

How to approach scenario exercises

- A scenario exercise is intended to have the Panel apply the Protocol in the context of a plausible but imagined incident that could occur during the Caretaker Convention.
- When working through a scenario the Panel must determine whether the incident meets the threshold for a Panel announcement outlined in s. 6 of the Protocol.
- The focus of the exercise is the deliberation process in making this determination through considering:
 - the degree to which the incident(s) undermine(s) Canadians' ability to have a free and fair election;
 - the potential of the incident(s) to undermine the credibility of the election; and
 - the degree of confidence officials have in the intelligence or information.
- The Panel will also consider the range of tools available to address the incident, whether through other sections of the Protocol, or regular Government operations.
- To stimulate real-life conditions, the exercise is also meant to get the Panel comfortable with working in the context of unforgiving timelines and with partial or imperfect information.

How to approach scenario exercises

- A scenario exercise differs from a tabletop exercise (TTX) in that it focuses on the deliberation process – i.e. does the event(s) described require a response from the Panel whether formal or informal – rather than roles and responsibilities of different actors during an incident.
- In addition to determining whether a hypothetical incident facing the Panel meets the threshold, the Panel could also assess:
 - What, if any, other sources or entities the Panel would like to hear from, either in advance of or during an election
 - Whether and how other elements of the Protocol could be applied in the scenario, i.e., short of a formal announcement by the Panel
 - If and how the real-time reality of the scenario impacts the Panel's assessment
 - Any other source of information or support that the Panel would need, or that would benefit the Panel's deliberations

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Looking ahead: Applying the CEIPP in 2024/2025

- Panel needs to get comfortable navigating incidents and its role in what is known as the “grey zone”
 - The grey zone describes activities that are neither clearly in the acceptable realm nor outright in the unacceptable realm
- Incidents that occur during the Caretaker period could require the Panel to navigate the space between:
 - Traditional diplomacy ↔ State-led foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI)
 - Fact-based debate ↔ Debate based on attempts to deceive
 - What is known at the time ↔ What has actually occurred
 - Providing important information ↔ Arbitrating truth

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