canada (40%), BC/Territories (38%), and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (36%). Obtaining a firearm this way is also more common in rural communities (47%) and for those aged 45 years or older (43%).

5. How often firearms are used

Most firearms owners use their firearms less than once a month and 13 percent never use them at all. One quarter are more frequent users.

A majority of firearms owners use their firearms less than once a month (62%, up three points from 2022) with 39 percent using them a few times a year and 23 percent using them once a year or less. Thirteen percent (up one point) never use their firearms. About a quarter (24%, down four points from 2022) are more frequent users and use them use their firearms 1 or 2 times a month (17%, down three points from 2022), or once a week or more (7%, down one point from 2022).

How often firearms are used

Q7. On average, how often do you use your firearms?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: At least monthly	24%	28%
Once a week or more	7%	8%
1 or 2 times a month	17%	20%
Net: Less often	62%	59%
A few times a year	39%	36%
Once a year or less	23%	22%
Never	13%	12%
Don't know	1%	<1%

Firearms owners who use their firearms at least monthly include large proportions of those in Ontario and Atlantic Canada, leaving Quebec to be the least likely. Those who frequently use their firearms are largely urban community members and in younger age groups (ages 18 to 44, compared to those aged 45 years and older).

Those who use their firearms “less often” are more likely to include those in rural communities, and those age 45-59 and 60 or older.

6. Possession of a PAL (Possession and Acquisition Licence)

Three quarters of firearms owners currently have a valid up to date PAL number

The vast majority of firearms owners possess a valid PAL (82%, down five points from 2022) that is either valid and up to date (74%) or may have some out-of-date information on it (8%). Twelve percent (up two points from 2022) do not possess a PAL, with six percent having had a PAL number in the past that has now expired, and six percent having never had a PAL number.

Possession of PAL

Q8. Do you currently have a valid PAL (Possession and Acquisition Licence) number? (NB: Please be assured once again that your answer will remain anonymous and will never be traced back to you.) CHECK ONE	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: YES	82%	87%
Yes, my PAL number is valid and up to date	74%	79%
Yes, I have a valid PAL number, but some of my information is out of date	8%	9%
Net: NO	12%	10%
No, I had a PAL number in the past, but it has expired	6%	5%
No, I have never had a PAL number	6%	5%
Prefer not to say	4%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%

Firearms owners who have their PAL are more likely to be in the younger age groups (ages 18 to 44), live in urban or suburban communities, and have—or had—a job that involves the use of firearms.

Those without their PAL tend to be aged 45 years or older and less likely to have a university education. They are also more likely to only own one firearm.

7. Previous possession of RPAL (Restricted Possession and Acquisition Licence)

Over half of firearms owners previously had a valid RPAL.

Over half (55%) of firearms owners previously had a valid RPAL. A third say they have never had an RPAL (36%), and just under one in ten do not recall or prefer not to say.

Possession of RPAL

Q9. Did you previously have a valid RPAL (Restricted Possession and Acquisition Licence) number? (NB: Please be assured once again that your answer will remain anonymous and will never be traced back to you). CHECK ONE	2023 Total (n=2,000)
Yes, I had an RPAL	55%
No, I have never had an RPAL	36%
Prefer not to say	5%
Don't know	3%

Canadian firearms owners who had an RPAL are more likely to be living in urban communities, aged 18 to 29 years, female, have a university degree, and whose current job involves firearms.

8. Main reasons for owning firearms

The main reasons for owning firearms are target shooting for sport, hunting for food or sport, or for safety/protection/self-defense.

Four in ten (40%) firearms owners report target shooting for sport (recreational or competitive) as a main reason for owning a firearm. Just under that amount say they own a firearm to hunt for food (34%) or hunt for sport (33%). About three in ten (30%) cite safety, and protection or self-defence as their main reason for owning a firearm. These reasons are largely the same as in 2022, though there has been an increase in citing hunting for food as a main reason, and a drop in citing safety or protection.

Main reasons for owning firearms

Q10. People own firearms for many different reasons. Which of the following are the main reasons you own a firearm? Check all that apply.	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Target shooting for sport (recreational or competitive)	40%	39%
Hunting for food	34%	28%
Hunting for sport	33%	34%
Safety/protection/self-defense	30%	37%
Gifted through inheritance	21%	20%
I'm a firearms collector	13%	14%
Hunting as part of Indigenous tradition/treaty right	9%	12%
Work-related (employment, animal control, etc.)	7%	11%
To get rid of pesty animals on the farm	1%	1%

Those most likely to cite target shooting for sport as a main reason to own a firearm include residents of British Columbia (48%), those aged 30 to 59 years (42%), and men (41%).

Those most likely to cite hunting for food as their main reason for owning a firearm includes residents of Atlantic Canada (46%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (42%), and Alberta (40%). This reason is also more prominent among rural communities (46%), those without a university degree (40%), as well as those who have five or more firearms (56%).

Hunting for sport as a main reason is higher among those living in Quebec (42%) and French speakers (47%), as well as men (35%), and those with a university degree (37%). They are also more likely to own a shotgun (42%) or semi-automatic (43%).

Those who cite safety and protection as a main reason are more likely to be residents of Ontario (37%) or Alberta (34%). They are also more likely to be aged 18 to 29 years (40%), women (36%), have a university degree (35%), born outside of Canada (41%), and whose job has involved firearms (38%). They are also more likely to own a handgun (50%).

9. Sources of information

Government websites are the main avenue Canadian firearms owners turn to for information or news, followed by family and friends, or firearms in-store sales outlets.

When in search for news and information on firearms, firearms owners are most likely to turn to government websites (40%), family or friends (25%), firearms in-store sales outlets (20%), or TV/radio (18%). Smaller proportions mention social media (15%), firearms advocacy groups (14%), online forums (13%), newspapers and magazines (12%), firearms trade shows (11%), blogs for gun owners (11%), online firearms sales outlets (10%), or podcasts (5%). Sources for news and information on firearms has remained fairly steady among firearms owners since 2022.

Firearm information sources

Q12. What are your two main sources of news and information on firearms?	2023 Main/2 nd biggest source (n=2,000)	2023 Main source	2023 2 nd biggest source
Government websites (e.g., RCMP, Public Safety Canada)	40%	28%	12%
Family/friends/word of mouth	25%	12%	14%
Firearms in-store sales outlets	20%	9%	12%
TV/radio	18%	10%	7%
Social media (e.g., Facebook groups, Twitter, etc.)	15%	7%	8%
Firearms advocacy groups	14%	7%	7%
Online forums (e.g., Reddit, Quora, etc.)	13%	6%	7%
Newspapers/magazines	12%	5%	7%
Firearms trade shows	11%	5%	6%
Online firearms sales outlets	10%	5%	6%
Blogs for gun owners	11%	3%	8%
Podcasts	5%	2%	3%
Other	<1%	<1%	<1%
Don't know	5%	<1%	5%

When it comes to sources for information on firearms, preferences are scattered across demographics and regions of Canada with a couple of exceptions. Those living in Manitoba/Saskatchewan and Atlantic Canada are more likely to turn to family/friends/word of mouth. Residents of Quebec are more likely to get their information and news from firearms in-store sales outlets.

Firearms owners aged 60 years or older are more likely to turn to TV/radio or newspapers/magazines, while younger owners aged 18 to 29 years are more likely to rely on social media or online forums for news and information.

Women are more likely to turn to family/friends/word of mouth, while men are more likely to get information from the TV/radio.

Firearm information sources – Tracking

Q12. What are your two main sources of news and information on firearms	2023 Main/2nd biggest source (n=2,000)	2022 Main/2nd biggest source (n=2,001)
Government websites (e.g., RCMP, Public Safety Canada)	40%	42%
Family/friends/word of mouth	25%	22%
Firearms in-store sales outlets	20%	23%
TV/radio	18%	15%
Social media (e.g., Facebook groups, Twitter, etc.)	15%	14%
Firearms advocacy groups	14%	12%
Online forums (e.g., Reddit, Quora, etc.)	13%	11%
Newspapers/magazines	12%	14%
Firearms trade shows	11%	11%
Online firearms sales outlets	10%	12%
Blogs for gun owners	11%	12%
Podcasts	5%	6%
Other	<1%	<1%
Don't know	5%	6%

B. Awareness and opinions of firearms regulations

1. Familiarity with firearms regulations

The vast majority of firearms owners are at least somewhat familiar with firearms regulations, with half claiming to be very familiar.

Nine in ten (91%) firearms owners are very (50%, down five points from 2022) or somewhat (41%, up two points from 2022) familiar with firearms regulations around the ownership, licensing, transporting, storage, and safe use of firearms in Canada. One in ten (9%) reports being not very or not at all familiar with these firearms regulations.

Familiarity with firearms regulations

Q15. There are a variety of regulations around the ownership, licensing, transporting, storage and safe use of firearms in Canada. How familiar are you with these firearms regulations?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: Familiar	91%	94%
Very familiar	50%	55%
Somewhat familiar	41%	39%
Net: Not Familiar	9%	6%
Not very familiar	6%	5%
Not at all familiar	2%	1%

Urban residents are more likely to be familiar (93%) with firearms regulations. Canadian firearms owners who are aged 44 years or younger are also more likely to be familiar (93%), as well as those whose job has involved firearms (95%).

2. Perception of firearms regulations

Two thirds of firearms owners believe the regulations of firearms in Canada either strikes the right balance or are not strict enough. Three in ten say regulations are too strict, up six points from 2022.

There has been a significant drop in the past year in the proportion of firearms owners (52%, down 12 points from 2022) who think that the regulation of firearms in Canada strikes the right balance. It is notable that there has been an increase both in the proportion who think the regulations are too strict (30%, up six points from 2022), and in the proportion who think they are not strict enough (15%, up five points from 2022).

Perception of firearms regulations

Q16. Would you say that the regulation of firearms (e.g., banning categories of firearms, licence verification, etc.) in Canada is too strict, not strict enough or strikes the right balance?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Too strict	30%	24%
Strikes the right balance	52%	64%
Not strict enough	15%	10%
Don't know	4%	2%

Canadian firearms owners living in Alberta (43%) and small town communities (36%) are more likely to consider the regulation of firearms too strict. This is also true about men (32% compared to 23% women). On the contrary, women are more likely (58% compared to 50% men) to think firearms regulations 'strike right balance.'

3. Attitudes towards legality of types of firearms

Most firearm owners believe that almost all types of firearms should be legal in most cases. A plurality now believes that semi-automatic handguns should be illegal in all or most cases.

Large majorities believe that possession of the following types of firearms should be legal in all or most cases: manual action rifles and shotguns (76%), replica firearms (73%), and semi-automatic rifles and shotguns (62%). Less say the same about revolvers (54%) and semi-automatic handguns (46%) being legal—close to half of firearms owners who feel possession of those firearms should be illegal in all or most cases.

Over the past year, firearms owners increasingly feel that the following types of firearms should be illegal: semi-automatic handguns (49%, up eight points from 2022), revolvers (40%, up six points from 2022), and semi-automatic action rifles and shotguns (33%, up six points from 2022).

Attitudes on legality of types of firearms

Q17. As you may know, there are a variety of categories of firearms in use in Canada. To what extent do you think the personal possession of each of the following types of firearms should be legal or illegal?	2023 Net: Illegal Total (n=2,000)	Illegal in all cases	Illegal in most cases	Net: Legal	Legal in most cases	Legal in all cases	Don't know
Semi-automatic handguns	49%	19%	29%	46%	31%	15%	6%
Revolvers	40%	12%	28%	54%	36%	17%	6%
Rifles and shotguns, that are semi-automatic action	33%	11%	22%	62%	40%	23%	5%
Replica firearms (e.g., airsoft, pellet, BB)	20%	8%	12%	73%	35%	38%	7%
Rifles and shotguns, that are manual action (e.g., pump, break)	20%	6%	13%	76%	42%	35%	4%

Attitudes on legality of types of firearms – Comparison

Q17. As you may know, there are a variety of categories of firearms in use in Canada. To what extent do you think the personal possession of each of the following types of firearms should be legal or illegal?	2023 Net: Illegal Total (n=2,000)	2022 Net: Illegal Total (n=2,001)	2023 Net: Legal Total (n=2,000)	2022 Net: Legal Total (n=2,001)
Semi-automatic handguns	49%	41%	46%	56%
Revolvers	40%	34%	54%	62%
Rifles and shotguns, that are semi-automatic action	33%	27%	62%	70%
Replica firearms (e.g., airsoft, pellet, BB)	20%	21%	73%	75%
Rifles and shotguns, that are manual action (e.g., pump, break)	20%	18%	76%	79%

Those most likely to feel that semi-automatic handguns or revolvers should be illegal in all or most cases include Quebec residents and French speakers, those in rural or suburban communities, those aged 60 years or older, and those who possess fewer than five firearms.

