



## Canada 2016 Crime & Safety Report: Quebec City

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Information Security; Cyber; Winter weather; Religious Terrorism; Riots/Civil Unrest; Counterfeiting; Intellectual Property Rights Infringement; Drug Trafficking

Western Hemisphere > Canada; Western Hemisphere > Canada > Quebec

6/7/2016

### Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Low

### Crime Threats

Quebec City has one of the lowest crime rates in Canada.

There were only two murders reported in Quebec City in 2015.

Crime trends tend to gravitate toward vehicles and other personal property. U.S. plated cars are targeted by thieves likely looking for normal tourist valuables. U.S. passports and other identity documents that have been left inside vehicles are often taken.

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Random violence is an unusual and is often associated with street gang activity and other forms of organized crime. Canada took measures to ensure public safety related to gangs. Bill C-394 made gang recruitment a federal crime, and conviction results in a minimum sentence of six months in prison with a maximum sentence of five years.

## Cybersecurity Issues

In May 2010, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) released a public memo indicating that cyber threats against both government and private sector industry entities in Canada were the fastest-growing and most complex problems facing the agency. While cyber espionage targeting sensitive economic and national security information from nation-state actors remains a large-scale threat, the threat by politically- or financially-motivated independent cyber actors also remains a security concern. The security firm Websense reported in 2012 that Canada ranked second in the world in terms of the number of malicious web pages designed to harvest personal and financial credentials. In 2014, Cisco Systems commissioned International Data Corporation Canada with surveying approximately 500 Canadian businesses and 2,000 employees spanning a number of sectors to determine the overall cyber security posture of the Canadian private sector. The survey determined that about 60 percent of Canadian businesses either had no cyber security plan or possessed one that did not account for increased data consumption or the evolving information technology landscape.

## Transportation-Safety Situation

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## Road Safety and Road Conditions

Road conditions and road hazards are similar to the U.S. and pose no particular hazards. Pedestrians and vehicles are in a constant battle for right-of-way in the intersections, and extreme caution should be taken when driving or walking in downtown areas.

The city does an excellent job clearing streets after snowstorms, but drivers can expect parking restrictions on nights that plowing will be conducted. Extra caution is needed while driving during the winter. Even in good weather, black ice and sudden blizzards can occur.

Park in areas that are illuminated and do not leave anything of value in a vehicle.

## Public Transportation Conditions

Public transportation is considered safe and reliable. There are many forms of public transportation in Quebec City: local buses, ferry, taxi, and shuttle services.

24-hour taxi service is always available through the concierge at a hotel or by calling directly and is a safe way to travel. Taxis from the airport to downtown are set at a fixed rate, but taxis

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to the airport (and other locations) are metered.

## Aviation/Airport Conditions

Quebec City is served by Jean Lesage International Airport (YQB) and is 11 miles (18 kilometers) from the city center. A drive between the two locations takes about 30 minutes. The airport is relatively small yet very efficient by U.S. standards. The airport adheres to international air safety standards and management of flight operations. Security measures are on par with U.S. airports, and security personnel are well-trained and effective in the performance of their duties.

## Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Low

## Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

Many groups exist in Canada that have ties to or are sympathetic with various well-known international terrorist organizations.

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In October 2014, there were two ISIL-inspired, lone wolf terrorist attacks in Canada.

The first was an attack in St. Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, (outside Montreal) where a local, radicalized Quebec man drove over two Canadian soldiers with an automobile, killing one and severely injuring the other.

The second attack took place in Ottawa, Ontario, by another locally radicalized individual who shot and killed a Canadian soldier at the Canadian War Memorial on Parliament Hill.

The Canadian government raised its own terror threat level to “medium” after these attacks.

The call for self-radicalization, whether disseminated on extremist forums or via a broader approach on social media, continues to be a global concern. It is difficult to determine which message will inspire a violent extremist.

## **Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence**

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

### **Civil Unrest**

Demonstrations are, for the most part, peaceful and occur on almost a daily basis during the springtime. In the winter, protests are fairly infrequent due to the cold. Demonstrations are

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usually led by workers' unions, specific ethnic groups, or student associations. Within the last five years, there have been no violent demonstrations targeting Americans. More often than not the Quebec City Police Service will provide uniformed officers to facilitate the movement of traffic and intervene should the protest become out of hand.

## Religious/Ethnic Violence

The Constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom. When there are reports of societal discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practices, prominent societal leaders often take positive steps to promote religious freedom and condemn intolerance.

## Post-specific Concerns

### Environmental Hazards

Severe winter weather can represent a hazard in Quebec City. Quebec City's Consular district has experienced winter ice storms and blizzards, followed by flooding in spring. Temperatures in late January can fall well below 0 F with strong winds. Environment Canada's Meteorological Service provides updates about potentially hazardous weather.

