



Customs and Immigration Union
Syndicat des Douanes et de l'Immigration

May 10, 2010

Mr. Stephen Rigby
President
Canada Border Services Agency
191 Laurier Ave. W., 6th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0L8

RE: Border Services Officer Re-certification Costs and Lacolle Pilot Project

Dear Mr. Rigby,

I am writing to formally express CIU's concerns related to CBSA's new plan to re-certify, on a triennial basis, enforcement skills of all Border Services Officers (BSOs) and to do so at a single location in Canada.

If CBSA were to simply follow the long-established practices of other law enforcement agencies in Canada, the plan to re-certify enforcement skills – whether jointly with or separately from firearms proficiency re-certification – is unwarranted.

Also, use of a single location in Canada (Ottawa) to undertake this re-certification means that many BSOs will be required to spend up to two additional days travelling, leading the CBSA to incur more additional and unnecessary travel and accommodation costs. These costs will be further exacerbated when each BSO is replaced at home for up to 7 days: 2 to travel and 5 to re-certify.

As you know, CIU repeatedly expressed concerns when CBSA decided to use only a few sites in Canada to provide the initial firearms training and firearms certification to BSOs because of the significant travel and accommodation costs that would have been easily avoided if more sites were used.

Alternate sites requested by CIU were ignored by your predecessor with the result that implementing the arming initiative cost millions more than necessary.

Incurring such unnecessary costs is hardly fiscally responsible when government is operating under a multi-billion dollar deficit. These costs also limits CBSA ability to undertake its mandate and fully participate in new security and enforcement initiatives like the eleven-month Lacolle Pilot Project (the start to

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CIU's long-recommended mobile, joint-force, intelligence led border patrol) that was recently announced.

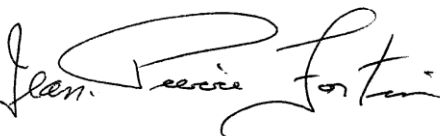
I would therefore like to re-iterate CIU's position that CBSA must use alternate sites, i.e. regional site, throughout Canada to provide firearms proficiency certification and re-certification.

Moreover, I would encourage you to seriously reconsider CBSA's position to needlessly force all BSO to re-certify enforcement skills other than firearms proficiency.

I am confident that using regional sites and foregoing unnecessary re-certification would generate the necessary savings that could then be properly allocated to fund the CBSA's full participation in the Lacolle Pilot Project. In the News Release on the Lacolle Pilot Project, you referred to CBSA's non participation in the enforcement component as being "...*the most effective and responsible at this time.*" With all due respect, the partial participation CBSA proposed does not fulfill the Government's 2008 platform commitment and neither does it effectively ensure the productive deployment of highly trained and skilled BSOs to the appropriate benefit of the public CBSA serves.

It is my sincere hope that as the President of CBSA, you will consider these suggestions and lead this Agency into the enforcement role it properly and responsibly should assume notwithstanding those who might counsel otherwise. Should that be the case, you can count on our complete cooperation and support in moving forward on behalf of the Canadian public we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean-Pierre Fortin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Jean-Pierre Fortin
Acting National President