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# Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

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Chair: The Honourable John McKay





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• (1645)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)):** This is the 29th meeting of the public safety committee. We are about an hour and 15 minutes, from what I can see, behind, so we are going to have to extend the meeting.

We have with us very experienced and able witnesses, all of whom will introduce themselves. I'm given to understand that the Department of Public Safety wishes to go first, followed by CSIS, the RCMP and CSE. We've asked them to cut back their remarks to five minutes each.

Mr. Clerk, if you could send me the order of people's questions, I would appreciate it.

With that, I'll turn it over to the Department of Public Safety.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon (Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, National Security and Cyber Security Branch, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, committee members. Thank you for the invitation to appear today to discuss ideologically motivated violent extremism in Canada.

My name is Dominic Rochon. I'm the senior assistant deputy minister of the national and cybersecurity branch here at Public Safety Canada. I'm pleased to be joined today by my colleagues Tim Hahlweg from CSIS; Michael Duheme and Mark Flynn from the RCMP; Artur Wilczynski from the Communications Security Establishment; and Jill Wherrett, assistant deputy minister at Public Safety Canada, joining us in her role representing the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence.

Preventing and countering violent extremism in all its forms is a complex and ever-evolving issue. Effective and sustainable efforts require a comprehensive approach, combining domestic and international efforts, and involving a range of stakeholders.

Public Safety Canada, its portfolio agencies and partners such as the Communications Security Establishment have distinct but complementary roles as they relate to violent extremism, the terrorist listings process and related enforcement measures, which we will be pleased to discuss with you today.

Ideologically motivated violent extremism, or IMVE, is the term that Canada has adopted to describe what was previously referred to as right-wing and left-wing extremism. My colleague from CSIS will expand on this in a moment, but in brief, the violent actions

and rhetoric of IMVE actors are fuelled by white supremacy, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, violent misogyny, anti-authority and, often, all of the above, making IMVE one of the most serious threats we are facing today.

[Translation]

The listing of terrorist entities is one tool that is available to the Government of Canada.

In 2019, as you may recall, the Government of Canada added the international neo-Nazi network Blood & Honour and its armed affiliate Combat 18 to the list.

[English]

**Ms. Kamal Khera (Brampton West, Lib.):** On a point of order, Mr. Chair—

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Chair, I'm not getting translation.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Yes, I'm not getting translation.

**The Chair:** Can we check into that?

I can hear the interpretation service.

Mr. Rochon, continue on.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Shall I continue from where I left off, or would you like me to restart where I started in French?

**The Chair:** From where you started in French I think would be most helpful. Thank you.

[Translation]

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Certainly.

The listing of terrorist entities is one tool that is available to the Government of Canada.

In 2019, as you may recall, the Government of Canada added the international neo-Nazi network Blood & Honour and its armed affiliate Combat 18 to the list.

Operationally, those listings contributed to the removal of the groups' online presence. This meant that social media platforms that had previously sold group-affiliated merchandise banned any associated accounts. Additionally, Canadian service providers also shut down affiliated websites.

[English]

Earlier this year the government placed 13 new groups on the terrorist list, including an additional four IMVE groups: the Russian Imperial Movement, Atomwaffen Division, The Base, and the Proud Boys. Being listed as a terrorist entity can carry significant consequences. Although it is not a crime to be listed, once listed, an entity falls under what are defined as terrorist groups in the Criminal Code, which apply to several terrorism offences, including recruitment, training, travel and terrorist financing. A listing, therefore, may help support criminal investigations by the RCMP that could trigger potential charges. A listing may also trigger non-criminal measures such as the deregistration of a charity or the inadmissibility of a foreign national into Canada.

A broad Government of Canada approach is taken to identify entities to prioritize for listing. This work is then further supported by criminal or security intelligence reports, which are ultimately independently reviewed by the Department of Justice to ensure that entities meet the threshold test as set out in the Criminal Code. It is important to note here that the legal criteria are not restricted to groups that actually commit violent acts. The threshold also applies where there are reasonable grounds to believe that an entity attempted, conspired for or counselled the commission of a terrorist activity.

In order to ensure that the listings process is balanced and fair, there are several safeguards built into the regime. A listed entity may request that the Minister of Public Safety recommend to the Governor in Council that it be removed from the list. This can happen at any point. The Criminal Code also allows for a review of the minister's decision by the Federal Court. Finally, there is a statutory requirement to review each entity on the list every five years to ensure that it merits continued listing.

[Translation]

We recognize that addressing the ideologically motivated violent extremism threat is not only an enforcement or technological issue.

The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence leads the Government of Canada's efforts to prevent and counter radicalization to violence. The centre provides funding to support the efforts of researchers and frontline practitioners to understand, prevent, and counter radicalization to violence in Canada through its grants and contributions program.

The Government of Canada is actively working with Five Eyes partners and G7 allies, the technology industry, experts, and civil society to more effectively counter ideologically motivated violent extremism in the online space.

Canada is also a signatory to the Christchurch Call to Action to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online.

Our government will thus continue to bring the full range of resources we have to bear in dealing with this issue and to keep our communities safe from violent extremism.

[English]

Thank you. I will now turn the floor over to my colleague, Mr. Hahlweg.

• (1650)

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg (Assistant Director, Requirements, Canadian Security Intelligence Service):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm grateful for the opportunity today to appear before this committee and appreciate your taking the time to study the issue of IMVE in Canada. The threat that IMVE poses remains a high priority for CSIS.

As mentioned, my name is Tim Hahlweg, and I'm the assistant director of requirements at CSIS.

As this committee is well aware, CSIS has the mandate to investigate threats to the security of Canada, to advise the government on these threats and to take steps to reduce them.

Since 2014, Canadians motivated in whole or in part by extremist ideological views have killed 21 people and wounded 40 others on Canadian soil. This threat is a multi-faceted problem, going well beyond law enforcement and national security, and requires a whole-of-government response, engaging social, economic and security mandates. You will likely hear this refrain from all of my colleagues here today.

Using accurate terminology when discussing national security threats, particularly as they relate to violent extremism, is important. In 2019, CSIS, in consultation with other security intelligence community members and our Five Eyes partners, took a leading role in developing terminology that more accurately reflects and depicts the violent extremist threats facing Canada.

Thanks to this effort, the Government of Canada now uses the following terminology in its discussions of the violent extremist threat landscape: religiously motivated violent extremism, politically motivated violent extremism and ideologically motivated violent extremism.

With respect to the IMVE landscape in particular, our analysis demonstrated that the traditional terms of right-wing and left-wing extremism were overly simplistic and politicizing and did not accurately reflect the complexity of this threat landscape.

While it is difficult to perfectly label the threats in this diverse and very fluid landscape, this new terminology, RMVE, PMVE and IMVE, was also chosen to mirror existing domestic legislation, paragraph 2(c) of the CSIS Act, and section 83.01 of the Criminal Code. None of these categories are necessarily mutually exclusive, as extremist narratives often derive from the personal grievances of the individual.

Even within IMVE, there is no one-size-fits-all ideology. IMVE adherents are driven by a range of grievances, ideas and narratives, including conspiracy theories. They may be motivated to commit acts of violence against others or incite violence to achieve societal change.

CSIS identifies four subcategories of IMVE: xenophobic, gender-driven, anti-authority and other grievance-driven violence. These categories are not silos, however, and threat actors may be motivated by more than one grievance or shift from one to another. IMVE threat actors continue to target equity-deserving groups, including racialized individuals, religious minorities, LGBTQ2+ community and women.

As we know, it is not illegal to be hateful, racist or misogynist. Freedom of speech is constitutionally protected, and CSIS is expressly forbidden from investigating lawful dissent, advocacy and protest.

CSIS only investigates threat actors who rise to the threshold outlined by the CSIS Act. The actor must engage in activities “directed toward or in support of the threat or use of acts of serious violence...for the purpose of achieving a political, religious or ideological objective”. Only a small fraction of individuals who adhere to the IMVE narratives go beyond the chat rooms to mobilize to violence. CSIS investigates those suspected of posing a threat to the national security of Canada, working closely with law enforcement partners, including the RCMP, to ensure the appropriate response.

The rapid spread of IMVE narratives online adds to this challenge. Online platforms can serve as echo chambers of hate. IMVE adherents are able to connect and communicate anonymously online and mobilization to violence can occur rapidly. Particularly troubling is the number of youth who are espousing these narratives and inspiring others to violence.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only amplified the IMVE threat. We have seen that COVID-19 public health measures have intensified xenophobic and anti-authority narratives as well as conspiracy theories, some of which rationalize violence. We are continually seeing these narratives play out during the vaccine rollout.

In addition to my testimony today, I invite you all to read the “CSIS Public Report 2020”, which we released earlier this spring. It details the very important work that CSIS did last year to keep Canada and Canadians safe in a rapidly evolving threat environment.

• (1655)

The public report makes clear that violent extremism continues to capture a significant portion of our attention and our efforts, particularly IMVE-inspired online and real-world threats. IMVE is a complex and multi-faceted threat that erodes social cohesion, and CSIS, working closely with communities and our partners across the country, is committed to fulfilling its mandate to keep all Canadians safe.

