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SITE TF SITREP: 22 October 2019

2019 Federal Election – Threat Trend: **STABLE**



This situation report (SITREP) provides information on the operations of the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force. It is to be used by Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) and Deputy Ministers (DMs) for information and decision-making purposes. Intended for named recipients only. Please share with members of: SITE TF ADMs; SITE TF DMs; Panel of 5

Threat Updates

GAC:

- (U) RRM Canada noted ongoing engagement on the Buffalo Chronicle stories published over the weekend. An Avaaz petition calling for an RCMP investigation into who may have paid the Buffalo Chronicle's owner to promote disinformation related to Canada's election has now garnered almost 22,000 signatures. The Avaaz petition states that "these stories have reached an estimated 20 million views and counting". The RRM assesses this number as greatly exaggerated based on its own open-source analysis but cannot fully quantify engagement at this point. We do note that Facebook, the primary platform for the article's amplification, had around 240,000 engagements on all Buffalo Chronicle stories involving Canada between March and October 2019.
- (U) RRM Canada cannot assess either the motivation for the publication of these stories or its potential impact on the Canadian election. At this point, we have no evidence to suggest that the articles in any way compromised the integrity of the election.
- (U) We will undertake further research and analysis in the days and weeks ahead to ascertain how Buffalo Chronicle content is disseminated on social media to try to assess whether foreign actors are involved.
- (U) RRM Canada is also aware of the hashtag #TrudeaulesTuesday and is investigating for signs of inauthentic and coordinated foreign behaviour. It will report further if necessary.

Operational Responses and Updates

CSE:

- (PB) Since September 30, cyber analysts have triaged over 63,512 network security alerts from 133 unique cyber threat types. Dynamic defence systems have blocked 16,517 requests for compromised websites and stopped over 15,000,000 port scans and software vulnerability probes on EC systems.

CERRID 65693709

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