



Addendum to Interview Summary: CSIS Regions Interview Summary

Bo Basler and two Regional Director Generals (“DGs”) were interviewed in a panel format by Commission Counsel on February 20, 2024. The interview was held in a secure environment and included references to classified information. This addendum contains information provided during that interview that is relevant to Stage 2 of the Commission’s proceedings and that, in the opinion of the Commissioner, would not be injurious to the critical interests of Canada or its allies, national defence or national security.

Notes to Readers:

- Commission Counsel have provided explanatory notes in square brackets to assist the reader.

1. Creation of Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator Role

- [1] Mr. Basler explained that the role of Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator was created in March of 2023, for two reasons. First, as CSIS faced intense attention from the public, the media, and the Government of Canada in relation to the media leaks on FI-related information, it was necessary to ensure that a point-person from CSIS responded with a coherent and consistent narrative and coordinated all responses. This included responding to the FI-related reviews by the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (“**NSIRA**”), the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (“**NSICOP**”) and the Independent Special Rapporteur (“**ISR**”). Second, because different regions and different mission centers saw different kinds of FI-related activity, they had their own, on-the-ground definition of FI, it was necessary to have someone coordinate internal strategic and policy elements to guide the unified response

to this threat and to coordinate activity with other government departments. As a result, CSIS created Mr. Basler's position.

2. Michael Chong

- [2] The interviewees then discussed the meetings CSIS had with MP Michael Chong. Regional DG #1 noted that in 2021, MP Chong had voted in favour of a motion to declare the PRC's treatment of the Uyghur people a genocide. The Service assessed that due to this issue the PRC took an interest in MP Chong and his family. Regional DG #1 described the subsequent protective briefing that involved discussion of how he had voted, and how he would be perceived. Regional DG #1 then referred to page 6 of **CAN013134** [this is a document that lists CSIS' engagements with MP Chong]. Regional DG #1 noted that after the media leaks, MP Chong made public comments that he was not aware of the threats that had been leaked in the media. Mr. Basler noted that some of the narratives coming from the media were incomplete or incorrect. He explained that MP Chong's family was not targeted in the traditional sense of that word. In the intelligence realm, "targeted" can mean that the PRC was simply collecting information on MP Chong's family.
- [3] Mr. Basler explained CSIS then met with MP Chong again to conduct a protective briefing to ensure he was aware of all PRC threat activity relating to him and his family. He noted that the National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister was also involved in the process that led to briefing MP Chong.
- [4] Mr. Basler emphasized that this briefing was part of a TRM.
- [5] Mr. Basler explained that the media leaks led to a Ministerial Direction to brief MPs on any intelligence related to threats against them or their families. He expanded that this Ministerial Direction was quite general and lacked a certain level of nuance with respect to briefings: Briefings were to occur based on reporting of any threat that had been collected by the Service, regardless of whether the threat actor actually had the capability to follow through on that activity, and regardless of the reliability of the reporting. Under this initial, broad Ministerial Direction, CSIS briefed Erin O'Toole and Jenny Kwan on the full threat picture relating to FI. This may have led to a distorted

view of the threat. Eventually, an implementation protocol was developed between CSIS, Public Safety and the Privy Council Office interpreting the Ministerial Direction with a more narrow scope. Briefings are no longer required for every threat. Rather, briefings must occur for credible threats that threat actors could actually undertake.

- [6] The interviewees were then referred to a classified document regarding the PRC's interest in Erin O'Toole. Mr. Basler could not recall whether there had been a defensive briefing of Mr. O'Toole related to this document. He did point out, however, that the reporting discloses no threat against Mr. O'Toole, as it simply details that the PRC wanted to find out more about Mr. O'Toole's position on China.