Finally, I would like to thank the employees of CSIS, our police colleagues and everybody else working in the national security space. It's difficult work, often requiring exposure to vile and ab-

horrent content to detect and investigate these threats, and for that I thank them.

With that, I'll be happy to respond to any questions throughout this session.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hahlweg.

Deputy Commissioner Duheme, you have five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**D/Commr Michael Duheme (Deputy Commissioner, Federal Policing, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** Good evening, Mr. Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Michael Duheme. I am the deputy commissioner for federal policing.

[*English*]

With me, I have assistant commissioner Mark Flynn, who is the executive director for national security, as well as protective policing, for the RCMP.

We appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to answer questions about IMVE, along with our federal colleagues who are also impacted by this highly concerning issue.

The IMVE threat environment is rapidly evolving and complex, and it requires close collaboration among security and intelligence partners at all levels, both nationally and internationally. From a law enforcement perspective, hate-motivated violent incidents and criminal threats related to IMVE are increasing in frequency across the country. The most common threat actors we see are individuals with no clear group affiliation, who are motivated by highly personalized and nuanced ideologies that lead individuals to incite and/or mobilize to violence.

Perhaps most importantly, the RCMP is seeing a rampant growth in hateful and IMVE content online. We are gravely concerned with the extremist views that are first fostered online, which can lead to actual physical violence—and have. The RCMP has seen several examples of this evolution, although I can't provide details in this open forum, as several of these investigations are either ongoing or currently proceeding through the courts.

The increasingly individualized and leaderless nature of this threat environment, combined with the amplifying effect of the online space, carries detection and other challenges that are driving a shift in the RCMP's national security priorities. With this in mind, we are re-evaluating elements of our current counterterrorism posture, our strategies for countering IMVE threats and our resource capacity requirements. The RCMP takes its preventive mandate very seriously, and the key to prevention is timely information and intervention before it's too late.

The nature of the IMVE threat also raises jurisdictional and mandate considerations that enhance the need for coordination and information sharing between domestic law enforcement partners and the security and intelligence community.

The RCMP's federal policing national security program is mandated to investigate IMVE-related criminal activity that rises to the level of a national security threat as defined in the CSIS Act. As such, we maintain close partnerships with CSIS and other domestic security and intelligence agencies and engage in tactical information sharing with foreign partners to counter IMVE threats.

On the other hand, police of jurisdiction have primary responsibility to investigate hate-motivated criminal activity. These jurisdictional realities highlight the importance of law enforcement coordination at all levels to combat this evolving threat and the value of intelligence-led policing.

Since there is often overlap between hate-motivated crimes and IMVE-related criminality, the RCMP works closely with police of jurisdiction to identify criminal threats of national security interest and conduct coordinated investigations. We are also working internally to develop uniform guidelines and indicators for assessing when a particular threat or criminal activity falls within the national security mandate of the RCMP.

In terms of criminal investigations, the RCMP's foremost priority is protecting the safety and security of Canadians. It is also important to note that minority Canadians are disproportionately the victims—and not the perpetrators—of hate-motivated and IMVE-related violence. It is incumbent upon the security and intelligence community to use every tool at our disposal to protect these communities against violent acts.

The RCMP has a robust mandate to prevent criminal activity, and we can pursue various investigative avenues to mitigate potential threats to public safety or national security when they are brought to our attention. Where criminal charges are applicable, the RCMP works together with Crown prosecutors, including the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, to carefully consider which offences have the best chance of successful prosecution.

On that note, I thank you. I'm hoping that my presence and that of Mark Flynn can help you clarify the situation with regard to IMVE.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1700)

**The Chair:** Thank you so much. We appreciate that.

With that, the final witness is from CSE.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski (Assistant Deputy Chief SIGINT, Special Advisor, People, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Communications Security Establishment):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for the invitation to appear today to discuss ideologically motivated violent extremism in Canada.

My name is Artur Wilczynski, and I am the assistant deputy chief of SIGINT at the Communications Security Establishment, known as CSE.

CSE, reporting to the Minister of National Defence, is one of Canada's key security and intelligence agencies, with a mandate to provide foreign intelligence in support of a broad range of government priorities. CSE is also the country's lead technical authority for cybersecurity.

[*English*]

As my colleagues have indicated, the threat landscape as it relates to ideologically motivated violent extremism continues to evolve, amplified through the increased use of the Internet and social media by threat actors. Through these outlets, there has been a surge in violent extremist and terrorist media production, as groups continue to spread their extremist messaging while attempting to recruit like-minded individuals to their cause and planning activities.

Under its foreign intelligence mandate, CSE works to uncover foreign-based extremists' efforts to carry out attacks in Canada and abroad, including those that are ideologically motivated. It is important to emphasize that CSE cannot direct its activities at Canadians or at anyone in Canada. Our efforts must be focused on foreign actors outside Canada.

In addition to foreign intelligence, CSE can provide technical support to key Government of Canada partners, those in national security or federal policing roles as well as defence agencies. Any assistance that we provide is conducted under the authorities of the requesting agency and in alignment with the legal and policy parameters of their mandate.

CSE has a strong and valuable relationship with our international partners. We regularly share information on a wide range of threat actors, including IMVE. This exchange has a significant effect on protecting our respective countries' safety and security.

[*Translation*]

Addressing ideologically motivated violent extremism requires collaboration from our federal and international partners, and I want to assure you that CSE will continue to work within our mandate and with these partners to support efforts to fight extremism.

Thank you.

I look forward to answering your questions.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, witnesses.

We will now turn to our first round of questions, for six minutes each.

We'll go to Mrs. Stubbs, Ms. Damoff, Madame Michaud and Mr. Harris, in that order.

You have six minutes, Mrs. Stubbs.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

For Mr. Hahlweg, I just wonder if you could expand a little bit on what you touched on regarding the fluidity of the definitions related to the categories that fall under IMVE, but also with regard to other activities, say under politically motivated and religiously motivated violent extremism.

Could you also comment on the chart that's in the 2019 report where it breaks up subcategories under ideologically motivated violent extremism? There's sort of an extra category that says "other". Is that a catch-all for mass casualty attacks? What would be included under there?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Thank you very much for the question.

Maybe I can start at the bottom. I think I can work my way through that a little more clearly if I start with the "other" category, because it helps to describe the narrative in the IMVE space.

For the IMVE space, the "other" category is obviously part of the four that I articulated at the outset, which include xenophobic, linked to white supremacy or neo-Nazism and ethnonationalism; anti-authority and targeting of government and law enforcement; and gender-driven, which can lead to violent misogyny. The "other" category is an example of the fluidity of this environment because we have a number of individuals who don't have a defined ideology, who aren't linked to a certain conspiracy or who move around to various groups, and it's very difficult to place them.

In the RMVE space, we have additional threat actors like al Qaeda. We have ISIS. We have a group ideology that these people adhere to.

In the IMVE space, it's quite different. We see a lot of movement depending on the nature of the grievance, and those grievances change all of the time, depending on what situation is happening. We see this in the COVID example, where that has galvanized some individuals in that space, so it's not as fluid as the other typical and more traditional categories in the RMVE space.

I hope that answers your question.

• (1705)

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Yes, it does. Thank you.

It's illuminating, and it makes sense, then, that the definition also has been adapted to move away from what could be perceived to be partisan or political definitions. Also, I think it's instructive that there probably is a thread of these actors through ideologically motivated violent extremism, as well as religious and politically motivated violent extremism, if I've got you right.

I wonder if you're able to give us a sense of what the attacks were that caused the deaths of the 21 individuals, as cited in the 2020 report. I'm not sure what can be discussed in terms of investigations or which agencies might be involved to some degree—probably all—but can you give Canadians a sense of exactly what caused those deaths and which attacks they were?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I absolutely can.

Starting in 2014, we have the Moncton shooting perpetrated by Justin Bourque. In that shooting, three were killed and two were wounded. In 2015, we have the Halifax mall plot. That plot was disrupted and there were no casualties. In 2016, we have the Edmonton stamping attack. One individual was killed. In 2017, we have the Alexandre Bissonnette attack on the Quebec City mosque. Six individuals were killed and 19 were wounded in that attack.

In 2018, we have the Toronto van attack by Alek Minassian. Ten people were killed and 16 were wounded in that attack. In 2019, we have the Sudbury knife attack, and two people were wounded in that attack. Finally, in 2020, we have the Toronto spa attack, where one person was killed and one person was wounded.

I think I've covered that. If I've missed anything in that depiction, I will defer to my colleagues in the RCMP.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** No, you've covered it, Tim.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Thank you.

Can you give us a sense of how many plots were foiled last year that would have been planned ideologically motivated extremist acts?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Unfortunately, given the nature of this call, I won't be able to get into the specifics of those investigative activities, specifically on the foiled plots. Some of those investigations are still ongoing.

