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Deputy Minister Committee on Foreign Interference**February 24, 2023****15:00 to 16:00**

Key Messages

- Foreign interference poses a significant threat to Canada's national security, as it is multi-faceted.
- A comprehensive and collaborative approach with Government of Canada stakeholders and security and intelligence partners will be an important aspect in effectively countering foreign interference.
- The RCMP would welcome any effort to enhance collaboration and governance in the foreign interference space as this will improve Canada's posture, however, the RCMP will continue to maintain independence in its investigations, including for those related to foreign interference.

OUTLINE/OVERVIEW

The Commissioner has been invited to participate in a Deputy Minister level meeting concerning foreign interference (FI) and a Task Force (TF) being led by the Privy Council Office Security and Intelligence (PCO S&I) area. The TF has been recently stood up to improve various aspects of Canada's response to FI, including from an operational perspective. Talking points for the Commissioner are available at **TAB A**.

The TF is expected to complement the ongoing work already being undertaken by Public Safety Canada related to improving Canada's ability to counter hostile activities by state actors (HASA).

At today's meeting, it is anticipated that the FI TF will provide an overview of their ongoing counter FI activities pertaining to democratic processes and identify opportunities to enhance their overall approach and coordination. The discussion will also focus on the various media articles of potential foreign interference in the 2021 Federal election.

BACKGROUND

Working with the PCO TF, the RCMP may contact other government agencies that are mandated to respond to Foreign Actor Interference (FAI) activities that are threats to national security. It is expected that through the TF effort, the RCMP will leverage the process of lawful information sharing to mitigate national security threats. Information sharing may lead to the finding of information that may be useful for enforcement or mitigation responses within or outside of the RCMP's mandate, that a partner agency may not be aware of.

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Currently, the RCMP does not have an investigation into alleged foreign elections interference for the 2019 or 2021 Federal elections.

The RCMP has initiated an investigative file of potential breach of the *Security of Information Act* (SOIA) based on the current media reporting stating that journalists have viewed classified CSIS reports on potential foreign interference of the 2021 Federal election.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The Federal Policing National Security (FPNS) Foreign Actor Interference (FAI) Team is collaborating with the FI Task Force to provide them with an overview of the RCMP's operational perspective on FAI investigative files, including elections.

In the context of countering foreign interference, the RCMP receives information from the public, domestic and international partners that describe threats to Canada's national security. The RCMP assesses threats to national security and seeks to ensure public safety by enforcing various laws.

The RCMP often shares information with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service for their mandated use. Alternatively, or simultaneously, the RCMP may share information within the TF for the intended purpose to stop or impede threats to Canada.

A key aspect of the TF that is expected from the RCMP's perspective, will be an added mechanism to leverage mandates in order to improve Canada's ability to counter FAI.

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