

GUNSMITH CALL REPORTSBACKGROUND

Each year, our Service Representatives visit our Recommended Gunsmiths (approximately 400) at least once, and as many independents as possible.

During the call, records are examined whenever possible, and the gunsmith questioned as to the frequency and types of repairs made on each model. This information is noted in the call report and summarized by R. L. St. John monthly. Serious problems, repeated problems or trends, are reported to Ilion and the Marketing Product section.

We recognize that this data is not quantitative and does not denote age or use of the firearms nor lag time from sale or use; therefore, its use is limited. However, our experience over the past few years shows that this data, combined with the judgment of the best qualified gunsmiths and other data, such as shoot reports, in conjunction with Arms Service experience, does give us an indication of specific problems or trends.

For example, a short time ago we encountered a rash of broken firing pins in the 1100 and 870 which were brought to our attention by these gunsmiths and target shooters. This information combined with that of Arms Service, resulted in a manufacturing change. Since then, I can't recall a firing pin breakage complaint of any magnitude. Another example of a different nature, was that of rusted tubes and rings on the 1100. When summarized, the call report data indicated the major problem areas to be the South and Southwest.

Exhibit 3A is a summary of the major items reported to us during the first half of 1974. Many of these items are not new, but as long as they are brought to our attention, they are reported. You will note that most of the items listed under the Model 1100 are already a part of the upgrading study. But the incident rate of repair is high at the gunsmith level. Because of lag time, repeated reporting of most items does occur, but over a period of time, a drop-off, particularly after a modification, indicates it was effective. Conversely, continued reportings indicate the need for further investigation.

Based on this and previous summaries, plus other inputs and experience, I would conclude that the major consumer quality problems at the gunsmith level on models other than the 1100 and 3200 are: Model 788 bolt handles breaking off; Model 700 rusted ejectors which put the gun out of action; and loose barrel extensions on 742's. The 742 is included because of seriousness, not because of the number of complaints.

It must be noted that corrective action may have already taken place or being investigated when the reports are written, but as long as they present a problem in the field, we will continue to report same.

E. G. Larson
September 18, 1974