I can assure you that your colleagues in NSICOP and the service meet regularly to discuss those classified discussions.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Can you give us a general sense in terms of scale or scope? Dozens or hundreds or thousands...?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I can say generally that because we take the threat activity very seriously and we have a lot of assets at play in the organization.... We have regions across the country, as you know, and we have stations abroad. All these employees of our organization are working in concert with their law enforcement partners and other members in the S and I community to identify and disrupt this activity.

You will know that we have a threat reduction mandate as well in the service, so we actively take measures to try to disrupt plots. Given the fact that the activity has increased, our disruption activity, in correlation, has increased as well.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Stubbs.

Ms. Damoff, you have six minutes, please.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Thank you, Chair.

I'd like to thank all of our witnesses for being here today, especially on such short notice. Your testimony is very valuable to us.

My first question is for CSIS.

You mentioned online hatred and the prevalence of “echo chambers of hate”, whereby mobilization to violence can occur quite rapidly. The National Firearms Association is a group that shares offensive images online and has shared tweets that have been sympathetic to groups alleged to have IMVE affiliation. In one of them, the tweet said, “If the police will not protect you during a violent riot, you will have to protect yourself and others”.

I have personally been the subject of their comments. Recently, this committee voted to condemn remarks made by the group that discussed guillotining parliamentarians who support gun control, describing what is happening in Canada as “tyranny”.

My question for you is straightforward. We've seen far too many examples where language is later masked as jokes and then turned into real-world violence, either by those making the remarks or those following. I'm just wondering; what impact do these kinds of comments have on individuals who may be radicalized by them and should we be calling it out for what it is?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** That's an excellent question, and I think it would be useful at this time to give a snapshot of how we investigate in this space, from a CSIS perspective. I think it will help articulate the space we hold vis-à-vis other people in this landscape.

The way that we look at it organizationally is really in three tiers.

We have the first tier, which is passive engagement. There are a lot of books out there, and there are videos and chat rooms. A lot of people are listening to some of this violent, abhorrent content, but these people are passive. They're not moving to violence at this stage.

When those individuals move to our second tier of threat actions, it is a more active engagement. This is where we're seeing people not just listening but putting some propaganda out there. They're adding content, communicating and letting their voices be known. A lot of this still falls in with freedom of speech, but some of it starts to bleed into what is the third tier. That's where the service gets involved.

The third tier sees these people mobilizing to violence or potentially mobilizing to violence. In the third tier, we're seeing a lot of increased operational security by these individuals. They're not staying in the open. They're going into more private chat rooms and more encrypted forums. We're seeing them go to a lot of alternative platforms. When we look at this third tier, from a service perspective it's really important that we look at what triggers the CSIS mandate. We have done a lot of work in this space over the last couple of years with our partners in the S and I community.

What do we require to actually investigate these threats? We need a willingness to kill or inspire others to kill; a threat of serious violence; an attempt to effect societal change, so not just a personal narrative but something bigger; and an ideological influence. Once we have those triggers, we're able to investigate these threats. We deconflict on a regular basis with our police colleagues, especially the RCMP, and then we decide who's best positioned to deal with them.

I hope that answers your question.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** It does, sort of.

I'm going to turn to the RCMP, in a similar vein. There has been rampant growth of this type of content online, and you remarked that you were gravely concerned with extremist views that are first fostered online and can lead to and have led to actual physical violence. Our colleague at CSIS listed a number of cases that did result in injury and death.

Who is being targeted? Do you see this being race- and gender-based hatred? Are you seeing it tied to these anti-mask rallies, where we're seeing neo-Nazi flags being flown?

• (1715)

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** What we're seeing is that vulnerable groups, as I'll call them, are more targeted than the general population. It's important to note that we make a distinction between IMVE and hate-motivated crime. We're dealing with a lot of hate-motivated crime and with comments that are covered under the Criminal Code of Canada. There is a difference there. There are specific sections in the code to deal with hate-motivated crime. On the other side, as Tim mentioned earlier, with the IMVE, there's a deep-rooted ideology that's more complex than just hatred to things.

I don't have any information to say there are links with the different flags being shown at protests. We take every complaint seriously and investigate every complaint that is reported to us.

Mark, I'm not quite sure if there is anything you wish to add.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** It was on the CBC—at a rally in Saskatoon—where I saw that.

I think that's my time, Chair.

**The Chair:** Yes, you're at six minutes. Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michaud, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the witnesses for being here. I am very grateful to them.

Last week we had Mr. McGuinty from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, who presented his annual report to us. He explained how the members of that committee were taking stock of the situation and making recommendations to the government.

How does the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness react to this status report? What does it do with it?

Terrorism is still recognized as the greatest threat to Canada. I was wondering if you perceive this whole rise in ideologically-based violent extremism as a form of terrorism right now.

My questions are for Mr. Rochon from the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. If officials from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Communications Security Establishment want to add anything, I invite them to do so.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Thank you for the question.

I think it would be more appropriate for the RCMP and CSIS to talk about their definition of threats.

That said, I can give you a quick answer. As my colleagues have said, this is a team effort on a very complex topic. It is true that, until now, terrorism was really the most challenging threat. Violent extremism is a sub-category of that threat. It is part of terrorism, but as my CSIS colleagues have explained, we need better definitions.

We are in the process of defining these different categories so that we know exactly where these threats are coming from and can better respond.

That is my answer to your question. Perhaps my colleagues at the RCMP or CSIS would like to add something.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** In response to your question about IMVE, I would just add that sometimes crimes do not at first appear to be ideologically driven violent extremism, but during the course of the investigation we discover that there is an IMVE aspect.

In May 2020, an attack occurred in Toronto, and the investigation revealed that the individual was part of an unlisted involuntary celibates group. Now, because the act was ideologically motivated and intended to create consequences, we were successful in filing terrorism charges against this individual.

So, the RCMP's approach to IMVE is really a terrorist approach, now that groups are on the terrorist list.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you very much.

We know that extremist groups rely heavily on social networks and platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and other platforms that have even been banned, to recruit people and to misinform and radicalize them. Some people believe that shutting down certain platforms would not be beneficial because it would send people to private networks on the Internet.

Even if it's not on these private networks and it's on the platforms that we know and access every day, how can the government and the RCMP intervene to detect this kind of violent extremism, whether it's violent speech or video sharing?

Should there be collaboration with the private companies that own these platforms, or could the government and RCMP intervene directly?

• (1720)

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I'll talk about what the RCMP can do with respect to websites.

The majority of the investigations we conduct into hateful comments spread on social networks are triggered when we receive reports from people who have observed this on a site and report it to us. In most cases, we trigger an investigation.

Of course, if the social networks remove the information without notifying us, we don't have access to that information. It's no different than when someone calls the police to make a report and the police initiate an investigation, except that it happens on social networks.

If the platforms remove this information without notifying us, we can no longer take informed action on the complaint.

Members of Parliament often receive derogatory or hateful messages on social media. In these cases as well, the RCMP initiates an investigation and we follow through. Sometimes that's a challenge because people can use all sorts of mechanisms on social media to avoid being found.

I won't hide from you that this is one of our concerns, and it's not just about social networks. When you implement a new law or a new process, people always find ways around that through other mechanisms.

You've all heard of the dark Web. There are probably already many IMVE groups on the dark Web.

[English]

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, your time is up, Madame Michaud.

Mr. Harris, go ahead for six minutes, please.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for enlightening us on some of these issues that are increasingly concerning.

First of all, perhaps Mr. Hahlweg could deal with this question.

It's been suggested to us by the NSICOP report that there are more than 300 of these types of groups, IMVE groups, active in Canada. That seems to be an enormous number. Is it the tier three that makes them a group? How organized do they have to be to be considered such?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** It's a great question.

I would respond first by saying that this is how complex this investigative effort we undertake is, because a lot of the personal grievances and a lot of the conspiracy theories are not tied to one solid ideology that motivates a lot of other people. There are a lot of individuals who might move from one to another very quickly. From a CSIS perspective, it is absolutely crucial that we reach the threshold of violence or threat of violence and the four steps I talked about a little bit earlier before we can actively investigate.

In terms of the overall numbers, yes, if we look at this like a funnel, in that top tier I discussed, there are hundreds of different narratives out there, different ideologies, different conspiracy theories. A lot of that still falls into the free speech space. A lot of those individuals will just remain passive. They will not mobilize to violence, ergo not affect our act, from a CSIS perspective.

I hope that answers your question.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** It does to some extent.

In these tier-three groups—I guess that's where these 300 we're talking about are—is there any one particular type? We're talking about the propensity to violence or plans for violence or suggestions of violence. Is there a predominant group in the 300? We don't have 300 categories. We have outlined several, such as those motivated by a particular ideology or white supremacy or anti-authority or xenophobia, with some overlap obviously.

Can you categorize those for us and tell us what the predominant group is, if there is one?

• (1725)

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** The predominant ideologies are the ones I discussed at the outset. Those are the ones from our perspective anyway. The neo-Nazis and ethnonationalists are one of the major groups. Anti-authority and targeting government and law enforcement is also an ideology, both in the United States and here, that is of concern. Some of the attacks I mentioned that have taken place on our soil were driven in whole or in part by a gender-driven violent misogyny ideology. Then the other category we discussed involves somebody who doesn't have an affixed ideology but who has some personal grievances and a lot of different things going on. Again, those are the predominant ideologies, but there's a lot of movement in that space. The fluidity of that space makes it one of the most complex to investigate.

