



Addendum to Interview Summary: Minister Bill Blair Interview Summary

Bill Blair was interviewed by Commission Counsel on February 21, 2024. The content of this addendum is relevant to stage 2 of the Commission's inquiry. 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 Reader:

- Text contained [in square brackets] are explanatory notes provided by Commission counsels to assist the reader.

1. Michael Chong

- [1] Minister Blair stated that he first learned about the alleged targeting of MP Michael Chong by the People's Republic of China ("**PRC**") through the Globe & Mail articles reported in 2023. He indicated that he did not know of the existence of the 2021 reporting that first discussed the matter prior to the release of this newspaper article. Minister Blair stated that the only intelligence he received on that subject was the July 20, 2021 IA 2021-22/31.
- [2] This report stated that PRC officials have taken specific actions to target Canadian MPs affiliated with the Canadian parliament's recent vote on Uyghur genocide motion. A PRC official sought information on a Canadian MP's relatives who may be located in the PRC for further potential sanctions.

- [3] Given that the Canadian MPs mentioned in the IA were not named and that he did not see the underlying reports explicitly naming MP Chong, Minister Blair was not able to identify him as a target of PRC FI activities.
- [4] Minister Blair indicated that he would have liked to have known about the targeting of MP Chong as described in the media at the time, as he found it concerning. Although the intelligence does not reveal any physical risk to MP Chong or his relatives, Minister Blair opined that the targeting of a Canadian MP or their family members in the manner reported in the press is a serious issue.
- [5] Following the release of the Globe & Mail articles, Minister Blair conducted an internal investigation to determine what happened in terms of communication flow. This led him to conclude that his team at the Minister's Office was not informed of this intelligence in due time, either. When asked about the May 31, 2021, CSIS Issues Management Brief (IMU) sent by Director Vigneault to officials within the Department for purposes of distribution restricted to individuals that included him, his Chief of Staff, the Deputy Minister of PS, and the National Security Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister (NSIA) regarding the defensive briefings CSIS intended to provide to MPs Michael Chong and Kenny Chiu, Minister Blair indicated that he did not receive it. He remarked that intelligence never came to him in this format. He restated that if the CSIS Director felt it necessary for him to be briefed on a matter, the Director would arrange to meet him in a SCIF.
- [6] Commission counsel asked Minister Blair what he would have done had he known of the May 31, 2021 IMU sent by CSIS. Minister Blair responded that he would not have done anything in particular, but would have been reassured that CSIS was proactive in dealing with the issue. Minister Blair stated that he had an expectation that CSIS was doing its job and that he has continued confidence in CSIS and the RCMP that they would have taken action in keeping with their duty to ensure that Canadians are kept safe.
- [7] In response to his internal investigation, Minister Blair remarked that his successor, Minister Marco Mendicino, implemented a new Ministerial Directive which required CSIS to provide defensive briefings to targeted MPs as soon as they are identified as targets

of FI activities. Minister Blair stated that he was supportive of this new Ministerial Directive since he considers that the Government of Canada has a duty to warn Canadians when they are subject to such threats. Minister Blair was referred to his December 2020 letter to all 338 Members of Parliament, discussing what the Government of Canada was doing to actively address FI-related threats, and observed that this was part of his efforts to educate all MPs on these issues.