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SECRET/CEO

## Scenario Note

**Deputy Minister Meeting: Elections Security****Date: November 27, 2019****Time: 3:00pm-4:00pm****1929 Ogilvie Rd. Communications Security Establishment****Overview:**

You are to attend a Deputy Minister (DM) Elections Security Meeting to discuss the 2019 Federal Election, specifically, the Security and Intelligence Threat to Elections (SITE) Task Force, lessons learned, and an overall assessment. The agenda is provided at **Tab 1**. There will also be an informal reception from 4:00pm-5:00pm to thank SITE members and others who provided support over the past months to protect the 2019 Federal Election.

**Background:**

Since early 2018, work has been underway across the Government of Canada (GoC) to mitigate any potential threats to Canada's democratic institutions, and to ensure the integrity of the 2019 Federal Election. The Privy Council Office (PCO) led a whole of government effort to establish initiatives to protect democracy across four broad categories: 1) building citizen resilience; 2) promoting institutional resilience; 3) establishing rules of the road for digital platforms; and, 4) combatting foreign influence. Further to this, several initiatives were established, including, SITE, a Critical Election Incident Public Protocol (CEIPP); and several other initiatives.

*Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections (SITE) Task Force*

SITE is comprised of officials from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the RCMP, and Global Affairs Canada (GAC), was established as a fully integrated team to help the Government assess and respond to foreign threats. SITE provided security briefings to Elections Canada and Canadian political parties prior to and throughout the federal election, to promote situational awareness and to assist them with strengthening their security practices. In the lead up to the elections and during the writ period, elections-related incidents, complaints, and potential criminal offences received by the RCMP via SITE were forwarded to the appropriate responsible unit for action deemed necessary, consistent with the RCMP's Electoral Interference Response Protocol.

*Critical Election Incident Public Protocol*

The CEIPP was established as an effort to ensure consistency in Canada's approach when publicly informing Canadians about incidents that could threaten the integrity of the election. The CEIPP is limited to incidents that fall within the writ period and which fall outside of the Commissioner of Canada Elections' (CCE) mandate to address. The Protocol centers on a panel of senior civil servants who are jointly responsible for determining whether the threshold for informing Canadians has been met. The CEIPP Panel includes the Clerk of the Privy Council, the National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General, the Deputy Minister of Public Safety, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The RCMP and security and intelligence partners support the CEIPP's mandate to contribute to a free and fair election, and the investigation of criminal offences related to foreign influence activities is one of the RCMP's mandated responsibilities.

26/11/2019

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**Considerations:**

A key post-election activity will be the completion of a classified SITE After-Action Report that will identify final lessons learned and other relevant information. You may be asked to comment on whether the RCMP has any lessons learned. Notably, the RCMP did not report on and/or investigate foreign interference activities directly targeting the 2019 elections before and after the writ period. The After-Action Report is currently projected to be completed in the spring of 2020, and the RCMP will contribute as necessary.

While the RCMP, as a Criminal Law Enforcement agency had a limited role in intelligence collection with respect to the foreign interference threat, the Force was able to leverage unique access points to advance the SITE mission. A clear example was the deployment under the Canadian Policing Arrangement of [ ] RCMP National Intelligence [ ] and a technical specialist [ ] to the [ ]. These [ ] members spent approximately six weeks before and after the [ ] Presidential elections embedded [ ] observing their preparations and response to the [ ] threat to their elections. This engagement provided valuable insight on [ ] tradecraft, while building a strong operational relationship between the RCMP and [ ] Police.

SITE partners continue to work within their respective mandates to detect and counter possible foreign threats to Canada and democratic institutions. SITE daily situational reports have concluded, however the RCMP and other SITE TF partners will continue to meet as required, to ensure post-election activities are completed.

Collaborative efforts by GoC partners such as SITE, the CEIPP that included regular meetings and briefings that were informed by intelligence, and security analysis to the leaders of the major political parties, were valuable in countering potential threats to the 2019 federal election. Despite media reports that limited interference occurred in the 2019 election, the CEIPP did not observe any activities that met the threshold for an announcement to the public, or that would have affected Canada's ability to have a free and fair election.

**Talking points:**

- **To date, the RCMP has not initiated any criminal investigations linked to foreign interference related to the Federal Election.**
- **The RCMP is considering its role in the future scope and mandate of the SITE Task Force, as it is possible that SITE could possibly evolve into a Foreign Interference Task Force.**

Submitted by – Rédigé par <b>e-approved</b> [ ] A/Manager, National Security, Federal Policing Strategic Direction	Date 2019-11-26	Reviewed by – Examiné par <b>e-approved</b> [ ] Director Federal Policing Strategic Direction	Date 2019-11-26
Recommended by – Recommandé par <b>e-approved</b> Sean McGillis, Executive Director Federal Policing Strategic Direction	Date 2019-TBD	Approved by – Approuvé par Mike Duheme, Deputy Commissioner, Federal Policing	Date 2019-

26/11/2019