I'll defer to my other colleagues, but I'll say I've been in this business for well over 20 years and have been actively engaged in these investigations for a long time, and it is a complicated space for all of us. However, with our various mandates working in concert and together, I think we're making a dent in not only identifying and making sure we are up on the threat.... To do that, in all honesty, from a CSIS perspective, we have to ensure we have the right mandate. We have to ensure we have the right tools at our disposal, and that includes having modernized legislation to make sure we can deal with these threats as they emerge.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Can you tell us whether you have figured out—and this is probably something that you all wonder about—what motivates an individual, or can you identify what triggers someone to move from tier two to tier three? Is that something beyond your ken or are you just watching to see what happens?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** It's definitely something we analyze every day, all day.

The movement between the tiers is an interesting one. Unlike in a lot of the RMVE or other groups, the movement can happen very quickly. People can mobilize to that third tier and mobilize to violence very quickly. We've seen it go from the first tier to the third

tier without much warning in between. We've also seen the opposite. We've seen that people have gotten to that third tier and have said, "Oh, boy, we didn't realize this was what we were getting into", and they have moved back to that more passive space.

We've really seen a mixed bag on this, but it is absolutely something we monitor actively.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** I have a quick question. The Proud Boys were declared a terrorist group and have disbanded. What does that mean? Does that mean they have dispersed into other groups? That doesn't mean that they've changed their ideology, thoughts or beliefs, I wouldn't think. What do you think happens?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I'm not sure on that case. I can't speak of things that were monitored actively in the investigation space.

The Proud Boys are probably indicative of a lot of other areas. There will be some pockets of it. The broader ideology might be mobilized to violence. There will be others who are still up in that top tier. It doesn't mean—just because somebody is a Proud Boy—that they're actively mobilized to violence.

We see that different strata all the time in these groups. That's what makes it very difficult to monitor actively.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Now we'll move to the second round. We'll have five minutes with Mr. Van Popta, followed by Mr. Fisher.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of the witnesses for being with us here today and enlightening us on this very important topic.

I'm just going to follow the previous line of questioning with Mr. Hahlweg, if you don't mind.

There's been quite a bit of talk today about the three different categories of motivation for violent extremism. I wonder how important it is to define those different categories. For example, one of the witnesses mentioned the 21 deaths that occurred at the hands of ideologically motivated extreme actors, one of them being the Quebec mosque shooting. I would have thought that maybe that falls within the religiously motivated.

How important is it, Mr. Hahlweg, to get those categorizations right? How is that a tool for CSIS to keep Canadians safe and for prosecutions?

• (1730)

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I think it's an outstanding question. Thank you.

The way we look at this is from a service lens. I can articulate that the mosque shooting.... We look at things that trigger our act. In section 2 of our act, paragraph (c) is what defines whether or not we get involved from a service perspective—the serious acts of violence. Whether that falls into the RMVE space, the religiously motivated, or the IMVE space, that is actually where we mobilize and prioritize our investigative activity from an internal perspective. It is the trigger of our paragraph 2(c) threshold in our mandate that dictates whether or not we're going to go into that space.

I think it is very important to really articulate—and it's why we chose to do so in 2019 in the IMVE space—the complexity of this investigation so that we can actively portray what is going on and can actively decide when our threshold and our mandate is triggered. Otherwise, that deconfliction with the RCMP and others in the community is crucial. At the end of the day, we're all looking to prevent threats of violence.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you.

What tools does that give you for prosecution? You talked about the four trigger points. Maybe you could just expand on that a little bit so that I understand it better.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** It's a very good point that you made on prosecution. That is the lane of our good friends at the RCMP and other police jurisdictions.

From a CSIS perspective, those four triggers, as we've called them—the willingness to inspire others to kill others; serious violence; attempting to affect societal change; and ideological influence.... It is very crucial for us to go through all of these steps to understand what the individual is doing in these spaces so that we can make sure that we deconflict with our counterparts to understand who is best positioned to deal with this threat. Is it the RCMP? Is it local law enforcement, or is it a service perspective, where that person hasn't gone to that outer extreme and we might be able to inform others so that they can fulfill their mandate a little bit more effectively?

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Good. Thank you.

I'm not sure who this question is for, but it is about those called CETs, Canadian extremist travellers: people who have gone abroad to fight for al Qaeda or Daesh in Syria or wherever, and then they come back because they're Canadian citizens.

How big of a threat is that to Canada? That, to me, seems like a real and present danger for Canadians.

I'm not sure who that's for...maybe the RCMP.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I'll lead it off, Mr. Chair, but I think there's a little bit of Public Safety and also CSIS in this.

What's important here is that the RCMP's mandate, when it comes to national security and IMVE, is that really our sandbox is when there's a criminal element.

Tim mentioned how we work well together. We do work well. We deconflict as to who will take the lead, but when there's a criminal element to the file, it becomes our responsibility. We still work closely with the service throughout.

On the returnees, if you wish, we are looking at a list of people who have gone there, whom we were invested in before and know they've been involved in criminal activity. The service would have a different list, if you wish, based on their mandate and intel.

Do they pose a threat? There are several discussions with the community on how to best follow up on that when they return, or if they return, to make sure that we have the appropriate resources and the eyes and information on it. You can appreciate that when someone has left the country for six, seven or 10 years, you no longer have an intel picture of what's going on or what they've been involved in.

It's not an easy issue, but the community is together and monitoring it closely to make sure that we have the right resources in place to address it.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Fisher, you have five minutes, please.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to all of the witnesses. This is incredibly compelling testimony. I want to thank you for being here.

Personally, I'm glad we're talking about this today. In my riding of Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, people are extremely concerned about organizations such as the Proud Boys.

My question would be for Mr. Rochon of Public Safety.

It was not until 2019 that two ideologically motivated white supremacist organizations—and they were mentioned today, Blood & Honour, or I think they called it B&H, and Combat 18, C18—were added to the terrorist code listings. Earlier this year, there were four additional groups added, including the Proud Boys.

I touched on this with Mr. McGuinty the other day, but what is the goal that you hope to accomplish through the listings process? What message does it send to Canadians?

• (1735)

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Thank you for the question.

Frankly, I think I may have done Madame Michaud a disservice earlier, because I think that's what she was getting at in terms of IMVE and terrorism and where the two somewhat meet. The question that was just asked about Canadian extremist travellers touched on that issue as well.

These are not mutually exclusive categories, and it's a very complex situation. In order to address ideologically motivated violent extremism, religiously motivated violent extremism and all the various things that we're now starting to define, we need to make best use of the tools that we have at our disposal.

The Criminal Code listing regime is one of those tools. I think we've been talking about national security criminal investigations, or CSIS investigations, as other potential tools. You have the Secure Air Travel Act, which is another tool. We have the terrorism peace bond provision. These are all tools to help us deal with the evolution of the threats that we're seeing.

Up until 2019, as you rightly point out, ideologically motivated violent extremism, as such, was not part of an entity that had been listed until then. Canada was one of the first Five Eyes countries to actually list—as you point out, back in 2019—these types of groups. Earlier this year, we added another four groups.

I think that shows there's a trend, an identification that, for the Criminal Code definition of what terrorist activity is in order to be able to list an entity, these IMVE groups are starting to meet that threshold. As they meet that threshold, we're starting to list those entities, which is yet another tool to bring to bear on being able to deal with them.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you very much for that.

Someone claimed in testimony that two neo-Nazi groups no longer have an online presence. Mr. Harris touched on this as well.

Maybe you could reinforce whether there is a concern that these organizations could morph into something else or go deeper underground, because they don't give up on this level of hate that they have within themselves.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** I'll take a stab at answering that.

I think my colleague from CSIS, Mr. Hahlweg, certainly did a good job of describing the dangers that of course will continue to happen once you start listing these entities. By default, listing them does enable social media platforms to remove these entities. What I mean by this is that they might have a social media presence in order to try to raise funds for their cause, for example. With their being listed, it allows social media platforms to say, "No, we're not going to be selling T-shirts to promote your particular ideology." As such, they start removing that particular presence.

It doesn't mean that you're eradicating their presence in terms of their ability to propagate. I think it was my colleague from the RCMP, Monsieur Duheme, who mentioned that inevitably what they will do is revert to going to the dark web, or they will revert to going to encrypted channels or hidden channels to be able to continue to spread their rhetoric, but with that tool of a Criminal Code listing, at least they're not going to be able to do it as overtly.

As I said, though, Criminal Code listing is but one tool. It does help with certain aspects, but it does then push us further downstream to have to try to cope with some of the challenges of the spreading of their rhetoric in other avenues.

**The Chair:** You have about 15 seconds.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Okay. I have a quick one.

How does Canada's approach, broadly speaking, match up to other like-minded countries? Are we a leader in this?

