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Public Inquiry Into Foreign Interference  
in Federal Electoral Processes and  
Democratic Institutions

Enquête publique sur l'ingérence étrangère  
dans les processus électoraux et les  
institutions démocratiques fédéraux

## Interview Summary: Monik Beauregard

### Background

On February 22, 2024, Monik Beauregard was interviewed by Commission Counsel in her capacity as a member of the 2019 Panel of Five and senior official of Public Safety Canada. The interview was held in a secure environment and included references to classified information.

This preamble and the text contained in square brackets are explanatory notes provided by Commission Counsel for the assistance of the reader. This summary should be read in conjunction with the Institutional Reports prepared by the Government of Canada and with the interview summaries prepared for the 2019 and 2021 Panel of Five.

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- [1] Ms. Beauregard occupied various functions within the government before retiring in 2021.
- [2] Her most recent roles include:
- Intelligence analyst at the Department of National Defence (ND) and at the Security and Intelligence Secretariat at the Privy Council Office (PCO);
  - Executive Director of the Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre (ITAC);
  - Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, National Security and Cyber Security Branch at Public Safety (Sr-ADM);
  - Associate Deputy Minister of Public Safety (A/DM) from August 2019.
  - On or about September 12, 2019, she became Interim Deputy Minister (Interim DM) of Public Safety (PS) until Rob Stewart was appointed to the position on December 17, 2019. At that time, she returned to her previous position as Associate Deputy Minister at PS until her retirement in 2021.
- [3] In her capacity as Interim DM, she became a member of the Panel of Five, replacing Gina Wilson. Ms. Beauregard noted that when she was appointed A/DM, she was not replaced

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in her role as Sr-ADM. Thus, while she was occupying the positions of Interim DM, and A/DM, she continued to take on some of the responsibilities from her previous Sr-ADM job.

- [4] Ms. Beauregard explained that Associate Deputy Ministers do not have formal responsibilities or authorities. Accountabilities remain with the DM. Assistant Deputy Ministers who are ready to be appointed to the DM-level are promoted to Associate Deputy Minister positions so that they can have an opportunity to learn about the DM role, including the relationship with the Minister, before later being appointed to a full DM position.

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## Public Safety

### Role of PS in Countering FI

- [5] Ms. Beauregard described her experience with FI prior to her role on the Panel. She explained that throughout her time as the Sr-ADM, the Foreign Interference (FI) file grew in importance through PS' broader focus on Hostile Activities by State Actors (HASA). She explained that her remit at the time dealt mainly with HASA in the context of the *Investment Canada Act* (ICA); there was a growing concern about Chinese investments in Canadian businesses and infrastructures and the threats that might result from those investments. PS was involved in providing advice to the Minister on how to counter these threats. Ms. Beauregard noted that she was also involved in the development of Bill C-59 which modernized the national security legislative framework and the national security infrastructure, in part, by creating the **National Security and Intelligence Review Agency** ("NSIRA").
- [6] As A/DM and Interim DM of PS, Ms. Beauregard regularly consumed intelligence with the focus of using that intelligence to inform policy. She noted that she consumed less intelligence as A/DM and Interim DM than when she served as Sr-A/DM because at higher levels, her time was split across more issues and areas of concern.

### Flow of Information

- [7] Ms. Beauregard noted that in her earlier position as the Sr-ADM at PS she had regular and significant access to intelligence. She explained that at PS, the Sr-ADM is the most

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senior level official with direct access to Canadian Top Secret Network (CTSN) accounts. For that reason, it is more convenient to access intelligence than it is for DMs. The Sr-ADM is generally responsible for receiving extremely sensitive intelligence that is directed at named recipients at PS. Ms. Beauregard explained that as A/DM and Interim DM she received more routine intelligence through the Director General of National Security Operations (DG Ops). If she was a named recipient, the Sr-ADM would generally be alerted to the intelligence she needed to read. There was no formal mechanism for this.

[8] Ms. Beauregard further explained that if the Minister is listed as a named recipient on a piece of intelligence that intelligence will come through the Sr-ADM's office and be brought from the Sr-ADM's office to the Minister's office by a liaison officer. This officer is a public servant who works in the Minister's office and is responsible for passing information, including intelligence from the Department to the Minister's Chief of Staff. At the time of the 2019 election, Laurence Chow was the liaison officer in Minister Blair's office. Ms. Beauregard indicated that she could not confirm how the Minister's office handled the intelligence once received.

