



NSIRA Review of the Government of Canada's production and dissemination of intelligence on foreign interference in the 43rd and 44th Canadian federal elections

Terms of Reference, May 23, 2023

Introduction

The National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA) has initiated a review of the production and dissemination of intelligence on foreign interference in the 43rd and 44th Canadian federal elections, including how intelligence was communicated across agencies, departments and other groups in the Government of Canada.

The review will include the agencies and departments responsible for the production and dissemination of intelligence about foreign interference in Canada; these organizations inform government decision-makers regarding foreign interference threats to Canadian democratic institutions and processes.

Legislative Authorities

This review is being conducted pursuant to section 8(1)(a) and 8(1)(b) of the *National Security and Intelligence Review Agency Act*.

Background

Beginning in the fall of 2022, a series of reporting by the *Globe and Mail* and *Global News* cited classified Canadian Security Intelligence Service documents on People's Republic of China (PRC) foreign interference into Canadian democratic institutions and processes, including the 43rd and 44th federal elections. This reporting raised concerns regarding the government's response to the threat of foreign interference and, consequently, the integrity of Canada's democratic institutions and processes.

On 9 March 2023, NSIRA announced that it would initiate a review of the production and dissemination of intelligence on foreign interference with respect to the 43rd and 44th federal elections. NSIRA's expertise and mandate will allow it to examine the flow of crucial information in the relevant period within and across all implicated agencies, departments, and government bodies. This flow – the process by which the security and intelligence community produced, disseminated, and communicated intelligence – is fundamental to the broader conversation regarding foreign interference into Canadian democratic processes and institutions over the last five years. NSIRA's ability to review the entire security and intelligence community, and to access highly sensitive information held by each department and agency, render the present review imperative.



Scope

The timeframe of the review will be September 2018 to March 2023. The review includes the following departments and agencies:

- Canadian Security Intelligence Service
- Communications Security Establishment
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Global Affairs Canada
- Public Safety Canada
- Privy Council Office

The scope will include intelligence on foreign interference in federal democratic institutions and processes produced and disseminated during the review period.

If deemed necessary, NSIRA may request and review information outside of the parameters identified above.

Objective

The objective of the review is to:

- Document and evaluate the production and dissemination of intelligence on foreign interference, including the communication of intelligence within and across agencies and departments in the Government of Canada.

Methodology and Information Requirements

Various methods will be used to gather and analyze the information required to meet the objective identified for this review. These may include, but need not be limited to, requests for documentation, oral briefings and/or interviews, site visits, access to relevant databases and information repositories, and requests for written responses to questions and/or clarifications.

NSIRA has published its *Expectations for Responsiveness in Reviews* on its website, which includes expectations regarding access to information.¹ A verification exercise will be conducted for NSIRA to be able to test the completeness or accuracy of the information reviewed. The outcome of the verification exercise will inform a 'Responsiveness Statement' that will be attached to the report upon the review's completion.

NSIRA will disseminate a completed review report to all implicated departments and agencies, and publish a redacted version on its website.

¹ See <https://nsira-ossnr.gc.ca/expectations-for-responsiveness-in-reviews>.