



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

UNCLASSIFIED  
JULY 2024



## **Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force**

Threats to the Toronto-St. Paul's electoral  
district by-election – June 2024

**Canada** 

Information contained in this publication or product may be reproduced, in part or in whole, and by any means, for personal or public non-commercial purposes without charge or further permission, unless otherwise specified. Commercial reproduction and distribution are prohibited except with written permission from the Privy Council Office.

For more information, contact:

Privy Council Office  
85 Sparks Street, Room 1000  
Ottawa ON Canada K1A 0A3  
[info@pco-bcp.gc.ca](mailto:info@pco-bcp.gc.ca)

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, 2024.

Cette publication est également disponible en français : *Groupe de travail sur les menaces en matière de sécurité et de renseignement visant les élections : Menaces pour l'élection partielle fédérale dans la circonscription électorale de Toronto-St. Paul's – juin 2024.*

CP22-221/2024E-PDF

ISBN: 978-0-660-72987-9

## Background

On May 21, 2024, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions, and Intergovernmental Affairs, [announced](#)<sup>1</sup> that the Security and Intelligence Threats to Elections Task Force (SITE TF) was to provide enhanced monitoring and assessment of foreign interference (FI) threats against the federal by-election being held on June 24, 2024, in Toronto-St.Paul's, Ontario electoral district.

This report covers the SITE TF activities and observations of foreign actors' intentions and FI activities directed at the June 2024 federal by-election.

## Scope and resources

The SITE TF was initially created in 2018 and given the mandate to enhance monitoring and assess foreign interference threats directed at federal general elections. In 2023, the Government requested SITE's activation during federal by-elections.

On May 29, 2024, the SITE TF produced a classified baseline threat assessment on the Toronto-St. Paul's by-election taking into consideration potential FI indicators specific to the Toronto-St. Paul's region, for the Deputy Minister Committee on Intelligence Response (DMCIR).<sup>2</sup>

The SITE TF then provided DMCIR weekly updates on FI and violent extremism threats to the by-election from May 21 to July 3, 2024, based on weekly situation reports (SITREPs). The weekly SITREPs considered input from each SITE member agency.

The SITE TF offered an unclassified briefing on foreign interference to political parties, including information on the cyber foreign interference threat, the roles and responsibilities of SITE TF, and resources for political parties to protect themselves. The SITE TF, in collaboration with the Privy Council Office (PCO), provided this briefing in June 2024.

The current report covers the SITE TF observations of foreign threat actors' intentions and activities relating to FI as well as any observations of threats of violent extremism with respect to the Toronto-St. Paul's by-election. It is based on analysis, reporting and observations from classified and unclassified sources that were reviewed from May 21 to July 2, 2024. The vote was held on June 24, 2024.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/democratic-institutions/news/2024/05/government-of-canada-announces-measures-to-protect-toronto-st-pauls-by-election-from-foreign-interference.html>

<sup>2</sup> During federal general elections, as per the Cabinet Directive on the Critical Election Incident Public Protocol, the protocol is administered by a group of five senior civil servants initiated to respond to incidents that occur during the caretaker period (<https://www.canada.ca/en/democratic-institutions/services/protecting-democracy/critical-election-incident-public-protocol/cabinet.html>). Incidents that occur outside of the caretaker period are addressed through regular Government of Canada operations.

## SITE TF members and role

The SITE TF is currently chaired by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and consists of representatives from the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The SITE TF's role is to help safeguard the Canadian federal elections from FI by:

- providing a clear point of engagement with the security and intelligence community for government partners that are engaged in related work.
- reviewing and focussing intelligence collection, assessment and open-source analysis related to FI in Canada's democratic process in a coordinated manner.
- providing situational awareness for government partners, senior public servants and other relevant partners.
- promoting the use of intelligence, assessment and open-source information analysis in the protection of electoral processes through sharing with partners or, when respective mandates permit, taking action to mitigate the threat.
- providing political parties with advice and guidance during a SITE briefing, including an overview of common cyber threats and best practices for IT security.
- providing enhanced monitoring of cyber incidents.
- offering political parties a 24/7 hotline service<sup>3</sup> to obtain centralized support if party or candidate communications, email, or social media accounts are compromised.

## Foreign interference

The SITE TF defines foreign interference as an “activity conducted or supported by a foreign state/actor that is detrimental to Canadian national interests and is clandestine, deceptive or involves a threat to a person.” In the context of Canadian electoral processes, the objective of FI is to affect electoral outcomes and/or undermine public confidence in Canadian democratic institutions.

### Observations on foreign interference

The SITE TF monitored for FI directed at the Toronto-St. Paul's electoral district by-election from May 21 to July 2, 2024. The SITE TF did not observe any indication of FI activities directed at the by-election during the specified time period. No cyber incidents were detected to suggest that any

---

<sup>3</sup> Supported by CSE's Canadian Center for Cyber Security, the 24/7 hotline service will continue to be available to political parties for reporting of cyber incidents until one month after the election. When the hotline is activated, it triggers an immediate response to minimize damage and restore normal operations.

foreign state actors were specifically targeting Elections Canada's infrastructure from May 21 to July 2, 2024.

## Violent extremism

While the SITE TF is focussed on FI, the RCMP and CSIS have mandates and authorities to investigate threats of violent extremism. For the June 24, 2024 by-election, the SITE TF committed to reporting any threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election.

### Observations on violent extremism

The SITE TF monitored for threats of violent extremism directed at the by-election from May 21 to July 2, 2024. The SITE TF did not observe any threats of violent extremism directed at the Toronto-St. Paul's electoral district by-election during the specified time period. The SITE TF did not identify any direct threats to the by-election in social media, message boards, chatrooms, online forums or news media relating to the by-election. No direct threats to any of the candidates, nor to the administration of the election, were identified.