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Very quickly, I'd like to think that we're certainly at the table and we're shoulder to shoulder with our Five Eyes partners and others in terms of trying to address this issue. It's not an issue that Canada faces alone, by any stretch.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michaud, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Rochon and Mr. Duheme, for your previous responses.

I will continue in the same vein. You said that the RCMP can intervene when a situation is brought to their attention, not necessarily because a citizen files a complaint, but also following a call to report something to you. So I guess you can document the kind of entry that is violent in nature or ideologically motivated violent extremism.

I'm thinking of the infamous ideology of incels, involuntary celibates. You said that an accusation has been made in this regard. Beyond that accusation, in this time of rising femicide and a lot of talk about violence against women and how we can find solutions, the incel ideology is extremely disturbing.

How do you deal with it? Do you find the way cases are reported to you disturbing?

• (1740)

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** What we've seen in the last year is that there is some focus on this. I don't want to blame it on COVID-19, but the fact that people are more closeted at home and more present on computers or social media is having an influence. We have actually seen an increase in threats or derogatory comments towards elected officials.

I'd like to give you some numbers on our observations. In 2019 and 2020, we reviewed 273 cases that met the IMVE criteria. Of those, 65 cases were related to racist, ethnonationalist, and extreme violent motives. Approximately one-fifth of these cases were anti-authority related, while the majority were related to government decisions. The individuals in these cases were anti-law and anti-police. After that, there are 29 cases, really related to...

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, we're going to have to leave the answer there. Those are very important statistics, and I rather hope that you're able to work them into other questions.

Mr. Harris, you have two and a half minutes, please.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you, Chair.

I'd like to go back to Mr. Hahlweg from CSIS.

You have your third tier. You've identified these groups as having the propensity for some violent activity. You indicate that this meets a threshold for, I presume, your powers to take disruptive action.

Can you tell us what kind of disruptive action CSIS might undertake in these circumstances? What tools do you have? What kinds of things do you do?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Unfortunately, in this venue—and I really do appreciate the question—I can't get into operational methodologies or discuss what we do in that space. I can say, though, given the nature of the IMVE threat and the importance that we put on it as an organization, we've dedicated a number of resources, as I mentioned earlier. Our regional offices and overseas offices are connected with foreign partners to understand this threat a bit more.

We have a number of tools at our disposal. There are more, and we need to make sure that we have them in our tool box. Some of that is going to require looking at the CSIS Act to make sure sure that tools are fit for purpose so that we can properly identify and deal with all of these threats.

A big part of the issue, though, is deconflicting early and often with our law enforcement partners and making sure that our respective mandates are brought to bear in fulsome—

**Mr. Jack Harris:** I'm sorry. You're chewing up time, but you're not telling us anything. Thank you very much for your attempt.

Are there many occasions when people are being recruited to, for example, the Azov battalion in Ukraine? We have identified 14 Canadians travelling to the Ukraine to train with extremists. Is that common?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** In the early days there was some travel to various countries under the IMVE rubric. Given the COVID-19 restrictions, we've seen a lot less of that travel, obviously, for a variety of reasons. We're very actively monitoring that type of activity.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** This would be part of recruitment. Is that also active in these organizations?

• (1745)

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I would say it's a whole host of things. It's recruitment, getting together and networks. It's all of those things.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Go ahead, Mr. Kurek, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Let me thank all of the witnesses for being here today.

I'm curious. One of you mentioned 273 investigations regarding IMVE, if I recall correctly, in your previous testimony. I'm wonder-

ing if you have similar numbers to that for politically and religiously motivated instances as well.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** They're grouped into one.... I'll go through the numbers again, just to make sure.

There were 273 files that we categorized under the IMVE. They looked at certain criteria that fall under IMVE. Of them, 165 were racially and ethnonationalist motivated violent extremists. Approximately one-fifth of the IMVE files were in the anti-authority category. These could be derogatory comments towards a government but not necessarily towards elected members. There are people appointed in key positions that are providing messages on certain issues. We see an uptick there. Anti-law enforcement grievances and motivations are one-fifth of the 273.

There are 29 files related to incel violence, and the remaining files are related to a range of other grievances in ideology, like conspiracy theories with QAnon and COVID-19, and threats to elected members.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Thank you very much for that.

I've read that there are some barriers to convicting violent extremists because intelligence cannot easily be entered into the court system. Some conflicts exist with that.

I'll ask the RCMP and CSIS about this. What tools are needed to ensure that the evidence collected and the information that is found can actually be entered, resulting in convictions?

**Chief Superintendent Mark Flynn (Assistant Commissioner, Federal Policing, National Security and Protective Policing, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** I'll take that question.

There are definitely tools required for intel to evidence, and it's a priority area for us. The approach that we're taking, from a law enforcement perspective, is always focused on public safety.

If you look at statistics for terrorism convictions or terrorism offences and charges, you'll note that the numbers are not high. From a law enforcement perspective, we are taking the first opportunity to impact the individuals involved and prevent them from moving forward in that violent space. That can be a simple knock on the door and letting them know. It can be adding a particular group, or advocating for the addition of a particular group, to the listings so that people know that a behaviour is not acceptable and will disassociate from them. You'll also see recent charges related to firearms offences, uttering threats, possession of explosives, attacks against critical infrastructure, etc.

Even though challenges exist with the intel that may give us a much better awareness of the totality of the problem, as law enforcement we are leveraging opportunities that already exist, where legislative elements can be applied, to ensure that action is taken and there's early intervention.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Thank you very much for that.

In recent Bill C-59, Conservatives proposed an intelligence-to-evidence legal process to allow intelligence into courts, to help get intelligence into evidence under a judicial review process without revealing sources, which we've heard is a significant challenge.

Would something like that make it easier for prosecutors to pursue convictions of those who would perpetrate terrorism and these violent extremist actions, especially with some of these transnational groups and various other hate entities?

**The Chair:** That's a difficult question to be answered in 30 seconds, Mr. Flynn.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** To be honest, I'm not sure where to start with that.

As I said, there are definitely issues around the intel and the evidentiary process, and finding the appropriate balance between the protection of those intel sources, who do aid us greatly in understanding how to prioritize some of the work that we're doing, and the threat the groups poses. There are already some legislated protection mechanisms in sections 37 and 38 of the Canada Evidence Act that apply.

From a law enforcement perspective, more tools and more assistance in bringing evidence forward before judges to make a determination of guilt is obviously of significant benefit to us.

• (1750)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kurek, and thank you, Mr. Flynn for making some effort to answer a very difficult question.

Mr. Lightbound, you have five minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

First I want to thank all of the witnesses here today.

I thank you for your service to Canada in protecting our communities, and also for your testimony today, which is very compelling. It confirms the importance of this committee addressing the issue of ideologically motivated violent extremism.

My first question is for the Communications Security Establishment.

Last week, we heard from the chair of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, or NSICOP. He mentioned, among other things, that the threat of violent extremism is much more diffuse than it was in extremism inspired by the ideology of Daech or al-Qaeda. It is often a constellation of different diffuse and not necessarily connected actors. Added to this is the multiplicity of means of communication, i.e. more underground channels. One only has to think of Parler, Telegram and Gab. These are new platforms for communication. In his report, the chairman mentioned to us that there were now 6,600 channels of communication for extremist groups, often from the far right.

What challenges does this represent for the Communications Security Establishment?

How are you adapting to this new environment?

[English]

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** [Technical difficulty—Editor]

**The Chair:** Again, Mr. Wilczynski, we're not hearing you.

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** I'm sorry. I guess I have to push the button harder.

[Translation]

Thank you very much for your question.

A better understanding of the current means of communication of extremist groups is very important from a foreign intelligence perspective, to determine the motivations of these groups and the strategies they want to adopt to carry out their plans.

This is indeed a challenge for us. We are working in partnership with the other security agencies that are represented here to prioritize the different threats that we need to focus our efforts on, and to provide the information necessary for colleagues to take the actions that are required to enhance the security of Canadians.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Thank you.

My next question is for the CSIS representatives.

You were mentioning that the COVID-19 crisis amplified not only xenophobic sentiment among certain groups, but also anti-government and anti-authority attitudes.

Was there a shift from some groups that were more xenophobic, to conspiracy theories and anti-government, anti-authority, and anti-public health measures?

There were media reports, for example, that many members of an overtly xenophobic group with a particular presence in Quebec, the Meute, had redirected themselves to anti-public health and conspiracy-minded groups.

Have you observed this change?

[English]

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** It's a great question. Yes, we do. We see that movement often. That movement happens quite frequently when there's a new social event that galvanizes either a conspiracy theory or some individual intent to act.

Specifically with COVID-19, we have seen various groups that previously weren't aligned, or individuals who perhaps were not sharing the same ideology or the same motivation, come together under a common cause, whether that is anti-government activity or anti-vaccination activities.

We see that fluidity very often. It makes our investigative efforts extremely difficult. It makes our analytical efforts difficult. It's very important for all of us witnesses today to be able to identify those threats early and often, so that we can make sure we're well positioned to identify them and inform the government accordingly.

