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People's Republic of China Police Stations

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*This is a summary of some intelligence information that is available to the Government of Canada's national security and intelligence community on a certain topic, presented such that it can be released to the public without disclosing information that would cause injury to national security and international relations. As such it has several important limitations. **The summary must be read in light of these limitations, otherwise the summary has the potential to mislead the reader.** The limitations are the following:*

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The Commission has been provided with all relevant intelligence and assessments, which indicates information on reliability and corroboration of the information contained therein.

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PRC Police Stations: Information respecting the identification of and response to PRC Police Stations in Canada, including the timing of and dissemination of information to senior decision makers, including elected officials.

1. In September 2022, the Spanish non-governmental organization (NGO) Safeguard Defenders, published its first public report alleging that the People's Republic of China (PRC) had established what Safeguard Defenders called a series of "overseas police centres" in various countries, including Canada. Subsequent investigation confirmed the existence of centres in Canada. The NGO's report alleged that these centres were used to implement PRC operations to harass, intimidate and punish individuals around the globe with the aim of returning "fugitives" to the PRC.
2. Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Public Safety Canada (PS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) consulted interdepartmentally on the Safeguard Defenders report. The information provided in the Safeguard Defenders report, which included details such as the street addresses of the Canadian stations, was deemed credible. GAC, PS, RCMP and CSIS held regular briefings and interdepartmental meetings throughout the fall to share real-time updates, and discussions on relevant domestic and diplomatic tools available.
3. On October 7, 2022, GAC's Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) responsible for Asia, called in the PRC Ambassador to protest the presence of the stations, noting that they violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR), and requested the stations be shut down. On October 28, the ADM delivered a diplomatic note to the PRC Ambassador formally requesting an official and detailed explanation from the PRC concerning the stations and their intended purposes. During this meeting, the ADM also declared that Canada would be denying the longstanding PRC request to create a new PRC Embassy position for the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party of China, and would be denying the visa application for the candidate.
4. Also in October 2022, the Prime Minister's Office was briefed on the issue, and it was discussed at a Deputy Minister-level meeting.
5. After the September 2022 report publication, CSIS disseminated information and intelligence products to relevant Government of Canada partners. CSIS assessed that these stations were in part created to "collect intelligence and monitor former PRC residents living in Canada as part of the PRC's broader transnational anti-corruption, repression and repatriation campaign." Further, through the One Vision framework, CSIS had discussions and shared information with the RCMP pertaining to the overseas police stations. CSIS also issued a security alert on the stations to Government of Canada partners at the lowest possible classification level.
6. On November 30, 2022, GAC received a formal notification from the PRC Embassy that what they referred to as "overseas Chinese service centres" were no longer in operation.
7. Throughout fall 2022 and into early 2023, GAC liaised with like-minded countries to share information and coordinate approaches where relevant, including consultations on how other countries planned to respond to the issue. In addition, there were high-level engagements with

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select leaders and foreign ministers at the East Asia Summit, G20, and APEC meetings to increase international awareness of the extent of foreign interference from the PRC.

8. Throughout 2023, the GAC Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) Canada team conducted additional research, which included analysis of the types of services provided by any newly identified stations. RRM Canada began to use “liaison stations” as it reflected the fact that stations promoted services that were not just “police” in nature but included other types of government services (refer to background section below). RRM Canada research was global in nature, building on the original research by Safeguard Defenders. Based on RRM Canada research, on February 24, 2023, GAC again demanded that PRC officials cease operations of any stations in Canada as their presence would constitute a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.
9. Throughout the first half of 2023, the Prime Minister’s Office continued to be kept abreast of the situation within Canada and made aware of the developments on PRC police stations in other democracies as well.
10. Also in the first half of 2023, GAC pushed successfully for insertion of robust language in the G7 Foreign Ministers and Leaders’ Communiqués on Chinese foreign interference, including that the Leaders’ communiqué call on China to act in accordance with its obligations under the Vienna Conventions, and not to conduct interference activities aimed at undermining the security and safety of our communities.
11. On March 2, 2023, Canada’s Minister of Foreign Affairs met her PRC counterpart on the margins of the G20 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Delhi and raised concerns about foreign interference in Canada.
12. There were multiple senior-level interactions with the PRC Embassy in Ottawa between October 2022 and April 2023, (ADM and up) on foreign interference. At every interaction, GAC officials raised Canada’s concerns about the stations.
13. In March 2023, the RCMP informed the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC) that uniformed RCMP officers had visited four PRC “stations” which reportedly ceased their operations afterwards. The Minister of Public Safety informed PROC in April 2023 that the RCMP had taken decisive action to shut down the stations.
14. The Government of Canada continues to monitor for any indications of additional activity of these stations in Canada.

Background on China’s overseas stations

15. The stations were established around the world by sub-national PRC authorities, including police forces, to ostensibly provide services to diaspora communities abroad, including to assist Chinese tourists abroad, to combat internet fraud targeting Chinese nationals, and to offer administrative services. More than two dozen services were potentially available through these stations, including driver licence renewal, changes to PRC household registration, marriage status, military record, and entry permits to Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. The stations may

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have also appointed intermediaries to mediate on disputes between PRC citizens in China and people of Chinese heritage abroad. Not all stations perform all three missions or offer all services.

16. Although some stations predate the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in countries with large numbers of Chinese tourists, the stations saw a rapid increase in numbers during the pandemic, when internet fraud targeting PRC citizens in China proliferated and when the completion of administrative tasks became challenging due to severe restrictions on travel to and from China.
17. Either by design or through opportunism, some of these stations may have served as conduits for the PRC's broader trans-national repression and repatriation operations.
18. Regardless, the provision of services, such as drivers' licence renewals, without Canada's consent is in contravention of the VCCR. Such services are considered to be consular in nature and cannot occur outside of designated diplomatic premises (i.e., an embassy or consulate). Moreover, this foreign government activity in Canada, without Canadian consent, violates Canadian sovereignty.