

WHY C-21 DOESN'T BAN ASSAULT WEAPONS

The new definition of “prohibited firearm” in [Bill C-21](#) does not ban any existing assault weapons. It also won't prevent new models from entering the market as it's easily circumventable by manufacturers. In other words, Bill C-21 changes nothing.

Indeed, the definition announced on May 1, 2023, adds more confusion to the classification system, since it only applies to *future* models, meaning there's a contradiction from the outset: Current weapons that fall under the definition remain legal.

This means that owners of models that were [prohibited in 2020](#) can simply take the money from the upcoming buyback program and buy one of the estimated 480 models of assault weapons that [remain legal](#) (i.e.: those that would have been banned under a similar definition in the withdrawn amendments [G-4](#) and [G-46](#)) or new models than [continue to be introduced](#) onto the Canadian market.

The definition is ineffective (easily circumventable) because it depends on the mindset of the designer, something only manufacturers control and therefore can manipulate: i.e., was a firearm “*originally designed with a detachable magazine with a capacity of six cartridges or more,*” or not? A manufacturer can easily market a firearm with magazines of six or more after having initially launched the model with five or less.

The definition is limited to original magazine capacity and does not consider any military characteristics - as do most [US state laws](#) that ban assault weapons - like folding/telescopic stocks, pistol grips, ability to accept a bayonet, flash suppressors, bipods and grenade launchers, etc., nor does it incorporate the concept of “capacity” – like the [New Zealand ban](#). It doesn't even include the limits on muzzle energy or bore diameter that exist in the [2020 regulations](#) (the problem with this regulatory criterion is that it exempts models not “*of modern design*” like the SKS and models not “*present in large volumes in the Canadian market*” which by definition means any *new* model... and what happens once they end up in large numbers?).

The government needs to follow through on its commitment to implement a [complete ban on assault weapons](#) (as well as [large-capacity magazines](#)), which can be done through regulations.

- PolySeSouvient

(2) The definition *prohibited firearm* in subsection 84(1) of the Act is amended by striking out “or” at the end of paragraph (c), by adding “or” at the end of paragraph (d) and by adding the following after paragraph (d):

(e) a firearm that is not a handgun and that

(i) discharges centre-fire ammunition in a semi-automatic manner,

(ii) was originally designed with a detachable cartridge magazine with a capacity of six cartridges or more, and

(iii) is designed and manufactured on or after the day on which this paragraph comes into force; (*arme à feu prohibée*)