• (1755)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** My question is again for CSIS members.

You mentioned earlier in your testimony that these ideologically driven violent extremism groups moved more quickly from one third party to another than in groups driven by religious ideology.

Why is this the case?

[*English*]

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** There are many factors to that, in answering your question, but one of the factors is that there's no common ideology that binds these groups. They come from very different vectors of society. They have different personal grievances. They come together for one specific purpose and then they diffuse again and go elsewhere.

In the RMVE space, we have traditional threat actors that have one common ideology that they all follow. It's a very difficult and different circumstance, hence why we have really tried to identify and articulate the different groupings and why it is that these activities are different.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lightbound.

That completes our second round of questions.

For the third round of questions, for five minutes, we have Mr. Kurek and then Ms. Khera.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Flynn, were there any further comments that you wanted to add before my time ran out previously? I can move on to the next question, but I want to give you the opportunity to finish your thought.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** I would go ahead with the next question. I think I finished it as best I could...challenged by the question.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

I want to ask again regarding Bill C-59, so probably Mr. Flynn would be the best fit to answer this.

It raised the threshold to apply for terrorism-based reconnaissance warrants and didn't change the legal requirements to have one granted. It essentially made it harder to apply for a warrant against a terrorist, but it's the same as before to get a warrant.

How many warrant applications are the RCMP or CSIS seeking per year under this new system? Do you have numbers for that?

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** I do not have any of those numbers available today. I'm not sure if CSIS has any information with respect to that.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I also don't have active numbers on how many warrants we're seeking.

I can tell you that it is an active conversation we have in this building every day about trying to get more warrants before the Federal Court. It's something that we're working with our justice colleagues on achieving, but I do not have specific numbers.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I'll ask this question again.

Are there any specific tools that are needed to ensure that law enforcement and investigative authorities have the necessary tools required to accomplish the objectives and mandates that you have?

**The Chair:** It's a question where you're generally straying into the area of what should be properly addressed to a minister as opposed to people who work for the government. I'm sure they have their own thoughts, but I'm not sure they can actually share those thoughts.

All the people before us are very sophisticated witnesses, so with that caveat, I'm going to suggest that anyone who wishes to take up Mr. Kurek's question may do so.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I will take a stab at that.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Sure. Thanks.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Bravely....

I'll give you one example. We are quite proud of the work we're doing in the service on our outreach. We've been actively engaged with academia and with biopharma during the COVID pandemic. We've been engaged with NSERC about FI threats to various educational institutions. We're really out there and we're engaging.

One of the things that we have an issue with and we're trying to address is that, in our engagement with non-security-cleared individuals, under section 19 of our act, we are allowed to provide only unclassified information. This makes it difficult for us to really provide to the community the information they need that is useful to protect them and to make sure they're resilient against the threats that are coming our way.

When we talk about this service and the CSIS Act not being fit for purpose, this is one of the things that I think we need to look at in the future.

• (1800)

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** If time permits, I can add to that.

**The Chair:** Go ahead. I'm sure Mr. Kurek will be happy with that.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Yes, absolutely.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** Outside of any legislated ask, internal to the RCMP and in collaboration with CSIS, we're doing significant work in looking at what we can do better internally and collectively. We've implemented new programs after an operational program review.

We're implementing a leads program, where we collaborate at the early onset of knowledge around a problem. We're bringing psychologists into the police response to these problems so that we can better understand the people and what will aid in moving them away from the violent extremism or offer an early opportunity to mitigate the harm they cause or move them away. I could go on several different routes, but I think it would use up more time than is available.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I'm very curious about the foreign influence aspect of this and some of the efforts to destabilize our democracy. I'm wondering if there are any comments that any of you—maybe CSIS or CSE—have on those foreign influences and their impact on Canada related to IMVE.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I can start.

Foreign interference is one of the most important strategic threats to Canada's national security. The CSIS director has mentioned this at numerous venues. It undermines Canadian sovereignty, our national interests and specifically our values. It is a very complex threat.

It's also a national threat. It targets all levels of government, as you know, in communities all across the country. The threat activity has always been persistent in the FI space in Canada, but the scale, speed, range and impact have grown considerably as a result of globalization and technology. It encompasses a range of techniques, including human intelligence operations, state-sponsored or foreign-influenced media and sophisticated cyber-tools.

I'm sure my colleague Mr. Wilczynski can talk further to that, but it is a significant threat that we are absolutely seized with from a CSIS perspective.

**The Chair:** I'm sure Mr. Wilczynski would love to answer that, but he's not going to be given an opportunity because Mr. Kurek is out of time.

Ms. Khera, you have five minutes, please.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to all our witnesses for being here and, more importantly, for all the work you do.

My question is for CSIS.

Back in 2010-11, Canadians were informed by the government of the day that right-wing extremism has not been a significant problem in Canada and that the antics of certain high-profile white supremacists were extremely rare.

Since that time, we've seen the proliferation of threats posed by IMVE, such as incels and those inspired by xenophobia. How can we explain this growth? Were these threats always significant and perhaps not addressed, or was there truly a rapid increase that may have been spurred by external forces over the past few years?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** It's a very good question. It's a complicated question.

If I go back in time to when we still had the nomenclature of right-wing extremism and we had the attacks in Quebec and some other attacks.... At that time, just for context, we were dealing, in 2014, with the attacks against Parliament Hill and a lot of other attacks that fit more into the religiously motivated violent extremism category. This is an exercise that all of us undertake at all times. It's reprioritizing threats and allocating the resources to deal with those threats.

With the re-emergence of IMVE and the recalibration that we took as a service, we absolutely saw, with regard to the second part of your question, a more sophisticated threat actor than we had seen

before. You had new online tools. You had new ways of communication. You had accelerated interaction whereby these people could sit in their basements and never have to meet face to face. This accelerated the IMVE space, and it has actually grown ever since then, making it very difficult and complex to follow.

Thank you.

● (1805)

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Thank you.

Artur, do you have anything to add?

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** Yes.

To go back to what Mr. Hahlweg said and to part of the earlier questions, I want to emphasize that this truly is a global phenomenon. When we're engaging with international partners, when we're talking to our Five Eyes colleagues, this is something that is increasingly on our colleagues' radar. From a foreign intelligence perspective, it's why we believe that we need to continue to be engaged in this question and, again, to work with our colleagues at CSIS and other clients to make sure the international dimension of it, the global nature of it, is understood and how that connects to the phenomenon as it may manifest itself in Canada.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Thank you for that.

I have an additional question for CSIS or even, perhaps, the RCMP. We are aware that gender-based violence is a very serious threat, and I know that we're developing a national strategy to address it. In your opening remarks for CSIS, you did mention that one of the faces of this violence is misogyny. Can you, perhaps, explain a little bit further how IMVE is gender-driven?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** When we look at groups such as incels, involuntary celibates, that ideology bears many of the hallmarks of many more traditionally recognized ideologies, from our perspective.

Incels belong to a misogynistic community of males. They, like most others, associate primarily through online platforms. They use a unified terminology. They're not really an organized group, from our perspective, and they have no centralized structure or planning. They believe, though, at their core, that their genetics determine the quality of their life and relationships, meaning that they blame their unattractive physical features for their inability to attract women. They attribute their perceived failings in life to women and society in general.

We're also seeing subcategories of these types of ideologies. The manosphere is one that has cropped up. This is a network of online misogynistic and male-supremacy communities talking about men's rights issues to glorify the violence in violent misogyny. These subgroups are very concerning to us.

From a service perspective, I would say that not all of them are violent. From a service perspective, in terms of the act and meeting our threshold, a lot of that activity takes place in that first tier that I was talking about. However, it is absolutely something that is concerning from a national perspective.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Khera.

Madame Michaud, you have two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We understand that religiously motivated violent extremism that relies on social networks is an extremely modern threat, and it becomes difficult to legislate against it. As you were saying, Mr. Duheme, people will likely find a way around these new laws, quickly rendering them obsolete.

You are probably all aware of the Christchurch massacre, which the Prime Minister of New Zealand called an act intended to be broadcast on the Internet. As a result of this event, Australia passed the Criminal Code Amendment (Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material) Act 2019, which amends the Australian Criminal Code by adding as an offence the act of hosting or disseminating violent content on social networks or on any sites.

In your opinion, should Canada adopt similar legislation?

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I'm going to ask Mr. Rochon to talk about what's being done right now and the issue you raised.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Thank you.

As it happens, I don't feel like continuing to pass the torch.

[*English*]

However, I'm wondering whether Jill Wherrett might want to step in from a Public Safety perspective, in terms of Canada's participation in the Christchurch call. We certainly have been supportive, standing shoulder to shoulder with our New Zealand colleagues. There's a two-year anniversary event coming up later this week.

Jill, would you care to weigh in on Madame Michaud's question?

**The Chair:** Again, I'll give the same caution I gave to Mr. Kurek, that it's properly a minister's question as to whether there should be some legislative initiative.

But you all seem to be brave souls and you certainly have opinions, so I'll just let it proceed from there.