4. Awareness of policies to address firearms-related violence

Most firearms owners have heard at least a bit about each of the eleven government initiatives to address firearms-related violence. Awareness is highest for banning assault-style firearms, and to a lesser extent restrictions on handguns and of the buyback program.

The vast majority of firearm owners have heard at least a bit about all eleven of the policies the federal government has been working on to address firearms-related violence, and over one third have heard a lot about each of them. Awareness is highest for banning “assault-style” firearms, with 52 percent of firearm owners (up four points from 2022) having heard a lot about this. Awareness of the “buyback program” is somewhat lower with 37 percent having heard a lot about this (down two points from 2022).

Similar proportions have heard a lot about restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns (39%); action against gun and gang violence (35%); expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant’s life history (34%); requiring an “Authorization to Transport” (34%); temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada (33%); banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets (33%); requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes (33%); and requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer’s licence with the government (32%). Firearm owners are least likely to have heard a lot about new measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking (29%).

Awareness of policies to address firearms-related violence

Q19. The federal government has been working on policies to address firearms-related violence. To what extent have you heard about each of these policies?	2023 Heard a lot about this Total (n=2,000)	2023 Heard a bit about this	2023 Had not heard about this at all
Banning “assault-style” firearms	52%	37%	11%
Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns	39%	45%	15%
A “buyback” program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms	37%	45%	19%
Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investments and funding, etc.)	35%	46%	20%
Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant's entire life history	34%	44%	22%
Requiring an "Authorization to Transport" restricted or prohibited firearms to any	34%	45%	20%
Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada	33%	45%	21%
Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets	33%	47%	20%
Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes	33%	46%	21%
Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer's licence with the government	32%	46%	22%
New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking	29%	47%	25%

Awareness of policies to address firearms-related violence - Tracking

Q19. The federal government has been working on policies to address firearms-related violence. To what extent have you heard about each of these policies?	2023 Heard a lot about this Total (n=2,000)	2022 Heard a lot about this Total (n=2,001)
Banning “assault-style” firearms	52%	48%
Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns	39%	-
A “buyback” program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms	37%	39%
Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investments and funding, etc.)	35%	38%
Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant's entire life history	34%	38%
Requiring an "Authorization to Transport" restricted or prohibited firearms to any	34%	38%
Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada	33%	-
Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets	33%	35%
Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes	33%	35%
Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer’s licence with the government	32%	34%
New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking	29%	33%

Those most likely to have heard a lot about banning “assault-style” firearms include:

- Men (54% compared to 48% women)
- Household income of \$150k or more (61%)
- Own five or more firearms (78%)

Those most likely to have heard a lot about a “buyback” program include:

- Residents of Ontario (42%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (39%)
- Have a university degree (41%)
- English speakers (38%)
- Current job involves firearms (51%)
- Own five or more firearms (49%)

5. Support of policies to address firearms-related violence

Large majorities of firearm owners continue to support all eleven of the proposed measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada, though support for many policies have declined since 2022.

Firearm owners were asked about the extent to which they support or oppose each of the eleven proposed measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada. Support for these measures ranges from a high of 81 percent supporting action against gun and gang violence, to a low of 63 percent for temporary restrictions on the importations of handguns into Canada. It is notable that while 65 percent support both the banning of “assault-style” firearms and the “buyback” program, support for both of these initiatives have dropped by 12 points over the past year.

Support of policies to address firearms-related violence

Q20. To what extent would you support or oppose each of these measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada?	2023 NET % Support Total (n=2,000)	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly oppose
Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investment, funding, etc.)	81%	54%	28%	9%	6%
New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking.	79%	50%	30%	11%	6%
Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant's entire life history	73%	40%	33%	14%	9%
Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes	73%	41%	32%	14%	9%
Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer's licence with the government	72%	39%	33%	15%	8%
Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets	68%	38%	30%	16%	11%
Requiring an "Authorization to Transport" restricted or prohibited firearms to any location	68%	34%	34%	17%	10%
Banning "assault-style" firearms	65%	41%	24%	16%	14%
A "buyback" program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms	65%	34%	31%	15%	14%
Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns	63%	34%	29%	19%	14%
Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada	63%	34%	29%	17%	14%

Support of policies to address firearms-related violence – Tracking

Q20. To what extent would you support or oppose each of these measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada?	2023 NET % Support Total (n=2,000)	2022 NET % Support Total (n=2,001)
Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investments and funding, etc.)	81%	87%
New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking.	79%	85%
Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant's entire life history	73%	77%
Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes	73%	80%
Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer's licence with the government	72%	80%
Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets	68%	78%
Requiring an "Authorization to Transport" restricted or prohibited firearms to any location	68%	76%
Banning "assault-style" firearms	65%	77%
A "buyback" program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms	65%	77%
Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns	63%	-
Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada	63%	-

Generally, support for most of these measures is higher in Quebec and among French speakers, those aged 45 years or older, and the university educated. Support is also generally higher among those whose job does not involve firearms, and who possess just one firearm. Opposition to these measures generally tends to be higher among Albertans, English speakers, and those who own more than one firearm.

Looking specifically at support for banning "assault-style" firearms, it is notable that it is highest among French-speakers (82%), those 60 years of age and over (78%), those who have just one firearm (71%), and those who do not own any firearms that would be prohibited (73%). Support for the ban is lower among Albertans (57%), those aged 18 to 44 years, (60%) and those who own five or more firearms (40%).

Support for the buyback program is highest among French speakers (76%), university graduates, (72%) those who have just one firearm (70%), and those who definitely own firearms that would be prohibited (71%). Support for buyback is lower among Albertans (53%), those aged 18 to 29 years (60%), those with high school educations or less (59%), and those who own five or more firearms (49%).

C. Attitudes towards firearms violence

1. Concern about firearms-related violence in local community

Most firearms owners are at least somewhat concerned that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in their local community, however, this concern has declined over the past year.

Just over six in ten (62%) firearms owners are very or somewhat concerned that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in their local community. Over one third (36%) are not very or not at all concerned. It is notable that the proportion who are at least somewhat concerned about firearms-related violence in their local community has declined ten points over the last year, and the proportion of those who are not very or not at all concerned has increased by nine points over the last year.

Level of concern about firearms-related violence

Q21. How concerned are you that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in your local community? Are you...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: Concerned	62%	72%
Very concerned	25%	33%
Somewhat concerned	37%	39%
Net: Not Concerned	36%	27%
Not very concerned	22%	16%
Not at all concerned	14%	11%
Don't know	2%	1%

Those most likely to be concerned that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in their local community include Ontarians (67%), those living in urban communities (71%), those aged 18 to 29 years (70%), university graduates (69%), those born outside of Canada (70%), those who definitely own newly prohibited firearms (79%), those whose current job involves firearms (87%), and those who support the buyback program (70%).

It is notable that concern about firearms-related violence in the local community is significantly lower among Albertans (53%), those living in small towns and rural areas (43%), those aged 60 years and over (56%), those with high school educations or less (55%), those who own five or more firearms (44%), those who oppose the buyback program (47%), and those who do not possess any newly prohibited firearms (54%).

2. Concern about firearms-related violence outside local community

Firearms owners are more likely to believe that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety outside of their local community than within it.

Interestingly, a larger proportion of Canadian firearms owners are concerned that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety *outside* their local community. While 62 percent shared this concern about their own community, over seven in ten (72%) feel concerned about public safety outside of their community. That is, Canadian firearms owners are more inclined to think that firearms-related violence is an issue outside of their local community than within it.

Level of concern about firearms-related violence – outside of community

Q21b. How concerned are you that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety <i>outside</i> your local community (in other parts of Canada)? Are you...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)
Net: Concerned	72%
Very concerned	29%
Somewhat concerned	44%
Net: Not Concerned	26%
Not very concerned	18%
Not at all concerned	7%
Don't know	2%

Being very concerned with firearms-related violence outside your local community is higher among those living in Ontario (33%), and those living in urban (31%) communities. It is also more common among those aged 60 years or older (41%), have a university degree (33%), and those that have heard about a buyback program (35%) and support it (35%).

3. Perceptions of highest rate of firearms violence

Most firearms owners think inner cities have the highest rate of firearms violence in Canada. Just ten percent think small towns and rural areas have the highest rates.

Over six in ten (65%) of firearm owners continue to believe inner cities have the highest rate of firearms violence in Canada, while two in ten (19%) say it is highest in suburban areas. Just one in ten firearm owners think the highest rate is found in small towns or rural areas. Seven percent don't know. These sentiments are largely unchanged from 2022.

Perceived highest rate of firearms violence

Q22. Which of the following do you think has the highest rate of firearms violence in Canada? Is it...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
In inner cities	65%	63%
In suburban areas	19%	23%
In small towns/rural areas	9%	10%
Don't know	7%	4%

Those most likely to believe inner cities have the highest rates of firearms violence include those living in small town/rural communities (74%), those aged 45 years or older (73%), French speakers (77%), and those who have five or more firearms (76%).

4. Main causes or sources of gun violence in Canada

Firearm owners feel the biggest causes of gun violence are gang violence, organized crime and general criminal activity. They increasingly also mention mental health and accidents.

Firearms owners believe that the main causes or sources of gun violence in Canada are gang violence and organized crime (69%, down three points from 2022), and criminal activity such as break and enters and robbery (59%, down eight points). They are also increasingly citing suicide and mental health (28%, up five points from 2022) and accidental deaths and harm (15% up seven points from 2022). Another 22 percent (down two points from 2022) mention intimate partner violence.

Main causes/sources of gun violence in Canada

Q23. What do you think are the main causes or sources of gun violence in Canada? Is it...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	Biggest	Second Biggest
Gang violence/organized crime	69%	48%	21%
Criminal activity (i.e., break and enters, robbery, etc.)	59%	23%	36%
Suicide/mental health/self-harm	28%	12%	16%
Intimate partner violence/gender-based violence	22%	7%	15%
Accidental death or harm	15%	7%	8%
Government	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other	<1%	<1%	<1%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%

Main causes/sources of gun violence in Canada

Q23. What do you think are the main causes or sources of gun violence in Canada? Is it...?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Gang violence/organized crime	69%	72%
Criminal activity (i.e., break and enters, robbery, etc.)	59%	67%
Suicide/mental health/self-harm	28%	23%
Intimate partner violence/gender-based violence	22%	24%
Accidental death or harm	15%	8%
Government	<1%	<1%
Other	<1%	<1%
Don't know	3%	2%

Those who cite gang violence or organized crime as one of the main causes of gun violence in Canada are more likely to be living in rural communities, aged 60 years or older, men, born outside of Canada, and French speakers. It is notable that younger people and those whose job involves the use of firearms are more likely than others to cite mental health as a main cause of firearms-related violence.

5. Federal government performance on addressing gun-related violence

There has been a significant decline over the past year in firearm owners' rating of the performance of the government's performance on introducing measures to address gun-related violence. One half now rates it as good or excellent.

There has been a sharp decline in how firearm owners rate the performance of the Government of Canada when it comes to introducing measures to address gun-related violence. Just under half (48%, down 17 points from 2022) rate the performance as "excellent" (15%) or "good" (33%). Another 24 percent (up nine points from 2022) rate it "fair" and 26 percent (up nine points from 2022) rate it "poor."

Federal government performance on addressing gun-related violence

Q18. How would you rate the performance of the Government of Canada when it comes to introducing measures (e.g., regulations, policies, programs, etc.) to address gun-related violence?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: Excellent/Good	48%	65%
Excellent	15%	27%
Good	33%	38%
Net: Fair/Poor	50%	33%
Fair	24%	15%
Poor	26%	17%
Don't know	2%	2%

The sentiment that the federal government does an "excellent" or "good" job in introducing measures to address gun-related violence in Canada is highest among those living in urban communities (56%), those aged 18 to 29 years (61%), and those whose job involves firearms (79%). It is also higher among those who are very familiar with firearms regulations (54%), have heard a lot about the buyback program (54%), those who support the buyback program (56%), those who have newly prohibited firearms (73%), and those who would willingly take part in the buyback program (79%).

It is notable that those most likely to feel that the federal government does a "fair" or "poor" job in this regard include those living in Alberta (61%), rural areas and small towns (68%), those aged 60 years and over (71%), men (52%), those who own five or more firearms (78%), and those who oppose the buyback program (67%).

