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BUILDING A **SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA**
BÂTIR UN **CANADA SÉCURITAIRE ET RÉSILIENT**



Foreign Interference

Briefing to Canadian
Parliamentarians

June 2024

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What is foreign interference?

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The Government of Canada defines **foreign interference** as malign activities undertaken by states, or their proxies, to advance their own strategic objectives to the detriment of Canada's national interests. It includes activities that fall below the threshold of armed conflict, yet are clandestine, deceptive, threatening and/or illegal.

Foreign interference is **distinct from normal activities to exert influence**, which are legitimate, legal and an integral part of conventional and rules-based international relations.



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Some Foreign Interference Actors

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- Foreign states with a history of Foreign Interference activity in Canada include:

- China
- Russia
- Iran
- India



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Elected and Public Officials

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- Elected officials include:
 - members of Parliament;
 - members of provincial legislatures;
 - municipal officials; and,
 - representatives of Indigenous governments.



- Public servants, ministerial and political staff, and others with input into, or influence over, the public policy decision-making process.
- Electoral candidates and their staff.



What threat actors want from you

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- Compel you to **advocate or suppress specific policy positions.**
- Use you to obtain **access to policy makers and other high-value targets.**
- Obtain **privileged information** from you that would help them achieve their goals.
 - Information about government policies and plans.
 - Information about people in power positions.
 - Information about security protocols.



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Methods used by threat actors

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Elicitation



Illicit and Corrupt Financing



Cyber attacks

Threat actors can, for example:

- Threaten to **use compromising information** about you, your family or your close associates;
- **Harass or threaten** to use violence against you or your family;
- Conduct **social media campaigns** against you;
- Befriend you, creating a **feeling of indebtedness** towards the threat actor, or making you an unwitting participant;
- **Promise personal benefits** (i.e., money, status, access, votes, supporters); or
- **Access your digital information** without your consent.



Cultivation



Coercion



Disinformation



Espionage



Cyber Threats to Parliamentarians

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1. Cyber Attacks - Hacking

- Tracking you and accessing your privileged information.
- The PRC has hacked Canadian targets multiple times in the past few years to gain privileged information.

2. Information Operations Against Parliamentarians

- Your voice and likeness as a public figure are now easily manipulated and fakes are hard to detect.
- Parliamentarians face reputational damage from mis and disinformation and social media and encrypted chat apps can spread this info directly to voters.
- Cyber threat actors target the websites, e-mail, social media accounts, and the networks and devices of political parties, candidates and their staff. They may steal information and then release it to embarrass or discredit a political party or candidate.



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How to protect your digital self

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- Assume your digital devices have been compromised and act accordingly.
- Use your government provided phone, tablet and laptop whenever possible.
- Encrypt messages whenever possible.
- Use a password manager and two-factor identification.
- Do not connect devices to unsecured or free Wi-Fi networks.
- Be on guard for spearphishing messages.
- Don't click on links or attachments you don't trust.



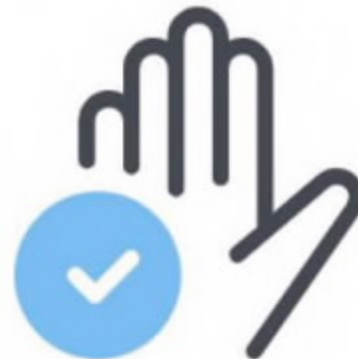
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How to protect your social self

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- Be aware and keep track of “unnatural” social interactions.
- Be aware of inappropriate requests that involve money, suspicious donations, free trips, personal benefits, or “gifts.”
- Follow protocols on the security of information.
- Be diligent with information sharing and partnerships.



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New Ministerial Direction

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In accordance with the Ministerial Direction on Threats to the Security of Canada Directed at Parliament and Parliamentarians, CSIS will continue to:

- Investigate all credible threats (as defined in the *CSIS Act*) that **target Parliament and parliamentarians**.
- Pursue the appropriate **lawful methods** in response to such threats.
- Ensure that **parliamentarians are informed** of these threats directed at them **wherever possible within the law** while protecting the security and integrity of national security and intelligence operations and investigations.
- Inform **Minister of Public Safety** of all instances of credible threats directed at Parliament or parliamentarians in a timely manner.