• (1810)

**Ms. Jill Wherrett (Assistant Deputy Minister, Portfolio Affairs and Communications Branch, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness):** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Thank you for the question.

[*English*]

I won't comment on government policy in terms of legislation, but I would say that, as my colleagues have described, there really are a variety of tools that can be brought to bear, whether they're legislative tools, working with civil society organizations or voluntary work that can be done between governments and social media platforms and the digital industry. That's certainly a big focus, in fact, of the Christchurch call that my colleague was just speaking about, where there's a series of commitments for governments, commitments for technology companies and shared commitments.

One of the elements—and something that we've been working on here—is that there's the legislative aspect, but there's also the crisis protocols that can be put into place, so that when there are streaming activities happening, as in the case of Christchurch, we can mobilize quickly to work with companies to make sure that content is no longer disseminated. That's another tool that we can use. Legislation, I think, is one part of the picture.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Michaud.

Mr. Harris, you have two and a half minutes, please.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you, Chair.

With regard to my first question, perhaps the representative from CSIS could deal with this as well.

We have, of course, reports of activity by extremist groups within the military. The gentleman, Mr. Hurren—I call him a gentleman, not advisedly perhaps—who went to Rideau Hall with a truckload of weapons and broke down the gate, was a military reservist.

We're told that there are pockets of supporters of the extremist view within the military. Do you actively engage in investigations regarding the military, or is that left to the military police?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Thank you for your question.

The service is actively involved and engaged with the military on IMVE and all other manners of threat activity. What I can say is that, if there's an individual within the military who meets our threshold to investigate or engage our TRM authority, just because they're in the military won't stop us from doing our job.

We actively engage with the military in terms of education—frontline education. We get out there and tell them about the things they might want to look for, and if they are concerned, these are some of the things we are seeing analytically, investigatively, on IMVE, to try to educate them so that they're better able to spot some of these issues on their own.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** According to statistics, we know there are about 1,250 police officers in the military police, so they have a lot of personnel.

Has your service noticed, perhaps more often than not, that you have military personnel you come across? Is that something that happens often? Do you refer them to military police, or do you carry on as if it were anybody else?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** While I can't get into specific investigative activities or files, I can say that, globally, the IMVE phenomenon has increased. In every pocket of society, we're seeing more of that activity. I think it might be natural that we're seeing that in that area as well, and we're actively engaged in dialogue with our DND colleagues.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Van Popta, you have five minutes, please.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you very much.

I'm going to follow up on the line of questioning from Madame Michaud a couple of minutes ago about legislative frameworks for combatting online extremist violence. It's not a question so much about legislation, but probably more of a technical question, and I'm not a technician myself at all.

Mr. Wilczynski, do we have the technological tools to be able to identify and prevent or disrupt online communities that are fostering violence of any sort?

• (1815)

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** Thank you for the question.

Again, I will just go back to CSE's core mandate, and SIGINT in particular, which is the collection of foreign intelligence. The types of activities that you mention in terms of our collection authorities are not necessarily consistent with the legislation we have.

In terms of the recent legislation, the passage of Bill C-59 and the CSE Act, we do have an active cyber-operations mandate. However, thresholds and proportionality are all very important considerations that we need to bear in mind. We are very cognizant of the importance of freedom of expression. There's a fairly high threshold that we have to look at. From CSE's point of view, we would be very cautious in that space.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you very much.

Do you get into recognizance warrants at all? Is that under your jurisdiction?

Should I be asking that question of the RCMP?

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** [*Technical difficulty—Editor*]

**The Chair:** Try it again, Mr. Wilczynski.

**Mr. Artur Wilczynski:** I was simply passing the question on. That is not in our mandate.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Maybe we'll go to Mr. Duheme from the RCMP.

Recognizance warrants are an extraordinary tool. How important of a tool are they for your tool box for preventing violence in Canada?

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** Thank you. I'll take that question.

I'm going to assume that when you say recognizance warrant, you are probably referring to the terrorism peace bond or similar....

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** That's correct.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** It's a very important tool for us. We use it early on when an individual is identified as a risk and revealing the potential to be involved in a terrorist activity through association

with other terrorists or online posts related to that material. It's a highly valued tool that allows us to intervene early, ensure there's awareness and apply the appropriate levels of restrictions, through the courts, on the individual and their association with others or with certain activities.

It's a highly valuable tool utilized by our organization and other police in Canada.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you.

Is that used internationally at all in co-operation with other public safety services around the world?

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** In the RCMP's investigations, we collaborate with our partners globally, as terrorism is not restricted to Canada's domestic geographical footprint. As long as we have jurisdiction or there's a connection with an international body, we will collaborate frequently. Sometimes you will see an individual being subjected to terrorism-like peace bonds—or other measures, depending on the country—in multiple countries at the same time.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta:** Thank you. I have just a quick question for CSIS.

CSIS has identified Daesh and al Qaeda as being particularly organized on the Internet to raise funds, to recruit and to organize. Is there the same degree of sophistication and threat from IMVE organizations or individuals?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Thank you for the question.

I would say that the traditional organizations had a lot longer to get organized. Therefore, they are able to do that a lot more frequently and in a sustained fashion. Given the fluidity that I described of the IMVE threat and the not so much connective tissue with the various individuals there, I would say the RMVE methodology is probably still very tried and true.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Lambropoulos, you have five minutes please.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

I would like to thank all of our witnesses for being here with us to answer our questions today.

Before I forget and if you don't mind, could you submit to the committee after this meeting the breakdown of the 273 ideologically motivated violent extremists events that took place in Canada?

My question is for CSIS. It's kind of along the lines of something you already mentioned. You mentioned the involuntary celibates group, which is a group that I've researched in the past. You said that they are not really a violent group, but that they are more online. However, that's not true. Alek Minassian drove into a crowd of pedestrians in Toronto killing 10 people in 2018 and posted on Facebook that the incel rebellion had begun.

What more does it take for a group to be considered violent?

• (1820)

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I apologize if I misspoke on that, but that's not what I said. I think what I said was that not all people in that group are violent. There certainly absolutely are, and he represents one of those individuals, for sure, so I totally agree. Once they mobilize to that level of violence, absolutely that is meeting our threshold from a CSIS perspective.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Is this group considered a terrorist group in Canada?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Incel is not.

Dom, I'll have to defer to you, but they are not a listed terrorist entity, if memory serves me.

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** Indeed not. We're getting involved in terminology here. It's like saying, is IMVE a terrorist group? Incel is an ideology that involves a whole bunch of different people, and there are groups that could fall under the category. If they were to meet the threshold in the Criminal Code, then they would become a listed entity.

Hopefully, that was clear.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Thank you very much.

In your testimony earlier you mentioned several of the different incidents that have taken place—including Christchurch, the Quebec City mosque, Pittsburgh—that were attacks against specific religious groups. We talked about addressing online harms and implementing “red flag” laws as measures to ensure that people who pose a risk to others do not have access to firearms.

What additional measures can we take in order to detect and prevent such attacks in the future?

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I'm not sure who is up.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I'm not quite sure who it's directed to. I think it begins with public vigilance and reporting. It's very important that when people see something that they report it. There are patterns that can be detected early on, with different posts, that could lead the service to disruption or the RCMP to investigate and lay charges before something happens. For the police or the service, it's impossible to monitor everything that's going on on the Internet, but it starts with public vigilance and reporting when you see it.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I would very much agree with that and add that, from our perspective, getting out into the communities and educating people as to what that looks like and what people should be advising the police is extremely important. This committee and the work you're doing is also very beneficial in getting the word out and showing people that the government is taking this issue seriously.

**The Chair:** You have about a minute left.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Thank you. I'll pass on my time.

**The Chair:** Colleagues, that brings us to the end of the third round. We have about 20 minutes available for these very excellent witnesses. My proposal would be another three- or four-minute round for each of the parties. In the meantime, while you're making up your minds, and if you could communicate with the clerk on

that, I would just take the opportunity to ask a question or two on my own.

All of you have extraordinary experiences as investigators. What has struck me with a lot of these organizations is, if you will, the borderline mental illness of some of the people they would be conducting investigations on—paranoia, disassociation from reality, conspiracies, all that sort of stuff. I'd be interested in your thoughts as to what element in your investigations actually is possibly mental illness of some kind or another?

• (1825)

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** Mr. Chair, from an RCMP perspective I would say mental illness is a very significant element. If you look at the COVID situation we're in right now, you see there is a lot of reporting about the increased mental illness that is being caused by the isolation that's in place. As an opinion, I would say there is likely a connection between some of the increases that we're seeing as well as the movement to align.

In some of our police investigations.... In fact we've had one that's under way right now. I won't get into too many details of it, but I'll say that it's actually an individual who is currently in a mental institution who is under investigation, and we've already intervened with that individual. I can't think of a better example than that to demonstrate the connectivity between this issue and mental illness.

**The Chair:** I'll just direct that question to Mr. Hahlweg as well.

CSIS gets in before the police get in, shall we say? It is an investigation. It's not evidence.