E. Participation in the Buyback Program

1. Clarity of firearm eligibility for the buyback program

Six in ten consider find it at least somewhat clear which firearms are eligible for participation in the buyback program. One third find it unclear.

Over six in ten (62%) firearms owners say it is “very clear” (20%) or “somewhat clear” (42%) to them which firearms are eligible for participation in the buyback program. One third (33%) say it is “not very clear” (23%) or “not at all clear” (10%), and six percent have no opinion.

Optimistically, this number (62%) represents a majority of those who report having heard about the buyback program.

Eligibility for participation in buyback program

Q23b. How clear is it to you which firearms are eligible for participation in the buyback program?	2023 Total (n=2,000)
Net: Clear	62%
Very clear	20%
Somewhat clear	42%
NET: Unclear	33%
Not very clear	23%
Not at all clear	10%
Don't know	6%

Those most likely to find it clear which firearms are eligible for participation in the buyback program include Ontarians (67%), those living in urban communities (71%), those aged 18 to 29 years (74%), those with a university degree (68%), and those whose current job involves firearms (87%). It is also notable that those most likely to find firearms eligibility at least somewhat clear is also significantly higher among those who are very familiar with firearms regulations (70%), those who have heard a lot about the buyback program (74%), those who say they definitely (89%) or probably (83%) own newly prohibited firearms, and those who would willingly participate in the buyback program (89%).

Clarity about which firearms are eligible tends to be lowest among those living in small towns and rural areas (46%), those aged 60 years and over (41%), and those with five or more firearms (45%). It is also lower among those who are unfamiliar with firearms regulations in general and have heard nothing about the buyback program.

2. Possession of newly prohibited firearms

One third of firearms owners report that they probably or definitely own any of the newly prohibited firearms that could qualify for the buyback program.

Over the last year, there has been a sharp decline in the proportion of firearm owners who say they definitely own any of the newly prohibited firearms. One third (34%) report they definitely (17%, down 18 points from 2022) or probably (17%, up three points from 2022) currently own one or more of the newly prohibited firearms (e.g., AR-15 style, Ruger Mini 14, Vz58 rifle, etc.) that they think could qualify for the federal government’s buyback program. One in ten (12%, up five points from 2022) are unsure whether they own firearms that could qualify. One half (50%, up eight points from 2022) report they definitely do not own firearms that could qualify for the buyback program, and five percent (up two points from 2022) prefer not to say.

Own newly prohibited firearms

Q24. Do you currently own any of the newly prohibited firearms (e.g., AR-15 style, Ruger Mini 14, Vz58 rifle, etc.) which you think could qualify for the federal government’s “buyback” program?	2023 Total (n=2,000)	2022 Total (n=2,001)
Net: Yes	34%	49%
Yes, I definitely own firearms that could qualify	17%	35%
Yes, I probably own firearms that could qualify	17%	14%
I am unsure if I own firearms that could qualify	12%	7%
No, I definitely do not own firearms that could qualify	50%	42%
Prefer not to say	5%	2%

The firearms owners who are most likely to say they definitely or probably own any of the firearms that could qualify for the buyback program include Ontarians (41%), urban communities (44%), those aged 18 to 29 years (52%), women (41%), those that have a university degree (42%), English speakers (36%, compared to 19% of French speakers), and those that have a job that involves firearms (76%).

Currently owning any prohibited firearms is also more prevalent among those who own a handgun (48%) or a semi-automatic rifle (46%), are very familiar with firearms regulations (40%), and those who have heard a lot about the buyback program (40%).

Almost half of those who may own prohibited firearms currently own just one; two in ten own two.

Among those who own a prohibited firearm or are unsure, almost half (44%, down ten points from 2022) report thinking they own just one newly prohibited firearm. Two in ten (18%) think they own two, and one in ten think they own three. Just two percent say they think they own more than five newly prohibited firearms. Increased proportions are unsure of how many they own (18%, up seven points from 2022) or prefer not to say (6%, up four points from 2022).

Number of newly prohibited firearms owned

Q25. How many of the newly-prohibited firearms do you think you currently own?	2023 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=907)	2022 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=1,117)
1	44%	54%
2	18%	18%
3	9%	10%
4	3%	3%
5	1%	1%
More than five	2%	2%
Prefer not to say	6%	2%
Don't know	18%	11%

3. Willingness to participate in buyback program

Less than half of firearm owners with prohibited firearms would now willingly participate in a buyback program – a sharp decline over the past year. Another third would participate, but only because it was mandatory.

There has been a significant decline over the past year in the proportion of firearm owners who may own newly prohibited firearms who say they would willingly participate in a buyback program. Less than half (48%, down 25 points from 2022) now say they would participate willingly in a buyback program. The proportion who say they would participate in a buyback program only because it was mandatory has doubled since the last wave (34%, up 17 points from 2022). Another 12 percent (up five points from 2022) would refuse to participate in a buyback program at all.

Willingness to participate in buyback program

Q26. To help Canadians comply with the law and not possess newly prohibited firearms, the federal government intends to implement a buyback program. Would you...?*	2023 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=907)	2022 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=1,117)
Participate willingly in a buyback program	48%	73%
Participate in a buyback program, but only because it is mandatory	34%	17%
Refuse to participate in a buyback program at all, even if it is mandatory	12%	7%
Don't know	6%	2%

*Wording of question slightly modified since 2022.

Those most likely to say they would willingly participate in a buyback program include those in urban communities (57%), those with a university degree (56%), French speakers (65%), those whose current job involves firearms (63%), and those who own just one firearm (52%).

Willingness to participate is also higher among those with a rifle (51%), those who are very familiar with firearms regulations (56%), those who have heard a lot about the buyback program (53%) and support the program (59%), as well as those who say they definitely have prohibited firearms (64%).

Willingness to participate tends to be lower among those in suburban (39%) and rural (28%) communities, those who are aged 60 years or older (38%), those with lower household incomes under \$40,000 (37%), and those with high school educations or less (39%). It is also much lower (30%) among those who oppose the program (27% of whom would refuse to participate in the program at all), and those who are unsure as to whether they possess any firearms that would be eligible (32%).

4. Motivation for participation in buyback program

The main motivations for taking part in the program are the financial compensation and wanting to comply with the law.

Among those who may own newly prohibited firearms, the main motives to participate in the buyback program are the financial compensation (34%, down 17 points from 2022) or desire to comply with the law (33%, down 13 points from 2022). Smaller proportions are most motivated by desire to avoid legal penalty (26%, down 12 points from 2022), supporting the principle of banning these types of firearms (25%, unchanged), and wanting to get rid of the firearms anyways (20%, up eight points from 2022). Twenty percent (up 13 points from 2022) now say that nothing would motivate them to participate.

Motivation for participation in buyback program

Q29. Which of the following would most motivate you to participate in a buyback program?	2023 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=907)	2022 Own forbidden firearms or are unsure (n=1,117)
Financial compensation	34%	51%
Wanting to comply with the law	33%	46%
Desire to avoid possible legal penalty	26%	38%
Support for the principle of banning these types of firearms	25%	25%
Wanting to get rid of these firearms anyways	20%	12%
Nothing would motivate me to participate	20%	7%
Other reason	<1%	<1%
Don't know	4%	2%

5. Reasons for refusal to participate in buyback program

The small number who would refuse to participate in the buyback program give a variety of reasons for their refusal.

The twelve percent of owners of prohibited firearms (n = 107) who say they would refuse to participate in the buyback program were asked their main reason for refusal. The main reasons provided are that they like their firearm/it was gifted/inherited (13%), that it is a free country/their right (12%), the government should go after criminals (11%), and that they have no intention to sell (10%).

Compared to the last wave, more firearms owners among this group mention liking their firearm or its sentimental value. Less mention that they have no intention to sell it/belongs to them/didn't buy it from the government to sell it back to them.

Reasons for refusal to participate in buyback program

Q27. What is the main reason you would refuse to participate in a buyback program?	2023 Refuse to participate in a buyback program (n=107)	2022 Refuse to participate in a buyback program (n=80)
I like my firearm/it was gifted/inherited	13%	6%
It is a free country/I have the right to own firearms	12%	15%
The government should go after criminals/gangs instead of law-abiding people	11%	14%
No intention to sell/it belongs to me/didn't buy it from the government to sell it back to them	10%	26%
It is a nightmare/nothing good happens with the government	7%	5%
I am a responsible firearm owner	6%	13%
I need it to protect myself	5%	8%
Wouldn't be adequately compensated	2%	9%
Tax dollars are being wasted here	1%	4%
Other	4%	10%
Don't know	13%	15%

F. Implementation of buyback program

1. Most important elements of buyback program

The two elements owners of prohibited firearms consider to be the most important in a buyback program include direct deposit payments and convenient drop-off options for returning firearms.

When asked about the two most important elements Canadian firearms owners would like to see in a buyback program, most say direct deposit payments (34%, first or second most important) and convenient drop-off options for returning firearms (31%). Around two in ten also mention easy ways to ask questions (24%) as being an important element, as well as the availability of technical information and support (22%), an easy way to initiate the application process (21%), and the ability to turn in firearms by mail (20%).

Q32. Which of the following are the two most important elements that you would like to see in a buyback program?	2023 TOTAL Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=907)	2023 1 st Most Important Element	2023 2 nd Most Important Element
Direct deposit payments	34%	19%	16%
Convenient drop-off options for returning firearms	31%	15%	16%
Easy ways to ask questions and get answers about the program (i.e., toll-free telephone line, online Q and A)	24%	11%	13%
Readily available technical information and support	22%	10%	12%
Easy way to initiate the application process (i.e., call a 1-800 number to create an application, easy online portal, etc.)	21%	10%	11%
Ability to turn in firearms by mail	21%	12%	9%
Group information sessions	18%	10%	9%
Automatic text or email updates on verification and payment progress	16%	7%	9%
Don't know	7%	7%	7%

2. Buyback program registration

Most owners of prohibited firearms would prefer to register for a buyback program completely online, though an increasing minority would prefer to do so over the phone.

While most owners of prohibited firearms continue to be more likely to register for a buyback program by completing the process completely online (45%, down 13 points from 2022), the proportion who would complete the process completely over the phone (28%, up six points from 2022) has increased since the last wave of research. Two in ten (18%, up three points from 2022) say they would be more likely to register using a combination of online and phone support to participate, and nine percent don't know.

Buyback program registration

Q31. To register for a buyback program, would you be more likely to...?	2023 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=907)	2022 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=1,117)
Complete the process completely online	45%	58%
Complete the process completely over the phone (1-800 number)	28%	22%
Use a combination of online and phone support to participate	18%	15%
Don't know	9%	5%

3. Preferred method of turning in firearms for buyback

A large majority would prefer to turn in their prohibited firearms in person. Just two in ten would prefer a virtual online process.

Seven in ten owners of newly prohibited firearms (70%, down five points from 2022) say that if they were to turn in their prohibited firearm as part of a buyback program, they would prefer to do so in person (e.g., turning in the prohibited firearm to a person physically). Two in ten (21%, up one point from 2022) say they would prefer to do so virtually (e.g., using online communications and contactless pick-up methods). Nine percent (up four points from 2022) don't know.

Preferred method of turning in firearms for buyback

Q30. If you were to turn in your prohibited firearm as part of a buyback program, how would you prefer to do so?	2023 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=907)	2021 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=1,117)
In person (e.g., turn in the prohibited firearm to a person)	70%	75%
Virtually (e.g., using online communications and contactless pick-up methods)	21%	20%
Don't know	9%	5%

Firearms owners who may own prohibited firearms who prefer to turn in their prohibited firearms in person are more likely to be men (73%) and live in urban communities (75%). It is also notable that those who support the buyback program are more likely to prefer to turn in the prohibited firearms in-person, compared to those who oppose the program who say they would prefer to turn the firearms in virtually.

4. Disposing of newly prohibited firearms

Most would prefer to dispose of their newly prohibited firearm(s) by surrendering them for compensation or returning them to the manufacturer.

When asked their preference in disposing of newly prohibited firearms, firearms owners most frequently mention surrendering the firearms for compensation (34%), returning the firearm to the manufacturer (19%), or deactivating the firearms at the government's expense (17%). Smaller proportions mention deactivating or destroying the firearm at their own expense (14%) or exporting it to another country (11%).

Disposing of newly prohibited firearms

Q28. How would you prefer to dispose of your newly prohibited firearm(s)?	2023 Would participate in buyback program (n=800)
Turn in the firearm for compensation	34%
Return the firearm to the manufacturer	19%
Deactivate the firearms at the government's expense	17%
Deactivate/destroy the firearm at my own expense	14%
Export the firearm to another country	11%
Don't know	7%

Categories modified since 2022.

