



Press Release

Agreement in Principle Reached with RCMP Regarding Criminal Record Checks

Vancouver, Apr 13, 2010

The National Association of Professional Background Screeners, Canada, (NAPBS – Canada) is pleased to advise that the RCMP are successfully moving forward recommendations and agreements in principle, that should make it easier for Canadians to obtain and share information relating to their criminal histories. The recommendations and agreements in principle were contemplated and put forth in Ottawa at the January Public Safety working group, which was comprised of Federal, Provincial and Territorial public safety representatives.

[Criminal record checks](#) have become commonplace in Canada, for both employment and volunteer positions. This ensures that companies and voluntary organizations can protect themselves from people who might pose an undue risk. It also ensures that Canadians, who may have offended in the past, can obtain jobs in order to rehabilitate themselves.

These agreements in principle will address the current inability to obtain the details of criminal records.

At present, if a criminal record exists, the details are not released other than to say a record may exist, and then fingerprints must be obtained to facilitate the release of any details. This is a problem as it can take as long as 120 days to obtain the results of fingerprints. The new process, called “Confirmation of Declaration” will allow anyone having their criminal record checked to disclose their criminal record, and police services will then be permitted to confirm if the disclosure matches the record on file for that name and date of birth. Any discrepancy will have to be resolved via fingerprint submission. This allows applicants to disclose the results of their records so that employers can hire them quickly, provided that their records are not such that they would pose an undue risk. Dave Dinesen, Chair, Government Relations Committee of NAPBS Canada, and President of BackCheck, a large [pre-employment screening](#) organization, says that this change will be an improvement over the current situation and will allow employers and voluntary organizations to make hiring decisions in a timely manner.

The working group’s proposals, which have been agreed to in principle with the RCMP, will also address the current inability to conduct Vulnerable Sector Searches (VSS).

VSS searches are conducted when the person will be working with children, the elderly, the mentally handicapped or other vulnerable persons. For these types of searches an additional



check of the pardoned sex offender database is also conducted as well as a search of local police indices and other appropriate CPIC checks, if possible. To facilitate this process, the RCMP has also agreed in principle to a proposal called “Virtual Front Counter” that utilizes a technology interface to gather and disseminate such information between all parties. This technology solution is important as currently VSS searches can only be conducted through local police departments, which creates compliance problems for national organizations. It also creates risks as applicants are currently provided with a copy of their record in a paper format which means that there is an opportunity for forgery prior to the record being provided to the employing organizations. Dave Dinesen says that if these proposals are fully rolled out, it will allow the VSS organizations to obtain the information they need to make an informed decision in a timely manner with less risk of fraud, and permit third parties to participate in these transactions in a manner that is compliant with the Criminal Records Act.

“We are delighted with the progress made with the RCMP” continued Mr. Dinesen. “The RCMP have moved quickly over the past few months to work with stakeholders to develop compliant solutions to help organizations conduct these searches quickly and conveniently. We understand that while there are some finishing touches to be done, the changes that have been agreed upon in principle are targeted to be rolled out by the end of April, 2010, and an official RCMP communiqué will be supplied to police services across Canada. This will allow employers to make hiring decisions and put Canadians to work. It will also allow volunteers to get involved in their local communities, be it in their churches, sport organizations, or their children’s schools. It is important to note that we all have a stake in coming up with the right solutions to these problems. We need to ensure that the vast majority of Canadians can gain employment and volunteer in their communities while keeping those few who would do harm from being put into positions where they can do it.”

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