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There have been a few mild earth tremors over the years that have caused road erosion but no large scale damage to infrastructure or human life.

### Critical Infrastructure Concerns

Public Safety Canada identified 10 sectors of critical infrastructure (Health, Food, Finance, Water, Information and Communication Technology, Safety, Energy and Utilities, Manufacturing, Government, and Transportation). Canada's critical infrastructure is massive, geographically dispersed, and owned by many different players, mostly within the private sector. Public Safety works with its partners to manage risks and reduce vulnerabilities across these sectors. The National Strategy supports the principle that critical infrastructure roles and activities should be carried out in a responsible manner at all levels of society in Canada. Responsibilities for critical infrastructure are shared by federal, provincial, and territorial governments and critical infrastructure owners/operators. Individual Canadians also have a responsibility to be prepared for disruption and ready to cope for at least the first 72 hours of an emergency. Canada and the U.S. share cross border critical infrastructure with movement of people and goods between the two countries.

### Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), and other law enforcement agencies are committed to undertaking coordinated action to counter the threats posed by intellectual property crime. According to the RCMP, "Twenty years ago, most members of the public, as well as most police officers, had never heard of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Crime in Canada. Today, the situation is dramatically different both domestically and internationally. Organized crime has discovered that the

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manufacturing and distribution of counterfeit goods are easy ways of generating huge profits rivalling those in the drug trade but with very little risk of getting caught. Even if apprehended and convicted, there is only a slight chance of incarceration.” Intellectual property is an important part of the economy and, as the country shifts toward an information-based economy, intellectual property rights are increasingly more important. As such, the priority of criminal intellectual property investigations has increased especially when dealing with counterfeit products (pharmaceuticals, electrical products, brake parts, contaminated shampoo, food products), which represent a health and safety concern to the consumer.

## Privacy Concerns

There is a relatively low risk to privacy in Canada. The Privacy Commissioner handles several complaints each year about violations of privacy rights. According to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, “Canada has two federal privacy laws, the Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. The Privacy Act took effect on July 1, 1983. This act imposes obligations on some 250 federal government departments and agencies to respect privacy rights by limiting the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information. The Privacy Act gives individuals the right to access and request correction of personal information about themselves held by these federal government organizations. Individuals are also protected by the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) that sets out ground rules for how private sector organizations may collect, use, or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities. The law gives individuals the right to access and request correction of the personal information these organizations may have collected about them. Initially, PIPEDA applied only to personal information about customers or employees that was collected, used, or disclosed in the course of commercial activities by the federally regulated private sector, organizations such as banks, airlines, and telecommunications companies. The Act now applies to personal information collected, used, or disclosed by the retail sector, publishing companies, the service industry, manufacturers, and other provincially regulated organizations. The Act does not apply to the personal information of employees of these provincially regulated

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organizations. The federal government may exempt organizations or activities in provinces that have their own privacy laws if they are substantially similar to the federal law. PIPEDA will continue to apply in those provinces to the federally regulated private sector and to personal information in inter-provincial and international transactions by all organizations engaged in commercial activities. Oversight of both federal Acts rests with the Privacy Commissioner of Canada who is authorized to receive and investigate complaints.”

## Drug-related Crimes

In 2015, Sûreté du Québec and the RCMP conducted several raids connected to drug trafficking in Quebec. Over the last decade, there has been an increase in violence and murder related to drugs. In Quebec, many of the drug-territory incidents and deaths have involved use of bombs by biker gangs. Hell's Angels and the Rock Machine traditionally were in control of the lucrative illegal drug trade in Quebec.

Sentences for drug-related crimes are shorter and less harsh than in the U.S., Australia, and other Western nations. For example, minimum sentencing requirements for trafficking three kilograms (6.6 lbs.) or more of marijuana, cocaine, or heroin carries a one year mandatory minimum sentence. (In the U.S., minimum sentencing for trafficking of marijuana, cocaine, or heroin carries mandatory minimum sentences of 5-20 years depending on the weight.)

## Kidnapping Threat

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International parental child abductions between Canada and the U.S. do occur. Procedures for coordinating with courts, establishing jurisdiction, and other issues associated with handling these cases are prescribed under the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (the "Hague Convention"), of which Canada is a signatory.

In 2012, the RCMP created a new unit, The National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains. The unit maintains a national database for finding missing people and identifying human remains that will link investigators from across the country when their cases match. The database will provide support to police, coroners, and medical examiners and let them compare their findings to cases from across the country.

