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SITE TF SITREP: 15 September 2021

2021 Federal Election – Threat Trend: **STABLE**



This situation report (SITREP) provides information on the operations of the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force. It is to be used by Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) and Deputy Ministers (DMs) for information and decision-making purposes. Intended for named recipients only. Please share with members of: SITE TF ADMs; SITE TF DMs; Panel of 5

Threat Updates

GAC/RRM

- (U//OUO) RRM Canada did not observe any clear evidence of foreign state-sponsored information manipulation in its monitoring of the broader Canadian digital information ecosystem on September 14. However, Chinese State media continues to take interest in GE44 in general and the perceived China policies of the Conservative Party of Canada in particular.
- (U//OUO) RRM Canada assesses the majority of English and French-language content originated from recognizable Canadian news sites.
- (U//OUO) Chinese Communist Party media outlets continue to share an article on Chinese news aggregators that the Conservatives “almost want to cut diplomatic relations with China.”
 - (U//OUO) The volume of articles on this topic continue to increase, but it is not clear what levels of engagement these articles receive from users and what audiences are being targeted.
 - (U//OUO) For example, during the Sept 14 reporting period, the media outlets who shared the articles, including *Strait Consumer Digest*, and *MNW.net*, are based in Fujian province, and report primarily on cross-strait news and issues. It appears these outlets are sharing the GT article because it suggests the Conservative Party would pursue “greater political cooperation with Taiwan.” It is unlikely that Canadians would see these articles, and are likely produced for news consumers based in Fujian province, Southern China.

RCMP

(U) *Information current as of 14 September 2021, 1300hrs*

- (PB) The past week has shown a marked increase in the number and size of protests as well as in chatter and rhetoric that has been advocating for divisive action or violence. Over the past few days, a number of incidents have occurred which are being tracked or investigated by the RCMP and applicable law enforcement partners.
 - (PB) On 10 September 2021, a Subject of Interest (SOI), who had been previously charged for making threats, allegedly issued a threat on Instagram targeting Parliament. The SOI was arrested and charged for uttering threats and breaching their current conditions.
 - (PB) On 13 September, 2021, an Elections Canada (EC) worker assisted an individual over the phone with an address update. In response to the EC worker’s offer for additional

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- assistance, the caller replied with an indirect threat towards the PM, asking the EC worker for help. The RCMP is investigating.
- (PB) The same day, during a Burnaby, BC campaign event, the PM was heckled by a protester to the point where, due to the disruptive nature of the protester, the PM interview originally scheduled to take place outdoors was moved inside.
 - (PB) Select comments on 4chan, a platform known for violent rhetoric, continue to advocate for the death of the PM if the LPC wins the election. Investigators continue to face difficulty with substantiating threats on 4chan due to the anonymous nature of the platform.
 - (PB) As of this writing, the majority of anti-vaccine discussion on social media is promoting upcoming rallies occurring in various Canadian cities for the remainder of September.
 - (PB) A “World Wide Rally For Freedom”, scheduled to take place on 18 September, 2021 is currently the most widely discussed. This chatter is occurring on the same social media that is typically used to promote protests against LPC campaign stops (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Telegram, etc.). Media coverage discussing recent charges against individuals protesting at Liberal campaign events in Kitchener and London has not quelled discussion related to protesting future PM campaign stops. It is highly likely that future disruptions of LPC campaign events will continue to be the focus of social media dedicated to anti-vaccine rhetoric.
 - (PB) The RCMP assesses that it is very likely there is crossover in attendance at recent protests aimed at hospitals, consisting of individuals who have also attended and continue to promote anti-Liberal protest events. Information from law enforcement partners indicates that there has been an increase in the number and impact of public order events, whether directed towards Protected Persons or critical infrastructure locations such as hospitals. No major incidents of violence were reported in relation to the anti-vaccine protests that took place on 13 September, 2021 outside several hospitals throughout Canada, although events in Ottawa, Edmonton, Toronto, and Calgary were met with small numbers of counter-demonstrators.
 - (PB) It is important to note that two Ontario-based individuals associated with organizing the Canada-wide protests outside hospitals were present in Washington, DC at a protest organized by a group called Global Frontline Nurses, which occurred on the same day as the January 6th Capitol Hill incident. These individuals have been present at various protests throughout Ontario since 2020 concerning lockdowns, masks, and mandated vaccinations which have tolerated the presence of ideologically motivated individuals who have promoted conspiracy theories. They were fired from their jobs as nurses in January 2021. Although they do not overtly promote QAnon conspiracy theories, the individuals’ presence in Washington on January 6th, along with their discussions about corruption in hospitals and promotion of content highlighting skepticism of the vaccine, have fed into narratives popular with QAnon conspiracies.
 - (PB) While the majority of protests related to the election thus far have been aimed at campaign events, information from law enforcement partners indicates that individuals refusing to wear masks have attended advance polling stations and, in some cases, yelled at staff on site. However, no instances of physical violence have been reported to the RCMP to date. Media reporting indicated that EC workers in the riding of Dartmouth–Cole Harbour were harassed and threatened by some electors due to the absence of a preferred candidate from the ballot (the former candidate withdrew

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and was not replaced by the party). EC personnel noted that the local Police of Jurisdiction were called at two separate locations due to instances of voters verbally abusing EC staff.

- (PB) The RCMP and applicable PoJ continue to investigate all such instances of threats and intimidation.

Operational Responses and Updates

- (U) No significant updates at this time.
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