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- The RCMP's Federal Policing National Security (FPNS) program has a multidisciplinary team dedicated to countering foreign interference.
- FPNS collaborates with domestic and international law enforcement and security and intelligence partners to counter foreign interference threats.

Investigations:

- FPNS provides leadership, subject matter expertise, and governance on foreign interference investigations.
- NS criminal investigations are conducted by regional investigative teams by using various investigative methods and techniques.

Engagement:

- The RCMP engages and conducts outreach with at-risk communities and sectors regularly.



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SITE Task Force

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SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE THREATS TO ELECTIONS TASK FORCE

WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Covert, clandestine, or criminal activities interfering with or influencing electoral processes in Canada

	MANDATE/ROLE	ACTIVITIES
 CSE Communications Security Establishment	Information Technology Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing advice, guidance, and services to help ensure the protection of electronic information and of systems of importance Foreign Intelligence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of foreign intelligence for Government of Canada on threat actors Supporting CSIS and RCMP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing assistance on technical operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing intelligence and cyber assessments on the intentions, activities, and capabilities of foreign threat actors Protecting Government systems and networks related to elections through cyber defence measures Providing cyber security advice and guidance to political parties, provinces and other institutions involved in democratic processes
 CSIS Canadian Security Intelligence Service	Intelligence and Threat Reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of information about foreign influenced activities that are detrimental to the interest of Canada and are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person Countering such activities through threat reduction measures Intelligence Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing advice, intelligence reporting and intelligence assessments to Government of Canada about foreign influenced activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing threat briefings and intelligence reporting to Elections Canada and the Commissioner of Elections Providing an assessment of hostile state activity methodologies and capabilities to Government of Canada decision makers
 GAC Global Affairs Canada	Mandate/Role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open source research on global trends and data on threats to democracy Partnership with G7 countries to share information and coordinate responses to threats as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing research on disinformation campaigns targeting Canada by foreign actors Reporting on global trends, metrics, and incidents Coordinating attribution of incidents
 RCMP Royal Canadian Mounted Police	Mandate/Role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary responsibility for preventing, detecting, denying and responding to national security-related criminal threats in Canada Investigates criminal offenses arising from terrorism, espionage, cyber attacks, and foreign influenced activities The key investigatory body for Elections Canada if criminal activity is suspected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigates any criminal activity related to interference or influence of Canada's electoral processes Works closely in partnership with intelligence, law enforcement and regulatory agencies



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Where to turn to

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- If you wish to report suspected foreign interference activity or other security issues, please refer to your established protocols and reach out to the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms & Corporate Security.
- In case of immediate threat or danger, call 911.



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Questions ?



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Annex – Additional Resources

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Extra Guidance for Parliamentarians

- [Protecting Democracy Toolkit](#)
- [Foreign Interference and You](#)
- [Cyber Security Guide for Campaign Teams](#)
- [Cyber Security Advice for Political Candidates](#)
- [Five Practical Ways to Protect your Campaign](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Canadian Political Campaigns: Protect Yourself Online](#)
- [Social Media Account Impersonation](#)
- [Cyber Security Briefing for Canadian Elections \(ITLC 612, Course Training\)](#)
- [Cyber Security for Political Party IT Decision Makers and IT Staff \(ITLC 616\)](#)
- See the Cyber Centre's [Cyber Threats and Elections](#) webpage and the [Cyber Threats to Canada's Democratic Process Update](#) for additional information.



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Annex – Additional Resources



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Additional Points of Contact

- To report non-urgent potential national security threats or suspicious activities, contact CSIS at **613-993-9620**, or **1-800-267-7685**, or by completing the [web form](#).
- Contact CSE's Canadian Centre for Cyber Security for tailored cyber security assistance: **1-833-CYBER-88** or contact@cyber.gc.ca.
- RCMP Protective Operations Coordination Centre (POCC): phone **1-833-226-7622** or by email protective_policing@rcmp-grc.gc.ca.



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