

## **Missing Persons and the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC)**

### **The Canadian Police Information Centre**

The Canadian Police Information Centre, commonly known as CPIC, is a national computer-based information system that is maintained by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on behalf of all Canadian police agencies. Created in 1972, it is located at the RCMP's Headquarters in Ottawa, Ontario.

CPIC contains records about a number of crime related topics including – criminal records, information on wanted persons, people who are on parole or probation, stolen vehicles, stolen property and missing persons.

In addition to maintaining their own records relating to occurrences within their agency's jurisdiction, police officers are able to upload information to the CPIC system.

### **CPIC's purpose**

CPIC was designed as an information system meant to assist law enforcement agencies in performing their duties and investigations. To do this, CPIC shares information with law enforcement agencies across Canada and the United States. Information can be shared almost immediately after it is entered. The system also allows police officers to check whether a person has been reported missing.

Access to CPIC is restricted to police personnel and authorized agencies (e.g., Military Police and Canada Border Services Agency).

### **CPIC and missing adults**

Information about missing adults can be added to CPIC. The type of information entered is the missing person's full name, aliases (if any), date of birth and any physical or identifying descriptions that are available.

There are no firm rules about how soon the missing person's information must be added to CPIC. This is determined by the individual police agency's internal policies.

## Limitations to CPIC

Once information about a missing person is entered into CPIC, there is no automatic message that is sent to all police agencies. Instead, police are able to ‘query’ CPIC. In other words, if a police officer enters a name into CPIC, any information relating to that person is displayed – including whether the person is the subject of an open missing person report.

## Verifying CPIC status

Once your missing loved one has been reported to police, be sure to find out if and when her/his information will be added to CPIC. Since CPIC is only accessible to police, follow up with the officer assigned to your loved one’s case to ensure that the case has been entered.

If your loved one remains missing for a number of years, you may wish to discuss CPIC updates with the investigating police force. They have discretion to include new information into CPIC that may have been uncovered in the investigation. You may want to do this on a yearly basis.

The National Crime Information Center, or NCIC, is the United State’s equivalent to CPIC. If the disappearance occurred in the United States, speak with the officer to see if your loved one’s information can be entered into NCIC.

For more information about CPIC, visit <http://www.cpic-cipc.ca/>

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