5. Where/how to turn in prohibited firearms

Those turning in their prohibited firearms as part of a buyback program would prefer to do so in a local police station or local RCMP station.

There is no clear consensus as to where those who would turn in their prohibited firearm as part of a buyback program would prefer to do so. They are most likely to prefer to turn prohibited firearms into a local police station (31%, up five points from 2022), to a local RCMP station or detachment (26%, up three points from 2022), or to a federal government centre (24%, down eight points from 2022). Smaller proportions would prefer to turn prohibited firearms in to a firearm dealer or specialty store (23%, up two points from 2022), to a firearm retailer (23%, up three points from 2022), to a firearm manufacturer (21%, up three points from 2022), at a community event (21%, down four points from 2022), to a local gun club or firing range (20%, up three points from 2022), or through a contactless pick-up method (18%, down two points from 2022).

Where/how to turn in prohibited firearms

Q33. If you were to turn in your prohibited firearms, where and how would you prefer to turn it in?	2023 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=907)	2022 Own forbidden firearms or unsure (n=1,117)
Local police station	31%	26%
Local RCMP station/detachment	26%	23%
Federal government centre (e.g., regional Service Canada office)	24%	32%
Firearm dealer/specialty store	23%	21%
Firearm retailer (e.g., sports store)	23%	20%
Firearm manufacturer	21%	18%
At a specific firearm collection community event (e.g., held at community centre, conference centre, etc.)	21%	25%
Local gun club/firing range	20%	17%
Contactless pick-up methods	18%	20%
Other	<1%	<1%
I wouldn't	1%	1%
Don't know	6%	2%

Answers do not vary greatly by demographics though it is notable that those who mention the local police station or federal government centre as preferred places to turn in prohibited firearms are more likely to support a buyback program.

G. Values of firearms owners

1. Agreement with values statements

Firearm owners have a mix of views on a series of statements that measure core values. Agreement is highest on the importance of protecting traditional values, but most also agree that post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone and believe climate change is an important issue and that we need to do more to protect the environment. Two thirds believe that owning a firearm is a privilege not a right.

Firearm owners were asked to read a series of ten statements that measure people’s core socio-cultural values, and to express the extent to which they agree or disagree with them. The purpose of this question was to assess how firearm owners in Canada—as a whole—feel about these statements, but also to see to what extent those who oppose the buyback program differ from those who support the buyback program.

While agreement was highest related to importance of protecting traditional values and activities (74%), Canadian firearms owners also adhered to more progressive values, such as post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone (70% agree) and believing climate change is an important issue and we need to do more to protect the environment. Similar proportions feel Canada is a safe and resilient country (70%), and that owning a firearm is a privilege and not a right (68%).

There is less agreement with the statement “I feel like I have a real say in what elected officials do” (39%), and “the information I get from social media sources is trustworthy and I share it” (35%).

Agreement with values statements

Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that deal with a variety of other topics?	2023 Net: Agree (n=2,000)	Strongly Agree	Some-what Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2023 Net: Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It is important to protect traditional values and activities.	74%	36%	38%	18%	8%	5%	3%
I feel Canada is a safe and resilient country.	70%	27%	43%	19%	11%	7%	3%
Post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone.	70%	40%	30%	18%	12%	8%	5%
I believe climate change is an important issue and we need to do more to protect the environment.	68%	36%	31%	18%	15%	7%	8%
Owning a firearm is a privilege not a right.	68%	40%	28%	16%	16%	8%	8%
I am concerned that governments (at all levels) are collecting too much personal information.	65%	31%	33%	23%	12%	8%	4%
When something is run by the government (at any level), it is usually inefficient and wasteful.	59%	27%	32%	26%	15%	11%	4%
I tend to hold the same opinions on most issues as my friends and family.	56%	19%	37%	29%	15%	11%	4%
I feel like I have a real say in what elected officials do.	39%	15%	24%	22%	39%	19%	20%
Information I get from social media sources is trustworthy and I share it.	35%	13%	22%	26%	39%	20%	19%

Agreement with finding it important to protect traditional values and activities is more prominent among those living in Atlantic Canada and Manitoba/Saskatchewan, as well as those who are aged 45 years or older. Feeling that Canada is a safe and resilient country is more common among men, those who are aged 30 years or older, and those born outside of Canada. Believing that climate change is an important issue and more needs to be done to protect the environment is more common among those who live in Quebec and British Columbia, urban communities, those with a university degree, French speakers, and those who own fewer than five firearms.

As the table below demonstrated, there are also some notable differences between those who support and those who oppose the buyback program when it comes to their response to these values statements. Those who oppose the buyback program are more likely to be concerned that governments (at all levels) are collecting too much personal information (70% compared to 64% among those who support it), and that when something is run by the government it is usually inefficient and wasteful (68% compared to 57% among those who support it).

Those who support the buyback program are more likely to agree with all of the other statements, most notably that Canada is a safe and resilient country (77% compared to 61% among those who oppose it), owning a firearm is a privilege not a right (78% compared to 52% among those who support it), and that climate change is an important issue and we need to do more to protect the environment (70% compared to 46% among those who support it).

Agreement with values statements by support/opposition for buyback

Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that deal with a variety of other topics?	2023 Net: Agree (n=2,000)	Support buyback program	Oppose buyback program
It is important to protect traditional values and activities.	74%	77%	72%
I feel Canada is a safe and resilient country.	70%	77%	61%
Post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone.	70%	76%	62%
I believe climate change is an important issue and we need to do more to protect the environment.	68%	78%	52%
Owning a firearm is a privilege not a right.	68%	79%	46%
I am concerned that governments (at all levels) are collecting too much personal information.	65%	64%	70%
When something is run by the government (at any level), it is usually inefficient and wasteful.	59%	57%	68%
I tend to hold the same opinions on most issues as my friends and family.	56%	60%	51%
I feel like I have a real say in what elected officials do.	39%	44%	30%
Information I get from social media sources is trustworthy and I share it.	35%	39%	29%

II. Detailed findings – Qualitative Phase

A. Awareness of assault-style firearms ban and buyback program

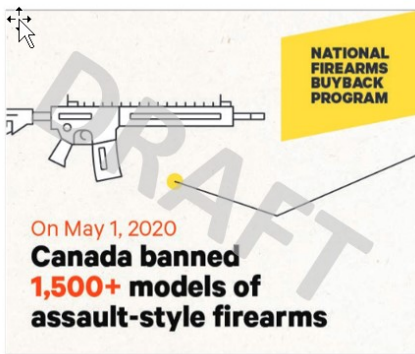
To begin each group session, participants were asked about their awareness of recent changes to Canadian laws and regulations around firearms. The vast majority of participants had at least some degree of awareness of the assault-style firearms ban in general, and many were aware that a buyback program was in development. It was notable that because the question was about recent changes, some initially focused on the restrictions on handguns since that had been announced quite recently at the time of research. The ban on assault-style firearms was something almost all were aware of, but it was not always seen to be something ‘recent,’ since at the time of research it had been announced several years ago.

Awareness of the buyback program was also quite high, though many remarked that they wondered when the program would be implemented. Firearms owners who more actively used their firearms, such as for hunting or target shooting, tended to be more aware of the ban on assault-style weapons and the buyback program. Those who rarely or never use their firearms often had lower awareness, particularly of the buyback program.

B. Reactions to creatives

1. Digital ads

Digital Banner Ad 1



Frame 1



Frame 2



Frame 3

Digital Banner Ad 2



Frame 1



Frame 2

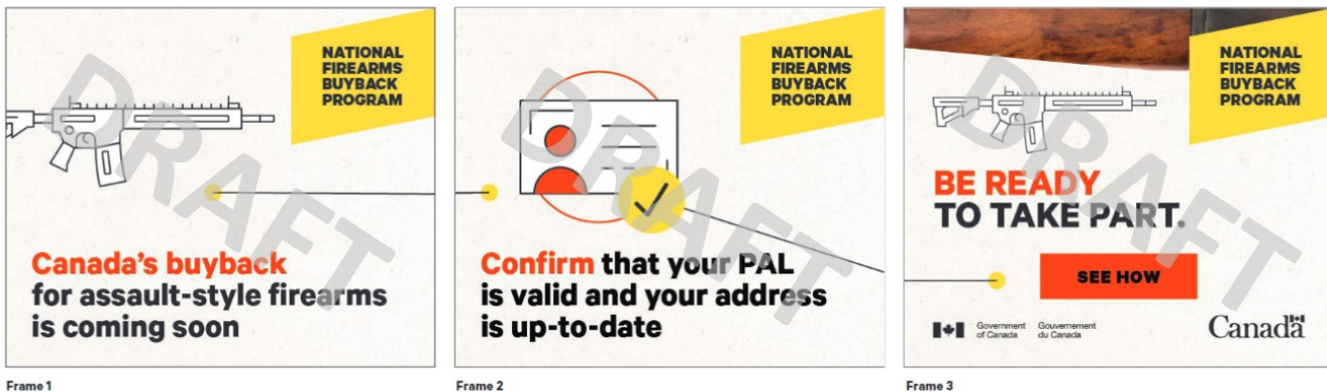


Frame 3

Digital Banner Ad 3



Digital Banner Ad 4



Participants were guided to discuss their reaction to the creatives in terms of their impact, the effectiveness of the message they convey, and also in terms of their visual appeal. Overall, firearms owners clearly understand the core message of the digital banner ads and were able to articulate in their own words that the purpose of the ads is to inform firearms owners that the buyback program would be beginning soon and that there are steps they need to take if it applies to them. The panels with specific calls to action—check, learn, confirm—were seen as most informative and neutral in tone. Digital Banner Ad 2 with the line “Check to see if your firearm is part of the program” was seen to be particularly useful compared to the other executions.

While some felt the ads might be a good reminder to those unaware of the program, others—especially in Quebec—felt that owners of assault-style firearms would not need to be reminded about the program or to update their PAL.

While the core message was easily understood, some participants had difficulty focusing on the task of assessing the ad itself, and there were often tangents where these participants would indicate their cynicism about the program itself when first presented with the concepts. When these participants were guided back to the task at hand, they often shifted this cynicism toward the ads. These more cynical firearms owners were not a majority of participants, but sentiments of this nature were present in all groups to varying degrees. Specific criticisms that came up included:

- Some found the wording in the ads to be ominous in tone, such as “coming soon” and “be ready.”

- Some objected to the use of the word “dispose” in Digital Banner Ad 3, pointing out that the banned firearms may have monetary and sentimental value to their owners, and this word devalued them and implied they were to be thrown out.
- In Quebec, the word « *participer* (take part)» was irritating to some participants. They felt it implied that people have a choice whether to participate in the program or not when that isn’t the case.

Considering the visual style and imagery of the digital banner ads, most appreciated the clean simplicity of the black-on-white frames. Some objected to a graphic of an AR-15 in the ad because they felt it misrepresented the range of models impacted by the ban, but most did not comment on this.

2. Print ads

Print Ad 1



A



B



C

Print Ad 2

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BE READY FOR BUYBACK. HELP KEEP CANADIANS SAFE.

To help ensure public safety, on May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada prohibited over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms. A national buyback program for these firearms will start soon.

Here are some things you can do to be ready to participate and to help keep Canada safe:

- Check to see if your firearm is part of the program
- Learn about the ways you can dispose of your firearm
- Confirm that your PAL is valid and your address is up-to-date

Learn more about the program and how to be ready.
CANADA.CA/FIREARMS-BUYBACK

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

A

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BE READY FOR BUYBACK. HELP KEEP CANADIANS SAFE.

To help ensure public safety, Canada's buyback program for over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms will start soon.

Here are some things you can do to be ready to participate and to help keep Canada safe:

Check
Check to see if your firearm is part of the program

Learn
Learn about the ways you can dispose of your firearm

Confirm
Confirm that your PAL is valid and your address is up-to-date

Learn more about the program and how to be ready.
CANADA.CA/FIREARMS-BUYBACK

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

B

Print Ad 3

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BUYBACK IS COMING. ARE YOU READY?

As a firearm owner, you know that on May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada prohibited over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms. A national buyback program for these firearms will start soon.

Here are some things you can do to prepare to participate and remain compliant with the law:

- Check to see if your firearm is part of the program
- Learn about the ways you can dispose of your firearm
- Confirm that your PAL is valid and your address is up-to-date

Learn more about the program and how to be ready.
CANADA.CA/FIREARMS-BUYBACK

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

A

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BUYBACK IS COMING. ARE YOU READY?

