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ITAC

The Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC)

BUILDING AN INTEGRATED SECURITY SYSTEM

The Government of Canada, as part of its National Security Policy, is building a fully integrated security system, to enable Canada to respond more effectively to existing and emerging threats to its national security. The necessity for an integrated security system has become increasingly evident in recent years, most dramatically demonstrated by the events of September 11, 2001, and the numerous and widespread terrorist attacks since then. The requirement to encourage information-sharing and cooperation among organizations that collect and analyze intelligence vital to national security is paramount.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

An effective security system begins with a comprehensive threat assessment. While many individual departments and agencies produce threat assessments, their ability to share information and conduct effective analysis has been inconsistent in the past. To address this gap, the Government of Canada established the Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC), which has been operational since October 15th, 2004.

ITAC'S ROLE

ITAC's primary objective is to produce comprehensive threat assessments, which are distributed within the intelligence community and to first-line responders, such as law enforcement, on a timely basis. Its assessments, based on intelligence and trend analysis, evaluate both the probability and potential consequences of threats. Such assessments allow the Government of Canada to coordinate activities in response to specific threats in order to prevent or mitigate risks to public safety.

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

With a budget of 30 million dollars over five years, ITAC is a functional component of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). It is housed within CSIS headquarters in Ottawa, and supported 24/7 by the CSIS Threat Management Centre.

ITAC works closely with the National Security Advisor (NSA) who, in consultation with the Director of CSIS, appoints ITAC's Director. Twice a year, the NSA chairs ITAC's Management Board meeting, attended by deputy ministers from participating organizations, to review ITAC's performance. An Assessment Management Committee, composed of assistant deputy ministers from participating organizations, provides advice to the Management Board on the focus, effectiveness and efficiency of ITAC activities. This committee and the NSA assist the ITAC Director in establishing threat assessment priorities. ITAC is required to submit an annual report to Cabinet.

A COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE

ITAC is a community-wide resource. It is staffed by representatives of the following organizations, who are usually seconded to the Centre for a period of two years:

- *Public Safety Canada*
- *Canadian Security Intelligence Service*
- *Canada Border Services Agency*
- *Communications Security Establishment*
- *Department of National Defence*
- *Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada*
- *Privy Council Office*
- *Transport Canada*
- *Correctional Service Canada*
- *Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada*
- *Royal Canadian Mounted Police*
- *Ontario Provincial Police*
- *Sûreté du Québec*

These representatives bring the information and expertise of their respective organizations to ITAC. When required, ITAC can also draw upon the specialized knowledge of other federal government agencies, such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada, Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada.



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Canadian security will increasingly depend on the country's ability to contribute to international security. Accordingly, the Government of Canada, through ITAC, is promoting a more integrated international intelligence community by cooperating with foreign integrated threat assessment centres, including the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, in Britain; the National Counterterrorism Center, in the United States; the National Threat Assessment Centre, in Australia; and the Combined Threat Assessment Group, in New Zealand.

CONCLUSION

ITAC is an essential component of the Government of Canada's efforts to build an integrated national security system. The centre facilitates increased information-sharing and integrated intelligence analysis. Its comprehensive threat assessments provide policy-makers and first responders with the information they need to make decisions and take actions that contribute to the safety and security of Canadians.

CONTACT

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