



THE RCMP and GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT SET SIGHTS ON FIREARM SAFETY

September 28, 2012 - Iqaluit, NU – The Royal Canadian Mounted Police alongside with the Government of Nunavut’s Departments of Justice and Environment, are collaborating on an important awareness campaign relating to firearm safety throughout the territory of Nunavut.

The campaign will see police and wildlife officers going house to house throughout the territory to discuss the safety protocols in storing firearms in their efforts to enhance and protect community safety.

“The recent spike in firearm related incidents has warranted a safety awareness campaign with the communities throughout Nunavut,” stated Chief Supt. McVarnock, RCMP Commanding Officer for Nunavut.

“This approach is critical to our committed efforts to make Nunavut communities safe. While respecting that firearms are essential in the north, we must ensure the safe handling and storage of firearms to improve and preserve the safety of our families and our RCMP officers,” said the Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Minister of Justice.

“It is important to preserve and respect our Inuit hunting traditions, however we also must balance the safety protocols when dealing with firearms,” said the Honourable James Arreak, Minister of Environment. “Government of Nunavut wildlife officers are good at maintaining that balance and will be working alongside the RCMP on this essential campaign.”

Seventy-three RCMP calls for firearm related complaints were received this year from January to September, in which the offences ranged from hostage situation, careless use and attempted murder of RCMP officers. The total of all firearm offences in 2011 totaled **118**. In that same timeframe of January to September 2011, **77** firearm related incidents were reported. Although the numbers of incidents are consistent with the January to September period, the incidences have not decreased.

“This joint initiative is about the dangers of unsafe storage and misuse of firearms and is a call for us to jointly educate our communities. Any number reflecting these types of incidences are too high,” added C/Supt McVarnock. “Taking time to gather with families and youth and discuss these important issues is a great way of speaking to this and addressing community concerns relating to their protection. It’s our quality of service. It’s the “way of the North”.

Current RCMP Statistics

"V" Division Calls for Service - Firearm complaint related - January 2012 - September 5, 2012

- 73 calls for service with firearm implications within the Nunavut RCMP V Division reported to members since January 1, 2012.
- 19 cases cleared by charges.
- 29 cases identified as unfounded or non-criminal complaints.
- 14 cases cleared as Departmental discretion.

Using a firearm in the commission of an offence:	3	Jan /Feb / April (1) ea month
Unsafe Storage of firearms	9	Jan (2) / Apr (1) / May (3) / Jun (1) / Jul (1) / Sep (1)
Unauthorized possession of a firearm	4	May (2) / Jun (1) / Aug (1)
Sexual Assault with a firearm	1	Apr (1)
Pointing a firearm	7	Feb (1) / Mar(2) / Apr(1) / Jul(2) / Aug(1)
Hostage taking with a firearm	1	July
Discharge firearm with intent while restricted	1	July
Discharge firearm with intent	4	Jan (1) / Mar (1) / Jul (1) / Aug (1)
Discharge firearm while being reckless	6	Feb (1) / Mar (1) / May (1) / Jul (1) / Aug (1) / Sep (1)
Careless use of a firearm	17	Jan (2) / Mar (3) / Apr (1) / May (1) / June (2) / Jul (3) / Aug (5)
Firearms Act - Other activities	17	Jan (2) / Feb (3) / Mar (2) / Apr (3) / May (5) / Aug (2)

-30-

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