Canada's buyback program for newly assault-style firearms will start soon. As a firearm owner, you need to be ready.

Here are some things you can do to be ready to participate and to help keep Canada safe:

Check
Check to see if your firearm is part of the program

Learn
Learn about the ways you can dispose of your firearm

Confirm
Confirm that your PAL is valid and your address is up-to-date

Learn more about the program and how to be ready.
CANADA.CA/FIREARMS-BUYBACK

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

B

The second set of ad concepts shown to participants were print ads. Participants viewed several variations of the print ads, including a photo that showed how these ads might appear on a magazine page. As with the digital ads, the print ads were widely assessed as understandable, to the point, and with a clear message. Most preferred the message in Print Ad 1B “Do you own a firearm? Get the facts.” This headline was seen to be factual, direct, and less stigmatizing than other messages.

Echoing similar sentiments expressed about the digital ads, some firearms owners felt some of the headlines (e.g., “Buyback is coming” and “Are you ready?”) seemed ominous and made them worry that there could be future bans on other kinds of guns. Some, particularly in Quebec, questioned the relevance of saying that the buyback was coming without communicating a deadline.

There was also a negative reaction to the line “Help keep Canadians safe” in Print Ad 2. Gun owners found this wording to be stigmatizing toward firearms owners and felt uncomfortable with the implication that law-abiding owners were a problem or otherwise responsible for people being unsafe. Discussing these negative connotations often led to participants expressing broader cynicism about whether or not the program would actually make anyone safer.

Looking at slight variations between ad layouts, most preferred seeing the checklist in horizontal as opposed to vertical form, and several commented that they appreciated the step-by-step icons in the ads. Participants were less interested in other fine print on the ads and didn’t express strong preferences about what was stated there. Several noted that print ads like this ought to include a QR code so that people could scan with their phone to reach the website without manually typing in a URL.

Reactions to the visual style of the ads were also similar to their assessments of the digital ads. The black-on-white style was seen to be very professional, easy to read, and instantly recognizable as government advertising. Some compared the ad style to pandemic-related announcements from the government.

The specific imagery used in the ads received mixed reactions. Many firearms owners did not initially recognize all the gun components shown at the top of each ad. The image of an upper receiver for a rifle was most recognizable for firearms owners, while the bumpy grip image was often unidentifiable or mistaken for other objects (frequently a yoga mat).

3. Social Media Posts and Graphics

Social Post 1

On May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada prohibited over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms. Buyback will start soon. See what you can do to be ready: Canada.ca/firearms-buyback

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BE READY FOR BUYBACK.
Let's keep Canadians safe.

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Social Post 2

Canada's buyback for newly prohibited firearms will start soon. You can be ready by having an up-to-date license and knowing your options for disposal. Learn more: Canada.ca/firearms-buyback

NATIONAL FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

BUYBACK IS COMING.
Are you ready?

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Participants were shown mock-ups for two social media posts (not specific to a particular platform). When asked where they might expect to see this sort of post, participants mentioned Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram most often as the platforms. TikTok and YouTube were also mentioned several times.

Some firearms owners who are on social media said they might click on a post about the program if it appeared in their feed, but many others said they would ignore the post. Several remarked that they never clicked on any ads in social media feeds, and these ads would not prompt them to change that behaviour. Some said they might share this with someone if they thought they would be affected by the program.

In terms of the messages in the graphics, there were objections to the phrasing of the posts similar to what was heard about the digital and print ads. Firearms owners were particularly bothered by “Let’s keep Canadians safe.” Beyond the graphics’ headlines, most said they likely would not read the finer text in the social post itself if they encountered it on social media.

4. Website Expectations

Following the review of the three sets of ads, participants were engaged in a discussion about a potential website for the buyback program, and what they would expect to find on such a site. In each group, there were usually one or two participants who could recall the URL listed on the ads, partially or in full, without having it on screen.

Considering the content on a potential website, participants had many suggestions or expectations for items to be included. Popular suggestions mentioned frequently included:

- User-friendly search functionality to help firearms owners determine if they are impacted by the assault-style firearms ban or are eligible for the buyback program.
 - Participants often stressed that it is not enough to simply have a list of affected firearms, but that the search functionality should be flexible and thorough, allowing owners to search based on different variables.
 - Many participants also indicated that for firearms owners who were not able to determine if they are impacted or not, there should be an easy way to contact someone for help.
- What actions are required for owners of prohibited firearms.
- Options for disposing or disabling prohibited firearms, and listings for technicians licensed to disable affected firearms.
- Price lists for prohibited firearms that are eligible for the buyback program.
- Detailed steps for participating in the buyback program (i.e., how to apply, where the firearm should be taken or sent, deadlines, etc.)
 - Some also mentioned that it is important to display warnings about what not to do with an illegal firearm (e.g., taking an illegal firearm to a police station is something owners should be warned against).
- Information about the penalties for continued possession of prohibited firearms (non-compliance).

C. Attitudes towards the ban and buyback program

Most participants in the focus group sessions held moderate to strong negative feelings toward the ban on assault-style firearms and were highly sceptical about its effectiveness. Though few said they owned prohibited firearms that would be directly affected by the ban, some expressed sympathy for other gun owners. They often felt it was unfair that someone who legally acquired their firearms would be forced to relinquish their possessions to the government. This sense of unfairness was often related to the money spent on firearms and accessories—participants generally did not believe the buyback would offer payments that would fairly compensate owners for the loss. Another common reason for negativity toward the ban was the emotional attachment owners have to their firearms. Many participants felt sympathy for firearms owners who stand to lose items that represent an important aspect of their lifestyle, their values, and their connection to others.

While negativity toward the ban for its impact on owners was common, most participants did agree that the firearms targeted by the ban are not necessary for typical uses, such as hunting or target shooting. While admitting that the ban did not seem overly extreme at this time, firearms owners often expressed concern that the regulations may later be expanded in ways that affect other firearms. Often, participants expressed a concern that the ban wastes resources by targeting law-abiding, legal gun owners who care for their firearms, rather than addressing trafficking and smuggling of illegal weapons. In Quebec specifically, many additionally perceived the campaign as a waste of resources because the provincial government has the information necessary to contact each owner directly, negating the need for more widespread advertising.

Considering the wider efficacy of the ban and buyback program as a means of reducing gun violence in Canada, most felt that this approach would not succeed. Even when the policies were promoted as part of a larger strategy, very few were willing to concede that the ban and buyback program were an effective strategy for tackling gun violence and gun-related crime. Most firearms owners in the group did not see themselves or their peers as a major factor in gun crime because their firearms are registered and legally safeguarded. They blamed the rise in gun violence on illegal owners and smugglers who would not be affected by the ban.

While sentiment toward the ban was largely negative and pessimistic, a minority of firearms owners in the groups felt that the ban on assault-style firearms was a good policy. For those who saw the policy in a positive way, the ban was noted as something that impacts types of firearms that they do not own and that, in their view, has no place in society.

Though firearm owners largely disagree with the ban and the buyback program on its face, most said that if they were affected they would comply with the policy, with specific preference for participating in the buyback program or disabling the firearm being mixed. For those with firearms that had more sentimental meaning, disabling the firearm was an option they would consider, but for those hoping to continue owning firearms for personal use, the buyback was an option they would pursue if they considered the compensation to be fair. For those who were enthusiastic or frequent users of their firearms, this willingness to comply was generally rooted in concern that non-compliance would threaten their ability to partake in a pastime that is very important to their lifestyle.

Appendix A: Quantitative methodology

The quantitative phase of this research consisted of an online survey of 2,000 current owners of firearms, 18 years of age and over. This necessitated the use of screening questions at the start of each online survey to ascertain if the respondent is currently the owner of a firearm of any kind.

Environics sourced the online sample from Delvinia’s AskingCanadians panel, to generate a large sample with representative coverage of all groups of interest. AskingCanadians is an online panel firm with access to more than one million Canadians. Established in 2005, AskingCanadians owns and manages Canada’s premier proprietary research panel—also known as AskingCanadians—and its French counterpart *Qu’en pensez-vous*, which provides Francophone panel members with a unilingual French interface and unique voice.

Since the samples used in online panel surveys are based on self-selection and are not a random probability sample, no formal estimates of sampling error can be calculated. Although opt-in panels are not random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys, provided they are well designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel.

Sample design and weighting

Normally, when Environics conducts national online surveys of the Canadian general public, we set provincial and regional quotas, and we also set interlocking age and gender quotas to ensure that the sample is as reflective as possible of the Canadian population. In this case, the survey was only with firearms owners. From past research, Environics had reason to believe that firearms owners are well distributed across the provinces and regions of Canada, with some possible over-representation in the Prairie provinces and in rural areas. Firearms owners skew heavily male, and it was expected there would be underrepresentation of those born outside of Canada or those who are racialized.

As such, the study did not set firm quotas on any other demographic factors, although Environics attempted to ensure the sample included a diverse sample of current Canadian firearm owners (gender, geographic location, urban/rural split, types of activities/hobbies of different firearm owners [i.e., hunters, sport shooters, collectors, etc.]). The data were not weighted since the exact demographic makeup of the population of firearms owners is unknown.

The following is the achieved (unweighted) distribution by region:

Region	TOTAL
Atlantic	241
Quebec	331
Ontario	763
Man./Sask.	160
Alberta	247
B.C.	258
TOTAL	2,000

Questionnaire design

Public Safety Canada provided Environics with an outline of topics to be covered in the survey. Environics then designed a questionnaire in consultation with Public Safety Canada to ensure its research objectives were met. Upon approval of the English questionnaire, Environics arranged for the questionnaire to be translated into French by professional translators.

Environics' data analysts programmed the questionnaire, then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured the data entry process conformed to the survey's basic logic. The data collection system handles sampling invitations, quotas, and questionnaire completion (skip patterns, branching, and valid ranges).

The final survey questionnaire is included in Appendix D.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was conducted from March 16 to 31, 2023. The median interview length was 15-minutes.

All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the surveys in their official language of choice. All research work was conducted in accordance with the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Online Surveys, and recognized industry standards, as well as applicable federal legislation (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA).

Completion results

The completion results are presented in the following table:

Contact disposition

Disposition	Total sample
Total invitations(c)	120,735
Total completes (d)	2,000
Qualified break-offs (e)	1,291
Disqualified (f)	9,816
Not responded (g)	107,120
Quota filled (h)	508
Contact rate = (d+e+f+h)/c	11.28%
Participation rate = (d+f+h)/c	10.21%

Respondent profile

The following table presents the distribution of survey participants by key demographic and other variables:

Total interviewed	Total sample %
Age	
18-29	27%
30-44	35%
45-59	19%
60+	19%
Gender	
Female	29%
Male	70%
Gender diverse	1%
Education	
High school or less	24%
College/tech/some university	36%
University	39%
Household income	
Under \$40,000	17%
\$40,000-<\$80,000	32%
\$80,000-<\$100,000	19%
\$100,000-<\$150,000	17%
\$150,000 or more	12%
Language of survey	
English	87%
French	13%
Community type	
Urban area	46%
Suburban area	29%
Small town/rural/remote area	24%
Birthplace	
Canada	89%
Other	9%

Appendix B: Qualitative methodology

This qualitative focus group study consisted of eight online focus groups to test reactions and gain feedback on draft advertising concepts for the buyback program. The concepts were intended to communicate details on the buyback program, including how to participate and what firearms would be eligible. In each discussion, participants were shown different formats of the ads (digital, print, and social media). While the ads were uniform in overall visual style, the ads varied in their layouts and the specific wording of the information in the ads. Participants discussed the general effectiveness of the ads, what they liked or disliked about the different formats and messaging variations, the amount of information about the buyback program shown in each concept, and the effectiveness of the ads in terms of informing and prompting action from firearms owners.

1. Group composition

Environics Research conducted a series of eight online focus groups in October 2022 for Public Safety Canada to assess reactions to a set of digital, print, and social media advertising concepts. One to two sessions were conducted with firearm owners from each of the following regions: Ontario (October 11 and 13), British Columbia (October 11), Atlantic Canada (October 12), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (October 12), Alberta (October 13), and Quebec (two separate sessions on October 15). The groups were conducted using the Zoom conferencing platform and were composed of Canadians who own firearms. Each session consisted of six (6) to eight (8) participants.

The primary objective of testing was to explore the reactions of firearms owners to the ad concepts designed to promote the buyback program for assault-style firearms. A secondary objective was to explore attitudes toward the prohibition of assault-style firearms and the planned buyback program.