[9] Ms. Beauregard characterized the flow of intelligence to Minister Blair's office as primarily dictated by the agencies, whose Heads would propose briefings directly to Minister Blair when appropriate. She explained that either the DM or the A/DM would attend any security agency briefings with Minister Blair. She recalled attending at least one FI briefing with Minister Blair in DM Rob Stewart's absence. She explained that this briefing occurred in early 2021 and discussed the Chinese interest in targeting Canadian MPs. She did not recall if any MPs were specifically named in this briefing nor the specific date of the briefing.

## Panel of Five

### Structure and operation of the Panel

[10] The 2019 Panel members had varying levels of knowledge and experience with intelligence information. Ms. Beauregard saw her role as both a representative of the national security community and as a senior government official. Ms. Beauregard joined the Panel at the beginning of the writ period, and so missed the Panel's first meetings in which the members began developing a common understanding of the Cabinet Directive.

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She could not recall whether she was subsequently briefed on the content of these meetings, or whether she was provided an initial threat assessment. Nonetheless, she had consumed a great deal of national security intelligence daily in her prior functions as the Sr-ADM and was confident that she was already well-versed on the threat environment. She felt that she was well-placed to leverage her national security experience when exercising her judgement at the decision making-table. At that time, her primary concern was the possibility of Russia hacking the election infrastructure.

- [11] Ms. Beauregard noted that she first attended a Panel meeting on September 16, 2019. During that and subsequent meetings, the Panel was provided with hypothetical scenarios (table-top exercises) that they worked through to determine, on a consensus basis, whether the threshold for public announcement would have been met. She recalls having the most discussions around the scenario where it was hypothesized that the Kremlin anonymously leaked information to Canadian media organisations with information on Russia's election interference plan for Canada and then artificially amplified the story on Twitter, resulting in a national media coverage and voters questioning the integrity of the electoral process. The Panel members also reflected on the appropriate approach that would have been used to inform Canadians about this particular incident, given that most of the associated intelligence was classified. A real example that occurred towards the end of the writ period was the "Buffalo Chronicle" incident, where a US-based paper published inflammatory information about the Prime Minister that gained significant exposure. Ms. Beauregard agreed with a statement put to her from the interview of other 2019 Panel members that the ecosystem had "cleansed itself" through mainstream media stories that debunked the Chronicle allegations, and that no action by the Panel was required. She noted that at that time, her concerns were primarily around misinformation in traditional media, as opposed to social media.

#### Flow of Information

- [12] Generally, the weekly Panel meetings began with presentations from the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force ("SITE TF") and the national security agencies. Panel members received relevant information primarily through written daily SITE TF briefs ("SITREPs"), which were provided to them directly, and through briefings at the Panel's weekly meeting. Ms. Beauregard remembered receiving some (but not all)

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of the raw intelligence underlining the SITREPs (such as the CSIS intelligence reports) from the SITE TF. After the briefings, the SITE TF or agency representatives would leave the meeting so that the Panel could deliberate alone, accompanied only by Allen Sutherland, of the PCO Democratic Institutions Secretariat, and the PCO Communications Secretariat. She recalled that some of the Panel members were also members of the Deputy Minister Operations Committee (DMOC), but added that there was no duplication of effort as election-related matters were left to the Panel to assess and manage.

**Threshold**

- [13] Ms. Beauregard was privy to certain conversations about the Panel's creation when working as Sr-ADM. However, she was not involved in formulating the language of the Cabinet Directive on the Critical Election incident Public Protocol (Cabinet Directive).
- [14] When determining whether the threshold for public announcement had been met, Ms. Beauregard first assessed her degree of confidence in the intelligence or information and closely examined the caveats that accompanied the reports. In her view, a report that had a low degree of confidence should not trigger a public communication considering the significant public repercussions. In the case of low degree of confidence, the Panel would seek further corroboration from the relevant national security agencies.
- [15] On that note, Ms. Beauregard remembered discussing the nomination process in Don Valley North. The members realized that the allegations suggested PRC engagement in Canada's democratic processes. However, Panel members "wanted more" information before considering action.
- [16] Ms. Beauregard was asked about an intelligence report relating to potential PRC foreign interference that was published after the 2019 election. She did not recall receiving information or intelligence on this matter, and acknowledged that the report would certainly have been of interest had it been published during the election period.
- [17] Ultimately, the Panel did not identify any issues that met the threshold in even a single riding.