I'm sure you've made some observations about mental illness and some of these individuals. I'm just curious as to what your thoughts are.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Like our RCMP colleagues, we have absolutely seen more of this. We have become very alive to some of the mental health indicators that allow us to make better assessments at the front end in terms of what we can or should be doing from an investigative perspective.

A lot of our work involves dealing with community members who might be better served to pre-emptively deal with individuals, rather than provoking investigative authorities from CSIS.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Colleagues, do you wish to ask further questions or do we terminate the meeting here?

Go ahead, Jack.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** I have a follow-up question on the incel numbers that Deputy Commissioner Duheme mentioned. Of the 273 files, 29 of them—which would be more than 10%—would be related to incels. This seems high to me, since it's a group I'd never heard of before 2018.

How large is that group compared to others in terms of the number of people who are involved? I think there was a big explanation of what they are, but is this prolific within society?

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Again, it's an ideology. It's not a group; it's not considered a group. There are pockets of single individuals who have the same ideology. I would not be able to put a number on that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lightbound, I think you have another question.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have one last question for Mr. Rochon.

You mentioned the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence. Can you tell us more about the activities of the centre?

I remember hearing about a year ago that the New York Times team had traced the journey of a young person who had become radicalized on the Internet and descended into right-wing extremism. They had traced the path he had taken on YouTube and social media to get to that stage of radicalization.

What kind of research is being done at the centre? Are there effective ways to divert some individuals from the path toward radicalization and violent extremism that they have embarked on?

**Mr. Dominic Rochon:** That is a very good question, thank you.

That centre just happens to fall under Ms. Wherrett. So I'm going to turn it over to her so she can give you more information on that.

**Ms. Jill Wherrett:** Thank you for the question, Mr. Lightbound.

[*English*]

The Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence was formally launched in 2017. It is really a centre of excellence in terms of coordinating the Government of Canada's efforts related to countering radicalization to violence and complementing some of the security responses you've heard about today through an emphasis on prevention and intervention.

The Canada centre is focused on all types of radicalization to violence, regardless of ideology or political or religious motivations. As outlined in the national strategy on countering radicalization to violence that was issued several years ago, there are three priority areas that the centre is looking at. One is building, sharing and using knowledge. That's about really building up the knowledge base we have in Canada and internationally. The second is addressing radicalization to violence in the online space. As you know well from the conversation today, that's a pre-eminent concern currently. The third is supporting frontline interventions.

To be clear, the Canada centre does not work directly with individuals at risk or those who have radicalized to violence, but what we do have is the community resilience program, which is a \$7-million-a-year funding program that provides financial assistance for some of the research efforts I talked about in terms of our building knowledge, as well as support for frontline practitioners and community-based organizations that prevent and counter radicalization to violence in Canada. That's where those kinds of organizations are dealing with some of the individuals who have indicated some signs of radicalizing to violence.

To date, we've funded about 42 projects across Canada. Again, some are research projects, but a large part of that funding goes to prevention and intervention programs.

● (1830)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I think Mr. Kurek has his hand up.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I'm in the room, and there's a big screen here.

I'm just wondering. It's kind of a funny question, but Mr. Hahlweg's pin kind of pixelates and looks a little bit strange, the pin on his lapel. In the room, I can see the big screen. As you can see, I'm wearing a pin with a Canadian flag, and the lapel pin there is pixelated and not easy to see.

I'm sorry to ask a funny question.

**The Chair:** That is a strange question. I don't know what to do with it, but apparently pixelation is a bad thing.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I will remove it, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I don't see any other questions.

Let me finish with Deputy Commissioner Duheme. I thought, towards the end of your recitation of 276 files or whatever, you talked about threats against politicians or to political folks.

Can you expand on that? Has it increased or decreased? I daresay that there's not anyone on this call who hasn't received a threat of some kind or another. Could you expand on what your observations might be?

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** Of the 273, there are about one-fifth of them, the majority of which include anti-government and anti-law enforcement. What we're seeing are disparaging remarks, condescending remarks towards elected officials or appointed officials. I would say that most of time, or a lot of the time, they don't meet the criminal threshold to lay a charge.

That's where we do some disruption. The team that looks after it does work with the behavioural science team to try to get a better understanding of the individuals. There are mental health issues involved in this, but often what we've been seeing is that a simple knock on the door is enough to disrupt it and the person doesn't repeat it.

People sometimes feel safe in their basement. They feel protected because they're online and not face to face, but a simple disruption is just as good.

Is there an increase? Yes. I mentioned earlier on that we've seen an increase in what we are looking at, not necessarily towards all elected members but ministers. In my personal opinion, what we're seeing is people being at the residence due to COVID, as I said, and feeling protected on the Internet. We did see an increase in negative comments, I'll say. They're not always threats.

I think Mark would like to add something to this, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** I'd like to add some information about a program that we have that I'm quite proud of. I think it has application in the national security IMVE space outside of the security of protected individuals under the RCMP's mandate.

In our protective policing program, we have behavioural scientists who review the intelligence or evidence that comes in with respect to threats and the individuals who are involved. We put those people into defined categories with defined follow-up regimes based on the levels of threat, particularly when they don't meet the criminal threshold where there's likely going to be a conviction based on their activity.

It's a very new approach that we've been undertaking in the last few years. It's a very highly skilled group that is developing these assessments as well as the plans to intervene. That can go anywhere from a regimented monthly follow-up with public health officials, psychological services, counselling and so on, to someone who's at the very low end of the threshold potentially having annual follow-ups to determine whether or not they are increasing or decreasing their activity. It's a very effective group, and I'm very proud of the service that they provide.

• (1835)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Flynn.

Deputy Commissioner Duheme, your “knock on the door” analogy coincides with my own experience. The irony was that it was a former police officer who got the knock on the door.

I see two hands up, and I think that will have to do for today. We'll go with Mr. Fisher and then Ms. Damoff.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you very much. I think Pam had her hand up first.

Someone said today that if Canadians see something they should say something. If Canadians feel that they are seeing something that might be IMVE, how would they best go about reporting something like that?

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I can't shy away. I was the one who said that.

On the national security side for the RCMP there is a 1-800 number, 1-800-420-5805, but I think the underlying message here for the Canadian population is to call their local police, to call the police of jurisdiction. We have ties in different provinces with the PO-Js. They understand roles and responsibilities and mandates. If it's imminent, obviously, there is 911, and there are other ways to contact your police of jurisdiction to inform them.

To me, that's very important, because, as I said, it's not the law enforcement, the security community, that will be able to detect everything that's going on. Most of the work we're doing in this space is based on what is being reported to us by citizens.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

Ms. Damoff, you have the final question.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Thank you, Chair.

Often Canadians are fearful of extremism that is coming from abroad. I don't know that there is an awareness of this ideologically motivated violent extremism and the number of Canadians who have died because of what Minister Goodale in the last Parliament would have called “lone wolves”, those motivated by this type of ideology.

How important is it for Canadians to recognize that this is a threat to us, and that the threat is actually on our own soil by people who are being radicalized, not by foreign fighters but by those being radicalized right here in Canada because they are online and are part of these groups?

This is for Mr. Duheme or Mr. Hahlweg.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** Go ahead, Mike.

**D/Commr Michael Duheme:** I will start off, and then Tim...and I see that Mark had his hand on the microphone.

Very quickly, the challenging part in this is the spectrum of activity that gets the person to actually commit the act. It's a little bit like the radicalization aspect. It's not illegal to be radicalized. It's when you get to the point that you're committing that criminal offence that it becomes an offence.

It is difficult to really identify when the individual will commit that act. That is a challenge. There's a spectrum of activity, and identifying that single point, what triggers that person to do it, is sometimes difficult.

I will pass it over to Mark, who would like to add something.

**C/Supt Mark Flynn:** With respect to public awareness, it's absolutely critical. If people understand that the threat exists and apply a better awareness to it, they have the ability to counter some of the dangerous narrative that's out there and to report it to police and other security and intelligence partners.

From a policing perspective, one of the strongest tools we have in resolving the issue or addressing what we can of the issue is public awareness and public involvement.

• (1840)

**The Chair:** Mr. Hahlweg, you get the last word.

**Mr. Timothy Hahlweg:** I would echo those comments. Education is key.

The CSIS annual report, NSICOP report and SIRC reviews are meant to educate on this threat, but frontline education in dealing with people is the number one most effective way in the irony of this space. On IMVEs, most of the abhorrent material is actually domestically produced, so I would say education is key.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

On behalf of the committee, and individually, I want to thank you for your service to our country. Many of you go along underappreciated because it's a necessary hazard of the job, but I think you should be acknowledged publicly for the tremendous service you provide to our country.

I also want to thank you for appearing here today on short notice and for putting up with the vagaries of parliamentary calendars. You have been very generous with your time, and we appreciate it. You have certainly gotten our study off to a flying start.

With that, colleagues, I think we will retire. Mr. Harris can now feed his nutritional needs, and Mr. Fisher is going to do the same, no doubt sharing a meal with Mr. Harris.

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Thank you very much. We will talk later. The meeting is adjourned.







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