The following topics were explored in each focus group:

- Current firearm ownership and usage
- Awareness of new prohibition and buyback program
- Digital Banner Ads – Success Check
- Print Ads – Success Check
- Social Media Graphics and Posts – Success Check
- Website expectations
- Attitudes and opinions towards the ban on assault-style firearms and the buyback program
- Final comments

Environics recruited participants via a combination of industry-standard methods to ensure participation in all the sessions across all provinces. Participants were offered a \$100 incentive to thank them for their time. Environics invited eight (8) participants to each session. The sessions were hosted using the Zoom conferencing platform.

The sessions were distributed as follows:

Dates	Participant Locations and Times
Tue., Oct 11, 2022	5pm EST – Group #1 (Ontario) 7pm EST (4pm PST) – Group #2 (B.C.)
Wed., Oct 12, 2022	4pm EST (5pm AST) – Group #3 (Atlantic) 6pm EST (5pm CST) – Group #4 (Manitoba/Saskatchewan)
Thu., Oct 13, 2022	5pm EST – Group #5 (Ontario) 7pm EST (5pm MST) – Group #6 (Alberta)
Sat., Oct 15, 2022	10am EST – Group #7 (Quebec) 12pm EST – Group #8 (Quebec)

NB: Groups 7 and 8 were conducted in French. All other focus groups were conducted in English.

2. Recruitment

Environics developed the recruitment screener and provided it to Public Safety Canada for review prior to finalizing. While qualitative research does not give every member of the target population of firearm owners a chance to participate, and its results are not intended to be statistically representative of target population of firearms owners, it does aim to collect information that is broadly reflective of the target population. Potential participants were screened to reflect a distribution of factors to ensure a wide variety of perspectives. Factors included gender; age; ability to attend the online focus group session; and willingness to read, assess, and share feedback on the creative materials. Participants were screened to ensure all exclusions and specifications required by Public Safety Canada were followed. All participants were offered a \$100 honorarium to encourage participation and to thank them for their time.

Environics subcontracted Trend Research to recruit the focus group participants. In total, there were 64 participants invited to take part in the eight focus groups sessions, 55 of whom participated.

5. Moderation and conduct

Derek Leebosh, Vice President – Public Affairs at Environics Research, moderated four English-language sessions (October 11 and 12). Stephanie Coulter, Senior Research Associate – Public Affairs at Environics Research, moderated two English-language sessions (October 13). France Mercier moderated the two French sessions on October 15. Each focus group session lasted approximately 90-minutes and was conducted according to a discussion guide developed in consultation with Public Safety Canada. All qualitative research work was conducted in accordance with professional standards and applicable government legislation (e.g., PIPEDA).

All groups were video- and audio-recorded for use in subsequent analysis by the research team, and during the recruitment process, participants provided consent to such recording and were given assurances of anonymity. Environics arranged for the screener and discussion guide to be translated into French. Industry and Government of Canada standards for qualitative research were followed.

Appendix C: Quantitative questionnaire

Environics Research
March 7, 2023

**Public Safety Canada
Firearm Owners Survey
PN11600
Final Questionnaire
N = 2,000 CURRENT OWNERS OF FIREARMS**

LANDING PAGE

Please select your preferred language for completing the survey / Veuillez choisir la langue dans laquelle vous souhaitez répondre au sondage

- 1 English / *Anglais*
- 2 Français / French

The information collected through the research is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act, legislation of the Government of Canada, and to the provisions of relevant provincial privacy legislation.

Introduction

Environics Research, an independent research company, is conducting this survey on behalf of Public Safety Canada, which is a department of the Government of Canada.

Your participation is voluntary, and your answers will remain anonymous. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete.

The survey is best completed on a computer or a tablet. If you are completing this survey on a smart phone, please turn the device to landscape (horizontal/sideways) mode so that all questions display correctly.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Environics Research at publicsafetysurvey@environics.ca.

Please click on >> to continue.

Section 1: Screening and initial demographics

A. Do you own a firearm of any kind (i.e., handgun, hunting rifle, long gun etc.)?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 01 – Yes, I own a firearm | CONTINUE |
| 02 – No, I do not own a firearm | THANKS AND TERMINATE |

B. What is your province/territory of residence?

PROVINCE DROP-DOWN LIST

C. To ensure we include people from all parts of Canada, what are the first three characters of your postal code?

FSA OPEN END

D. Which of the following best describes where you live?

01 – An urban area

02 – A suburban area

03 – A small town, rural or remote area

04 – An Indigenous community

E. In what year were you born?

NUMERIC DROPDOWN (<1920 TO >2003).

F. What is your gender?

01 – Male

02 – Female

03 – Gender diverse

99 – Prefer not to say

Section 2: General firearms ownership

This survey will explore issues around firearms in Canada. Please be assured that your responses will be strictly confidential and will not be linked to you in any way.

3. How many firearms do you currently own?

01 - One

02 – Two

03 – Three

04 – Four

05 – Five

06 – More than five

99 – Don't know

4. Which of the following types of firearms do you own? *Check all that apply.*

- 01 – Rifle (manual action)
- 02 – Shotgun (manual action)
- 03 – Semi-automatic long gun
- 04 – Revolver
- 05 – Semi-automatic handgun
- 98 – Other (SPECIFY) _____
- 99 – Don't know

5. How long have you owned any firearms? Has it been...?

- 01 – Less than a year
- 02 – One to two years
- 03 – Two to five years
- 04 – More than five years
- 99 – Don't know

6. How have you obtained your firearm(s)?

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 – Purchased from a retailer
- 02 – Purchased from an individual
- 03 - Inherited from a family member or friend
- 04 – Received as a gift
- 05 – Imported from another country
- 99 – Don't know

7. On average, how often do you use your firearms?

- 01 – Once a week or more
- 02 – 1 or 2 times a month
- 03 – A few times a year
- 04 – Once a year or less
- 05 – Never
- 99 – Don't know

8. Do you currently have a valid PAL (Possession and Acquisition Licence) number? (**NB:** Please be assured once again that your answer will remain anonymous and will never be traced back to you)

CHECK ONE

- 01 – Yes, my PAL number is valid and up to date
- 02 – Yes, I have a valid PAL number, but some of my information is out of date
- 03 – No, I had a PAL number in the past, but it has expired
- 04 – No, I have never had a PAL number
- 98 – Prefer not to say
- 99 – Don't know

From 2022 survey - modified

9. Did you previously have a valid RPAL (Restricted Possession and Acquisition Licence) number? (**NB:** Please be assured once again that your answer will remain anonymous and will never be traced back to you).

CHECK ONE

- 01 – Yes, I had an RPAL
- 04 – No, I have never had a RPAL
- 98 – Prefer not to say
- 99 – Don't know

From 2022 survey - modified

10. People own firearms for many different reasons. Which of the following are the *main* reasons you own a firearm?

RANDOMIZE...CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 – Hunting for sport
- 02 – Hunting as part of Indigenous tradition or treaty right
- 03 - Hunting for food
- 04 - Target shooting for sport (recreational or competitive)
- 05 - I'm a firearms collector
- 06 - Safety/protection/self-defence
- 07 - Gifted through inheritance
- 08 – Work-related (employment, animal control, etc.)
- 98 – Other reason (SPECIFY) _____
- 99 – Prefer not to say

12. What are your two main sources of news and information on firearms? **RANDOMIZE ORDER...DRAG AND DROP MAIN SOURCE, 2ND BIGGEST SOURCE**

- 01 – Government websites (e.g., RCMP, Public Safety Canada)
- 02 - Blogs for gun owners
- 03 – Social media (e.g., Facebook groups, Twitter etc.)
- 04 – Firearms in-store sales outlets
- 05 – Online firearms sales outlets
- 06 – Firearms trade shows
- 07 - TV/radio
- 08 - Podcasts
- 09 - Family/friends/word of mouth
- 10 - Newspaper/magazines
- 11 – Online forums (e.g., Reddit, Quora etc.)
- 12 – Firearms advocacy groups
- 98 - Other (SPECIFY) _____ **ANCHOR**
- 99 – Don't know **ANCHOR/EXCLUSIVE**

Section 3: Awareness and Opinions of Firearms Regulations

15. There are a variety of regulations around the ownership, licensing, transporting, storage and safe use of firearms in Canada. How familiar are you with these firearms regulations?

- 01 – Very familiar
- 02 – Somewhat familiar
- 03 – Not very familiar
- 04 – Not at all familiar

16. Would you say that the regulation of firearms (e.g., banning categories of firearms, licence verification, etc.) in Canada is too strict, not strict enough or strikes the right balance?

- 01 – Too strict
- 02 – Strikes the right balance
- 03 – Not strict enough
- 99 – Don't know

17. As you may know there are a variety of categories of firearms in use in Canada. To what extent do you think the personal possession of each of the following types of firearms should be legal or illegal?

RANDOMIZE. CAROUSEL.

- a) Rifles and shotguns, that are manual action (e.g., pump, break)
- b) Rifles and shotguns, that are semi-automatic action
- c) Revolvers
- d) Semi-automatic handguns
- e) Replica firearms (e.g., airsoft, pellet, BB)

01 - Illegal in all cases

02 - Illegal in most cases

03 - Legal in most cases

04 – Legal in all cases

99 – Don't know

18. How would you rate the performance of the Government of Canada when it comes to introducing measures (e.g., regulations, policies, programs, etc.) to address gun-related violence?

01 – Excellent

02 – Good

03 – Fair

04 – Poor

99 – Don't know

19. The federal government has been working on policies to address firearms-related violence. To what extent have you heard about each of these policies?

RANDOMIZE. CAROUSEL.

- a) Banning “assault-style” firearms
- b) A “buyback” program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms
- c) Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns
- d) Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada
- e) Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investments and funding, etc.)
- f) Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant’s entire life history
- g) New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking.
- h) Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets
- i) Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes
- j) Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer’s licence with the government
- k) Requiring an “Authorization to Transport” restricted or prohibited firearms to any location other than a range or home after a purchase.

01- Heard a lot about this

02 – Heard a bit about this

03- Had not heard about this at all

20. To what extent would you support or oppose each of these measures to address firearms-related violence in Canada?

RANDOMIZE. CAROUSEL.

- a) Banning “assault-style” firearms
- b) A “buyback” program whereby the government will provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms
- c) Restrictions on the sale, purchase, and transfer of handguns
- d) Temporary restrictions on the importation of handguns into Canada
- e) Action against gun and gang violence (e.g., gang prevention programs, investments and funding, etc.)
- f) Expanding background checks to include a review of a firearms licence applicant’s entire life history
- g) New measures and funding to tackle gun smuggling and trafficking.
- h) Banning the sale or transfer of magazines capable of holding more than the legal number of bullets
- i) Requiring businesses to maintain inventory and sales records of non-restricted firearms for tracing purposes
- j) Requiring a seller of non-restricted firearms to validate a buyer’s licence with the government
- k) Requiring an “Authorization to Transport” restricted or prohibited firearms to any location other than a range or home after a purchase.

ROTATE SCALE

- 01- Strongly support
- 02- Somewhat support
- 03- Somewhat oppose
- 04 - Strongly oppose
- 99 – Don’t know

Section 4: Firearms and safety

21. How concerned are you that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety in your local community?

- 01 – Very concerned
- 02 – Somewhat concerned
- 03 – Not very concerned
- 04 – Not at all concerned
- 99 – Don’t know

New

21b. How concerned are you that firearms-related violence is a threat to public safety **outside** your local community (in other parts of Canada)? Are you...?

- 01 Very concerned
- 02 – Somewhat concerned
- 03 – Not very concerned
- 04 – Not at all concerned
- 99 – Don't know

22. Which of the following do you think has the highest rate of firearms-related violence in Canada? Is it...?

CHECK ONE

- 01 – In inner cities
- 02 – In suburban areas
- 03 – In small towns and rural areas
- 99 - Don't know

23. What do you think are the main causes or sources of gun violence in Canada? Is it...?

RANDOMIZE...DRAG AND DROP BIGGEST AND SECOND BIGGEST

- 01 – Gang violence/Organized crime
- 02 – Criminal activity (i.e., break and enters, robbery, etc.)
- 03 – Intimate partner violence/gender-based violence
- 04 – Suicide/mental health/self-harm
- 05 – Accidental death or harm
- 98 – Other (SPECIFY) _____ **ANCHOR**
- 99 - Don't know **ANCHOR...EXCLUSIVE**

Section 5: Removal of Newly-Prohibited Firearms from Canadian Society

Now some questions about the federal government's removal of newly prohibited types of assault-style firearms (identified as part of the May 2020 Order in Council) and the buyback program.

A reminder that your answers will remain anonymous and will not be traced back to you.

23b. How clear is it to you which firearms are eligible for participation in the buyback program?

