

Protected B
Confidence of the King's Privy Council Office

Deputy Minister Meeting on Foreign Interference

June 13, 2023
Meeting Location: TBC

Key Messages

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- we are concerned that there will be increased risk of missing important details due to the accelerated timelines to draft and advance the legislation and regulations for this initiative.
- The RCMP has supported the Independent Special Rapporteur's examination of foreign interference in Canada. We are concerned about the recent announcement of the ISR's resignation and what that might mean in terms of future processes and workload.
- We also continue to support parliamentary hearings, including by appearing at the Standing Committee on Procedures and House Affairs (PROC) today (June 13th) and 15th.

OUTLINE/OVERVIEW

You will be attending a Deputy Minister meeting on FI on June 13th. The meeting provides you with the opportunity to reaffirm the RCMP's support for, and role in, key FI-related initiatives and to sensitize the Minister to the RCMP's ongoing efforts to combat foreign FI targeting Canada.

BACKGROUND

PROC is currently conducting a study of allegations of FI – including intimidation, surveillance, and electoral interference – targeting Members of Parliament (MPs), including the Hons. Michael Chong (Conservative Party of Canada), Jenny Kwan (New Democrat Party), and Erin O'Toole (Conservative Party of Canada).

The Hon. Michael Chong has described, at both a prior PROC meeting, as well as in media reporting, alleged intimidation affiliated with the People's Republic of China targeting him and his family. In an interview with the Canadian Press, the Hon. Jenny

Kwan has stated that they are an “evergreen foreign interference target” due to their criticisms of the PRC. Media reporting has also described FI targeting the Hon. Erin O’Toole, including an alleged misinformation and voter suppression campaign that allegedly targeted them during the 2021 federal election.

You will be appearing at PROC today and on the 15th with PS DM Tupper, to speak to the RCMP’s role in FI investigations. Efforts to brief parliamentarians on FI-related threats are also underway, and the RCMP is contributing to these efforts.

Of note, on June 9th, media reported that the Independent Special Rapporteur (ISR), the Right Honourable David Johnston, announced that he will be resigning from the ISR position effective no later than the end of June 2023, after delivery of a brief final report.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- The RCMP [redacted] as this will assist the RCMP in improving its ability to counter FI-related threats. This legislation is both needed and overdue in Canada as Five Eyes partners – including Australia and the United States – have similar registries in place to counter malign foreign influence efforts.
- [redacted] will enable us to meet our mandate letter commitment to collaborate with other authorities to combat FI and threats to Canada’s democratic institutions.
- In terms of investigation and enforcement, [redacted]
- DM’s are concerned that there will be increased risk of missing important details due to the aggressive timelines to draft the FITAA legislation and regulations.
- The RCMP is supportive of a well thought out approach that reduces risk, increases coherence and aims to achieve the best outcome for operational and policy purposes.
- The RCMP has provided documents and briefings to support the ISR’s mandate to examine the extent and impacts of FI in Canada’s 2019 and 2021 federal elections. It is possible that the recent announcement of the ISR’s resignation will mean an increased workload across the government, in particular if a public inquiry is called.
- The RCMP has also submitted documents to NSIRA and NSICOP. RCMP senior officials have presented on Foreign Actor Interference and investigations on May 12, 2023 at NSICOP. A follow up appearance has been scheduled for June 16, 2023. RCMP officials also provided an FI presentation to NSIRA.
- The RCMP is not currently investigating alleged FI targeting the Hons. Jenny Kwan and Erin O’Toole, because a complainant and information that an offence has occurred has not been provided to the RCMP.
- The RCMP has been working closely with PS and S&I counterparts to prepare for the proposed briefings to parliamentarians.