## **Police Response**

Police can be relied upon to respond to the scene of crimes in a timely manner. Police agencies and emergency medical services in the Quebec City area have the same capabilities as U.S. emergency services. The Service de Police de la Ville de Québec (SPVQ) is very proactive and responsive when dealing with all types of criminal activity. The SPVQ patrols the city and is the primary first responder in the case of an emergency. Sûreté du Québec is proactive in addressing criminal activity. The capabilities of both city and federal law enforcement agencies are on par with their U.S. counterparts. Routine and emergency requests for police assistance from the RSO have been met with an excellent response by the SPVQ and RCMP.

## **How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment**

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Reports of police detention of U.S. citizens can be directed to the American Citizen Services office of the U.S. Consulate General in Quebec City at 418-692-2095. After-hours calls to this number will be forwarded to the Consulate duty officer.

### Crime Victim Assistance

Anyone in need of police support or emergency services should dial 911.

### Police/Security Agencies

**Federal Police:** The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is the national police service and an agency of the Ministry of Public Safety Canada. The RCMP is unique; it is a national, federal, provincial, and municipal policing body. The RCMP provides a total federal policing service to all Canadians and policing services under contract to the three territories, eight provinces (except Ontario and Quebec), more than 190 municipalities, 184 Aboriginal communities, and three international airports. RCMP also have responsibility for protecting diplomatic facilities.

**Quebec Provincial Police:** Sûreté du Québec (SQ) is the provincial police force for the province of Quebec. SQ employs roughly 5,200 officers. SQ is second largest provincial force (behind Ontario Provincial Police) and fourth largest force in Canada (behind Toronto Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police). The primary function of the SQ is to enforce provincial laws, some municipal bylaws, the Criminal Code, many other laws throughout Quebec, and to assist municipal police forces when needed.

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Members of the force can also act as forest conservation agents. The SQ is also responsible for providing municipal police services to municipalities in the province that do not otherwise have municipal or regional police services. The force also patrols provincial highways. In addition, the SQ can investigate any incident that involves wrongdoing by a municipal police force or a case where a police intervention caused death.

Quebec City Local Police: The Service de Police de la Ville de Québec (SPVQ) has jurisdiction in the city of Quebec. The SPVQ is typically the primary first law enforcement responder in the case of any emergency. The SPVQ responds to emergency 911 calls.

## **Medical Emergencies**

Emergency medical care is reliable and on par with any major U.S. hospital. Individuals can walk into emergency rooms or, if needed, dial 911 for ambulance service.

### Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

Centre Hospitalier de l'Université Laval

Tel: 418-525-4444

Centre Hospitalier Jeffrey Hale

Tel: 418-684-5333

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Hôtel-Dieu de Québec

Tel: 418-525-4444

Available Air Ambulance Services

Air Medic

Emergency: 1-877-999-3322

450-766-0770

Info@airmedic.net

Recommended Insurance Posture

For information on auto insurance in Quebec, please visit the Société de l'assurance automobile at <http://www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/>

Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

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For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:  
[http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/canada?s\\_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-double-001](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/canada?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-double-001).

## **OSAC Country Council Information**

RSO Montreal is planning to launch an OSAC chapter in Montreal in Spring 2016. For OSAC inquiries in the province of Quebec, please email [OSACMontreal@state.gov](mailto:OSACMontreal@state.gov). To reach OSAC's Western Hemisphere team, please email [OSACWHA@state.gov](mailto:OSACWHA@state.gov).

## **U.S. Consulate Location and Contact Information**

### Consulate Address and Hours of Operation

Consulate General of the United States - Quebec City

2, rue de la Terrasse-Dufferin

Quebec City, Quebec G1R 4T9

Days/Hours of Operation: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, Mon-Fri

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## Consulate Contact Numbers

Switchboard: 418-692-2095

Post 1: 418-692-4023

Website: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/quebec/>

## Nearby Posts

Embassy Ottawa: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/>

Consulate Calgary: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/calgary/>

Consulate Halifax: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/halifax/>

Consulate Montreal: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/montreal/>

Consulate Toronto: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/toronto/>

Consulate Vancouver: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/vancouver/>

Consulate Winnipeg: <https://ca.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/winnipeg/>

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## Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

### Situational Awareness Best Practices

Visitors are advised to take the same security precautions they would take while traveling to any major U.S. city. All U.S. travelers should practice sound security procedures and immediately report any unusual incidents to local authorities. The RSO recommends the use of common sense as well as remaining alert and conscious of one's environment.

Stay alert and remain aware of your surroundings. Avoid flaunting/displaying large sums of cash/jewelry in public. Do not overburden yourself with bags and packages as you walk around. Keep your cell phone and keys in a pocket on your person and not in a purse or handbag. Stay or walk in illuminated, populated areas. Use only ATMs in well-illuminated, public areas. Let someone know where you are going and when you will be back.

If staying in a hotel, store valuables in safety deposit boxes or room safes and always keep your room door locked.

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