- 01 – Very clear
- 02 – Somewhat clear
- 03 – Not very clear
- 04 – Not at all clear
- 99 – Don't know

24. Do you currently own any of the newly-prohibited firearms (e.g., AR-15 style, Ruger Mini 14, Vz58 rifle, etc.) which you think could qualify for the federal government's "buyback" program?

01 – Yes, I definitely own firearms that could qualify

02 – Yes, I probably own firearms that could qualify

03 – I am unsure if I own firearms that could qualify

04 – No, I definitely do not own firearms that could qualify **SKIP TO Q34**

99 – Prefer not to say **SKIP TO Q34**

ASK ALL WHO DEFINITELY OR PROBABLY OWN PROHIBITED FIREARMS IN Q. 24 OR ARE UNSURE (01, 02 AND 03)

25. How many of the newly-prohibited firearms do you think you currently own?

01 - One

02 – Two

03 – Three

04 – Four

05 – Five

06 – More than five

07 – Prefer not to say

99 – Don't know

26. To help Canadians comply with the law and not possess newly-prohibited firearms, the federal government intends to implement a buyback program. Would you...?

CHECK ONE

01 – Participate willingly in a buyback program

02 – Participate in a buyback program, but only because it is mandatory

03 – Refuse to participate in a buyback program at all, even if it is mandatory

99 – Don't know

ASK ALL WHO SAY 03 "REFUSE" IN Q. 26:

27. What is the main reason you would refuse to participate in a buyback program?

OPEN ENDED QUESTION

ASK ALL WHO SAY 01 OR 02 OR DK IN Q. 26:

28. How would you prefer to dispose of your newly-prohibited firearm(s)?

CHECK ONE**RANDOMIZE**

- 01 – Turn in the firearm for compensation
- 02 – Deactivate the firearms at the government’s expense
- 03 - Deactivate/destroy the firearm at my own expense
- 04 – Export the firearm to another country
- 05 – Return the firearm to the manufacturer
- 99 – Don’t know **ANCHOR**

ASK ALL WHO DEFINITELY OR PROBABLY OWN PROHIBITED FIREARMS IN Q. 24 OR ARE UNSURE (01, 02 AND 03)

29. Which of the following would most motivate you to participate in a buyback program?

RANDOMIZE...CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 - Financial compensation
- 02 – Desire to avoid possible legal penalty
- 03 – Wanting to comply with the law
- 04 – Support for the principle of banning these types of firearms
- 05 – Wanting to get rid of these firearms anyways
- 06 – Nothing would motivate me to participate
- 98 - Other reason (SPECIFY)_____ **ANCHOR**
- 99 – Don’t know **ANCHOR...EXCLUSIVE**

30. If you were to turn in your prohibited firearm as part of a buyback program, how would you prefer to do so?

- 01 – In person (e.g., turn in the prohibited firearm to a person)
- 02 – Virtually (e.g., using online communications and contactless pick-up methods)
- 99 – Don’t know

31. To register for a buyback program, would you be more likely to...?

- 01 – Complete the process completely online
- 02 – Complete the process completely over the phone (1-800 number)
- 03 – Use a combination of online and phone support to participate
- 99 – Don’t know

32. Which of the following are the two most important elements that you would like to see in a buyback program?

1ST AND 2ND MOST IMPORTANT...RANDOMIZE ORDER

- 01 – Easy and accessible ways to ask questions and get answers about the program (i.e., toll-free telephone line, online Q and A)
- 02 – Group information sessions
- 03 – Readily available technical information and support
- 04 – Convenient drop-off options for returning firearms
- 05 – Ability to turn in firearms by mail
- 06 – Easy way to initiate the application process (i.e., call a 1-800 number to create an application, easy online portal, etc.)
- 07 – Automatic text or email updates on program participation verification and payment progress
- 08 – Direct deposit payments
- 99 – Don't know

ANCHOR...EXCLUSIVE

33. If you were to turn in your prohibited firearms, where and how would you prefer to turn it in?

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY...RANDOMIZE

- 01 – Firearm retailer (e.g., sports store)
- 02 - Local police station
- 03 – Local RCMP station/detachment
- 04 – Local gun club/firing range
- 05 - Mail-in
- 06 – Federal government centre (e.g., regional Service Canada office)
- 07 – At a specific firearm collection community event (e.g., held at community centre, conference centre, etc.)
- 08 – Firearm manufacturer
- 09 – Firearm dealer/speciality store
- 98 - Other (SPECIFY)_____
- 99 – Don't know

ANCHOR

ANCHOR...EXCLUSIVE

ASK ALL

34. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that deal with a variety of other topics?

RANDOMIZE. CAROUSEL.

- a) I feel like I have a real say in what elected officials do.
- b) When something is run by the government (at any level), it is usually inefficient and wasteful.
- c) I believe climate change is an important issue and we need to do more to protect the environment.
- d) Information I get from social media sources is trustworthy and I share it.
- e) It is important to protect traditional values and activities.
- f) I am concerned that governments (at all levels) are collecting too much personal information.
- g) I tend to hold the same opinions on most issues as my friends and family.
- h) I feel Canada is a safe and resilient country.
- i) Owning a firearm is a privilege not a right.
- j) Post-secondary education should be free and accessible to everyone.

ROTATE SCALE

- 01 - Strongly agree
- 02 - Somewhat agree
- 03 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 04 - Somewhat disagree
- 99 - Strongly disagree

Section 6: Demographics – ASK ALL

To finish up, we have just a few questions about you for statistical purposes only. Please be assured that your answers will remain completely confidential.

- G. Which of the following best describes your own present employment status? (Select one response only)
- 01 – Working full-time
 - 02 – Working part-time
 - 03 – Unemployed or looking for a job
 - 04 – Stay at home full-time
 - 05 – Student
 - 06 – Retired
 - 07 – Disability pension
 - 99 - Prefer not to say

H. Do you currently have a job that involves use of firearms (e.g., in the military, police, guard service etc.), or did you in the past?

01 – Yes, my current job involves the use of firearms

02 – Yes, I had a job in the past that involved the use of firearms

03 – No, I have never had a job that involved use of firearms

99 - Prefer not to say

I. Which of the following is the highest level of education that you have completed?

01 - Less than high school diploma or equivalent/I am still in high school

02 - High school diploma or equivalent

03 - Trade certificate or diploma (apprenticeship, technical institute, trade, or vocational school)

04 - College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma (other than trades certificates or diplomas)

05 - University (undergraduate degree)

06 - University (graduate or professional degree)

99 - Prefer not to say

J. Were you born in Canada or in another country?

01 – Canada

02 – Other country

99 - Prefer not to say

K. Which of the following best describes your ethnic background or nationality?

SELECT UP TO TWO RESPONSES

01 – British Isles (English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh)

02 – French

03 – Other European (i.e., German, Italian, Ukrainian, Polish, Dutch, etc.)

04 – Indigenous/First Nation/Métis/Inuit

05 – Chinese

06 – Other East or Southeast Asian (i.e., Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino, etc.)

07 – South Asian (i.e., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, or Bangladeshi)

08 – African

09 – Latin American

10 – Middle East/West Asian (i.e., Iran, Turkey etc.)

11 – Caribbean

97 – Other (SPECIFY) _____

99 – Prefer not to say

- L. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes. Select one only

01-Under \$20,000

02-\$20,000 to just under \$40,000

03-\$40,000 to just under \$60,000

04-\$60,000 to just under \$80,000

05-\$80,000 to just under \$100,000

06-\$100,000 to just under \$150,000

07-\$150,000 and above

99-Prefer not to answer

This completes the survey. On behalf of the Government of Canada, thank you for your valuable input. If you would like to know more about the new measures to address firearms related violence, please visit <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/frrms/index-en.aspx>

In the coming months, the results of this survey will be available on the Library and Archives Canada website.

Appendix D: Qualitative research instruments

September 2022

**Environics Research Group
Buyback Program Preparation Success Check
Public Safety Canada
PN11600
Recruitment for online group discussion**

Respondent Name: _____

Home #: _____

Business #: _____

Group #: _____

Recruiter: _____

GROUP 1 Firearms owners (English) Ontario Tuesday, October 11 5:00-6:30 pm EST	GROUP 2 Firearms owners (English) BC Tuesday, October 11 7:00-8:30 pm EST (4:00-5:30 pm PST)	GROUP 3 Firearms owners (English) Atlantic Wednesday, October 12 4:00-5:30 pm EST (5:00-6:30 pm AST)	GROUP 4 Firearms owners (English) Man/Sask Wednesday, October 12 6:00-7:30 pm EST (5:00-6:30 pm CST)
GROUP 5 Firearms owners (English) Ontario Thursday, October 13 5:00-6:30 pm EST	GROUP 6 Firearms owners (English) Alberta Thursday, October 13 7:00-8:30 pm EST (5:00-6:30 pm MST)	GROUP 7 Firearms owners (French) Quebec Saturday, October 15 10:00-11:30 am EST	GROUP 8 Firearms owners (French) Quebec Saturday, October 15 12:00-1:30 pm EST

NB: Groups 3 (Atlantic) - participants from at least two provinces.

Each session to have at least three participants from rural areas and all to have a mix of people from various parts of each province/region.

NB: Any francophones from other provinces may be invited to groups 7 or 8 and any Quebec anglophones may be invited to either Ontario session (Groups 1 and 5).

Eight recruits per session. \$100 incentive.

All must currently own at least one firearm and be over 18 years of age.

Hello/Bonjour, my name is _____ from Trend Research, a partner of Environics Research. Would you like to continue this discussion in English? / Voulez-vous continuer cette conversation en français?

We are conducting a series of online video-conference focus group discussions across Canada among people who own firearms on behalf of Public Safety Canada. This study is a research project, not an attempt to sell or

market anything. Your participation in the research is completely voluntary, confidential and your decision to participate or not will not affect any dealings you may have with the Government of Canada.

The format will be a video-conference call discussion using the Zoom platform led by a research professional from Environics that will involve you and some other Canadians from your region. May we have your permission to ask you or someone else in your household some further question to see if you/they fit in our study? This will take about 5 minutes.

The session will last a maximum of 1.5 hours and you will receive a cash gift of \$100 as a thanks for attending the session.

A recording of the session will be produced for research purposes. The recording will be used only by the research professional to assist in preparing a report on the research findings and will be destroyed once the report is completed. All information collected, used and/or disclosed will be used for research purposes only and administered as per the requirements of the Privacy Act. Environics Research has a privacy policy which can be consulted at <https://environicsresearch.com/privacy-policy/>.

If you have questions about the legitimacy of the research, you can e-mail Public Safety Canada questions@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca. Environics is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and adheres to all its standards; the project is registered with the CRIC with the number 20220919-EN390

NB: If a participant asks for information on the research company conducting the research they can be told: Environics Research is located at 33 Bloor Street East, Suite 900, Toronto Ontario and can be reached at 416-920-9010.

1. Do you personally own a firearm of any kind (i.e., handgun, hunting rifle, long gun etc.)?

- 01 – Yes, I do
- 02 – No, I do not

CONTINUE
THANK AND TERMINATE

2. Are you or is any member of your household or your immediate family employed in:

Type	No	Yes
A market research, communications or public relations firm, or an advertising agency	1	2
Media (Radio, Television, Newspapers, Magazines, etc.)	1	2
Public Safety Canada	1	2
Law enforcement (i.e., police, RCMP)	1	2
A political party	1	2

IF YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE – THANK AND TERMINATE

3. What province and city do you currently live in?

SEE REGIONAL BREAKS FOR GROUPS

4. Which of the following best describes where you live

- 01 – An urban area
- 02 – A suburban area

03 – A small town, rural or remote area **MINIMUM 3 PER GROUP**

TRY TO GET MIX OF URBAN, SUBURBAN AND RURAL PARTICIPANTS

5. Which language do you speak most often at home?

- English 1 **GROUP 1-6**
- French 2 **GROUP 7 and 8**

6. INDICATE:

- Male 1
- Female 2 **AT LEAST 2 PER GROUP**

NB: FIREARM OWNERS SKEW MALE BUT TRY TO GET AT LEAST 2 WOMEN PER GROUP

7. We have been asked to speak to participants from all different ages. So that we may do this accurately, may I have your exact age please? **(GET MIX)**

_____. WRITE IN

- Under 18 0 **TERMINATE**
- 18-24 years of age 1
- 25-34 years of age 2
- 35-44 years of age 3
- 45-54 years of age 4
- 55-64 years of age 5
- 65-74 years of age 6
- 75 years or more 7 **TERMINATE**

8. What is your ethnic or racial background?

AN EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO INCLUDE ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN ALL GROUPS.

9. Could you please tell me what is the last level of education that you completed? **(GET MIX)**

- Some High School only 1
- Completed High School 2
- Trade School certificate 3
- Some Post-secondary 4
- Completed Post-secondary 5
- Graduate degree 6

10. Participants in group discussions are asked to voice their opinions and thoughts, how comfortable are you in voicing your opinions in front of others? Are you... (read list)?

- Very comfortable 1- **MIN 5 PER GROUP**
- Fairly comfortable 2
- Not very comfortable 3 - **TERMINATE**
- Very uncomfortable 4 - **TERMINATE**

11. Have you **ever** attended a focus group or a one-to-one discussion for which you have received a sum of money, here or elsewhere?

- Yes 1 **MAXIMUM 4 PER GROUP**
- No 2 -> **(SKIP TO Q.14)**

IF Q11 YES ASK:

12. When did you last attend one of these discussions?

(TERMINATE IF IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS)

13. How many focus groups or one-to-one discussions have you attended in the past 5 years?

_____(SPECIFY)

IF 5 OR MORE, TERMINATE

ASK ALL

14. This focus group will require participants to join a videoconference using the Zoom platform using a desktop or laptop computer or a tablet. You will need internet access in a private and quiet location to take part in the study. We cannot provide this technology for you. Will you be able to access the Internet for a 1-hour audio-visual discussion using a desktop or laptop computer or tablet?

- Yes 1 **CONTINUE**
- No 2 **TERMINATE**

NOTE: A MOBILE PHONE WILL NOT WORK FOR THIS EXERCISE

ASK ALL

15. The focus group will take place using a video-conference platform called Zoom. If you are not already a user, Zoom may request you to install some software at the site <https://zoom.us/download>. You can delete it after the focus group if you wish. How experienced and comfortable are you with using Zoom videoconferencing?

Very comfortable	1	CONTINUE
Somewhat comfortable	2	CONTINUE
Somewhat uncomfortable	3	THANK AND TERMINATE
Very uncomfortable	4	THANK AND TERMINATE

16. Sometimes participants in the focus group are also asked to type out their responses in the “chat” function. Is there any reason why you could not participate? If you need glasses to read or a hearing aid, please remember to bring them.

Yes	1	TERMINATE
No	2	

17. I would like to invite you to attend the focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated discussion with other Canadians. The session will be recorded, and some other members of the research team may also observe the session, but your participation will be confidential. If you attend the session you will receive \$100 to thank you for your time. It will be sent to you electronically. Do you consent to take part in the focus group? By agreeing to participate you are giving your consent to these procedures.

Yes	1	
No	2	TERMINATE

18. We will contact you again before the date of the session to confirm your attendance. Note that this invitation is to you personally and you cannot have anyone else substitute for you. Do you consent to this?

Yes	1	
No	2	TERMINATE

19. The session will last a maximum of 90 minutes, but we are asking that all participants log into the Zoom online meeting 5 minutes prior to the start of the session. Are you able to log-in about 5 minutes prior to the start time?

Yes	1	
No	2	TERMINATE

20. Could you please confirm your email address so I can send you login details for the Zoom web conference application?

E-mail address: _____

PLEASE RE-READ THE FULL ADDRESS BACK TO CONFIRM CORRECT SPELLING.

(NB: We will send the links to you early next week)

**PLEASE ENSURE PARTICIPANTS ARE TOLD THE TIME OF SESSION IN THEIR TIME ZONE
SEE TIMES AND DATES ON PAGE 1**

INTERVIEWERS: Tell respondent that it is a small group and anyone who does not show or cancels at the last minute will compromise the project. Make sure they know we feel their opinions are valuable and we are serious about finding out what they have to offer.

NOTE: PLEASE TELL ALL RESPONDENTS THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION CALL AND/OR E-MAIL THE DAY PRIOR TO THE SESSION. IF FOR SOME REASON THEY HAVE NOT HEARD FROM US THEY SHOULD CONTACT US AT _____. IF THEIR NAME IS NOT ON THE ATTENDANCE FORM THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE GROUP. IF A RESPONDENT HAS ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH, THEY SHOULD ALSO CONTACT US AT THIS NUMBER.

Environics Research Group Limited
Focus Groups on Firearms Communications – Success Check
Public Safety Canada
PN11600

1.0 Introduction to procedures (10 minutes)

Hello everyone, my name is [NAME] and I work for Environics Research, a public opinion research company. Welcome to this online focus group. I will be moderating the session. This is one of a series of online focus groups we are conducting on behalf of Public Safety Canada with people from across the country. Please note that I do not work for Public Safety Canada and therefore I do not represent any of the policies or materials we will be discussing today.

The session should last about an hour and a half.

We want to hear your opinions so please feel free to agree or disagree with one another. For the most part, I will be showing you materials and asking you questions. You don't have to direct all your comments to me; you can exchange opinions with each other as well.

I want to inform you that we are recording this session to help me write my report. The recording will only be used internally to analyse the research and will not be released to anyone else. **MODERATOR TO PRESS**
"RECORD" ON ZOOM SCREEN

There are also some observers from the research team and from Public Safety Canada who are observing the session and taking notes while muted. I would also like to remind you that anything you say here will remain confidential and anonymous and any comments you make will not be linked to you by name in any reporting we do on this project.

I'm sure most of you are quite familiar with how Zoom works – especially over the last few years! For the most part we will be video chatting, but I will also be sharing my screen to show you some things and we will also use the "chat" function from time to time when I ask you to react to things in writing. I will type "hello" in the chat – can everyone see that and respond "Hi" to "everyone" just to make sure that the "chat" feature works for everyone?

I also want to say that if you feel you didn't have a chance to express your opinion on anything during the session, you can feel free to comment in writing in the "chat." Please chat with "everyone" unless you feel you need to send me a private message.

Before we get started, I just wanted to also say that if you think there may be a lot of noise at your end (i.e., kids, dog barking, etc.) please click the "mute" button and just "unmute" when you want to say something. You will get the cash compensation gift we promised you electronically in the next week or two.

Let's go around the imaginary table and introduce ourselves. Tell us your name and a bit about yourself, such as where you are calling from, what sort of work you do and how you would describe the composition of your household (family, pets etc.). Also, since you all own firearms, tell us a bit about your firearms use.

NB: This would include what types and how many guns you own, how long you have owned guns, and what are the main things you use your guns for and how often do you use them. (e.g., hunting, sport shooting etc.)

2.0 Introduction of assault-style firearms ban/buyback program (12 minutes)

I want to talk more about regulation of firearms in Canada. I'm going to type a question in the **CHAT** in zoom for you to each answer. *"What new regulations or restrictions around firearms has the Government of Canada announced in the past few years?"*

Can you each elaborate on what you wrote?

PROBE: What about the ban on "assault-style" firearms? How many had heard about that?

NB: The ban was put in place to limit access to the most common assault-style firearms in Canada. These guns are designed for military use and can be used to injure or kill a large number of people quickly. The ban has frozen the Canadian market for these firearms, reduced the number and availability of assault-style firearms, and lowered the possibility of these firearms being sold into the illegal market.

Have any of you heard about a "buyback program" for assault-style firearms?

IF NEEDED: This program will make it mandatory for owners to dispose of their newly prohibited firearms by either participating in the government's buyback program in exchange for compensation or have them rendered inoperable (i.e., deactivated), etc.

NB: We will talk about your thoughts about the program in a little while, but first let's take a look at some materials.

3.0 Digital ad - Success Check (15 minutes)

We are going to be looking at a few ads in this session that Public Safety Canada is currently developing and that are quite close to being finalized. They will be in a variety of formats. These would be print and digital ads that you might see in a magazine, in a daily newspaper, or on your phone or on your PC while on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or on a Google search etc. They are not necessarily final and could be changed based on your input.

(NB: We are not going to debate at this stage whether the ban should or should not happen or whether or not the buyback program is a good idea. We just want to evaluate some marketing products about and see which ones you think are the most effective.)

I will first share some digital ads and we can review them a couple times. After I've showed them, I will ask you to answer some questions about the ad in the chat box where I will type in a question for you to answer.

SHOW FOUR DIGITAL ADS:

OVERVIEW, ELIGIBILITY (CHECK), DISPOSAL OPTIONS (LEARN) AND PAL (CONFIRM).

MODERATOR WILL TYPE IN THE CHAT: *"What is the main message you got from the ads? What were they telling you?"*

Can you each elaborate on what you felt the main message of the ads was?

What do you think Public Safety Canada is trying to accomplish with these ads? What do you think their goal is?

Who do you think these ads are aimed at?

Were there specific things you liked or did not like in the ads?

Were there any specific images, icons or lines or facts from the ads that sticks in your mind?

What would be your reaction to seeing any of these ads while you might be browsing a website?

Each ad depicts a different step of what you might need to do for the program. If you only saw one version of these ads, do you feel that you could understand what you need to do? Which one would you be most interested to click on to learn more?

4.0 Print ads – Success Check (15 mins)

Let's return to the print ads on the same topic. The first ones I will show you flip between three images and the others flip between two.

SHARE SCREEN SHOW PRINT ADS:

APPROACH 1: Buyback is starting soon

APPROACH 2: Be ready for Buyback.

APPROACH 3: Buyback is coming.

What would be your reaction to seeing either of these ads while you might be reading a magazine?

What do you think of the imagery in each ad? Is it clear what it is trying to depict?

PROBE: How do you feel about the vertical versus the horizontal check list? Which one do you think is the clearest?

Which message approach do you like best? Which one do you like the least? Why?

Who do you feel these ads are aimed at?

Can you recall what the website URL was for the ad?

PROBE: Is the information about the ban useful?

5.0 Social media post – Success Check (7 mins)

Let's now take a look at some ads you might see on social media.

What would be your reaction to seeing either of these ads while scrolling through social media?

Which social media platform would you expect to see these ads on (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc.)?

How likely would you be to click on one of these ads?

Did you notice the post-text of each ad? Would you or do you usually read this text? What kind of information would you expect to see there?

6.0 Website expectations (6 mins)

I want to take a moment to ask you all a few questions about the URL you see in these ads and the website they will lead you to. Do you all recall what the URL was? **IF NEEDED: canada.ca/firearms-buyback**

What would you expect to see on the 'canada.ca/firearms-buyback' website?

What kind of questions do you think you would have that you would expect this website to answer?

PROBE: Do you expect to see the full list of prohibited firearms and price list?

7.0 Attitudes and opinions ban on assault style firearms and the buyback program (15 minutes)

Now let's talk about the ban and the buyback program itself. I asked you at the beginning of the session if you had heard about these initiatives, but let's talk more about your thoughts and opinions about them.

What do you know about this ban?

What do you think of it? What are the pros and cons of the ban, if any?

PROBE: Do you think the ban on assault style firearms and the buyback program will help reduce the level of gun crime in Canada? Why? Why not?

What if it was paired with other measures that fight against gun smuggling and trafficking (e.g., increased criminal penalties, strengthening border security, etc.)

Are any of you affected personally by the ban on "assault style" firearms? Do any of you own any firearms that are now be prohibited?

PROBE: Do you know where you can go to find out if any of your firearms are now prohibited? If you had a firearm that you didn't know the make/model of, where would you go to find out this information?

If you have one of the guns that is prohibited, what do you think happens? Do you know what you will be asked to do with it?

ASK THOSE WITH PROHIBITED GUNS: What do you think you'd do with any prohibited guns you might have? Would you destroy it? Export it? Take part in the "buyback program"? Why?

NB: The buyback program will make it mandatory for owners to dispose of their newly prohibited firearms. This could include participating in the government's buyback program for compensation or have them rendered inoperable (i.e., deactivated), etc.

What do you know about the program?

What do you most want to know about the program? What concerns do you have about the buyback program, if any?

The idea for the buyback program is that the government would provide compensation for the collection of certain banned firearms. In other words, they would compensate people for participating in the program. What do you think of that? How do you think it would work?

What would motivate you most to participate in the program? (Money/compensation, compliance, etc.) Why would any of you NOT want to participate in the program?

If you were going to share your thoughts on or information about the buyback program, who would it be with? (your friends and family, fellow firearm owners, etc.?)

8.0 Wrap up (10 mins)

Let's go around the room one last time and you can each give us any final comments you might have on the ads, and on the whole issue of firearms and public safety.

On behalf of Public Safety Canada, I would like to thank you for taking part in this focus group discussion. The cash incentive we promised you will be sent electronically in the coming week. The report on this project will be available on the Library and Archives Canada website in 2023.