

TOP SECRET – CEO

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REVIEW OF FO

(SIRC STUDY 2007-07)

**Security Intelligence Review Committee
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION 2

2 OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE 5

3 METHODS AND SOURCES 6

4 THE TRANSFORMATION FROM SERVICE LIAISON OFFICER 7

 4.2 On the Ground at FO 8

 4.3 A Broader Perspective 10

 4.4 Case Study: 12

5 OUTSOURCING INFORMATION STOVEPIPES 16

 5.1 What is the Price of Liaison? 18

 20

6 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS: 22

 6.1 Administration 22

 6.2 Building the Intelligence Capacity of Partner-Agencies 23

 6.3 Further Efforts 24

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 25

RECOMMENDATIONS 26

LIST OF ACRONYMS 27

1 INTRODUCTION

National borders have taken on decreasing significance to the vast majority of threats that CSIS (the Service) must contend with. Attempts to manage this borderless threat environment have required that the Service endeavour to strengthen its capacity to operate effectively abroad.¹

While debate continues about a possible expansion of foreign collection activities by Canadians – either through CSIS, or a separate dedicated agency – the fact is that Canada has traditionally been a net importer of intelligence products from allied partners,

the Post is a *prima facie* example of the challenges facing the Service as it attempts to strike a balance between liaison priorities on the one hand, and resource realities on the other. FO is responsible for managing section 17 arrangements involving countries within its geographical area of responsibility.

¹ CSIS Document, "Remarks by Mr. Jim Judd, Director, CSIS, to the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies (CASIS), Friday October 27, 2006, Located: <http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/en/newsroom/speeches/speech27102006.asp>

³ Stephane Lefebvre, "The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 16, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 2003, pp. 527-542.

ATIP version

dated: NOV 05 2019

2 OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

This review had five objectives. First, to examine the nature and volume of FO immigration-related work and how other responsibilities (such as intelligence gathering and liaison) were balanced accordingly. Second, to study the Post's relationships with domestic partners, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) as well as Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) personnel. Third, to analyse the Post's liaison relationships with foreign agencies, to ensure that CSIS was responsible in its dealings with those intelligence entities with questionable human rights practices. Fourth, to inquire how the May 2006 Service realignment impacted on the work of FO

The review period was from January 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007. To situate properly FO activities within the Service's IR reorganization, non-operational information outside of the review period was requested.

3 METHODS AND SOURCES

SIRC used three collection strategies during this review. First, CSIS primary documentation was examined by SIRC researchers. Second, SIRC's Executive Director and Senior Advisor visited the Post

Meetings were held with Mission staff,
and representatives of the RCMP, CIC and DFAIT. Third,
SIRC was briefed at CSIS HQ by the former representatives to
contextualize further the information obtained from other sources.

4 THE TRANSFORMATION FROM SERVICE LIAISON OFFICER (SLO)

This is the first SIRC review of a CSIS foreign post following the Service's May 2006 reorganisation. The transition from an issued-based organization (i.e. Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Intelligence and Counter-Proliferation) into a geographically driven enterprise (i.e. Middle East and Africa / Asia, Europe and Americas, International Terrorism, etc.) directly impacts foreign posts,

Past SIRC studies have documented previous CSIS reorganisation efforts, including the June 1994 merging of the Foreign Liaison Unit (the last remnant of the 1990 decision to dismantle the Foreign Liaison Branch), into the Protocol & Visits Unit (forming the Foreign Liaison & Visits Section).¹⁴ Over the years various Post locations opened and others closed, owing to a variety of factors including the immigration workload and operational requirements of the Service. For instance, FO came into existence

Until 2006, SLOs remained primarily responsible for immigration screening and "monitor(ing) the liaison program,"¹⁶ with limited time devoted to the development of non-traditional partners and Conscious Relationships (CR).¹⁷

Reflecting this prioritization was the Committee's own 1993/94 Annual Report, which voiced concern about the negative impact on the immigration screening program resulting from the low number of SLOs;

The events of September 11, 2001 illuminated the many challenges of intelligence management, e.g.: 'information stovepipes' and the tendency to move towards analytical 'groupthink'. The US Congress's Joint Intelligence Committee Report on 9/11 admonished American intelligence agencies for relying excessively on poorly sourced foreign liaison information for threat assessments. The Report warned that no

¹⁴ SIRC Study 93-09, "A SIRC Review of CSIS' SLO Post", January 5, 1995, p.i.

¹⁶ SIRC Study 91/92-11, "Review of CSIS' SLO Posts (London & Paris)," January 12, 1993, Annex E, p.4.

¹⁷ Conscious Relationships are contacts with representatives of allied security/intelligence services in a third country.

professional intelligence service could continue to view foreign collection and liaison as perfunctory obligations.¹⁹

CSIS was no exception. By the time SIRC reviewed SLO-Washington in 2005, the Service had commenced a series of organizational transformations in response to increased operational requirements abroad. For example, for the first time the Assistant Director, Intelligence (ADI), sent a Directive describing the prominent role of foreign liaison, including the development of operational objectives for all CSIS posts.²⁰

As would be expected, the 2006 reorganisation has produced challenges, including specialized training for foreign officers, staffing allotment issues,

identified by CSIS were observed during SIRC's review of FO as discussed throughout this paper. Some of these hurdles as discussed

All Service employees serving overseas, regardless of position, are known as Foreign Officers (FO).

¹⁹ US Congress, "Report of the Joint Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack of September 11, 2001 – By the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, December 2002, pp.33-117.

²⁰ SIRC Study 2005-02, "CSIS Liaison with Foreign Agencies – Review of the SLO Post" March 21, 2006, p. 34.

ATIP version

NOV 05 2019

dated: _____

every foreign Post

Yearly operational requirements are articulated for designed to define what is expected

4.2 On the Ground at FO

There are several environmental realities to working the City offers all of the amenities and attending problems common to large urban centres. Although the Post is located in the affluent district (known for trendy restaurants, embassies, boutiques and corporate businesses), the underprivileged of society occasionally enter this district to protest their unfortunate plight. Additionally, crime is common.³²

Post security issues observed during the Review Period included

Although relatively unusual from a Canadian perspective, protests are not uncommon in with these incidents being described by as

³² SIRC Document, "Interviews At CSIS Post –

" March 10-11, 2008.

primarily isolated and opportunistic. Even random street crime, while problematic, is not of primary concern when compared to security issues faced in countries

Also of great importance is FO relationship with the host Government of described by CSIS as excellent.

A third important element are the relationships between staff, Mission numerous travel demands mean that working relationships are often more robust with Canadian partners located elsewhere within FO jurisdiction, than at Post.

4.3 A Broader Perspective

Overall, SIRC's examination of life at the Post painted a familiar picture when compared to past Post Reviews: FO immigration

In terms of immigration, while not as extreme as SIRC's 2002/03 Review of SLO- approximately half of FO time is devoted to this task, primarily for

The Service's IR does not specifically list immigration screening as one of the Region's challenges; instead, they acknowledge that staffing generally is an ongoing problem.⁴⁵ Regardless, immigration screening continues to be a pervasive challenge for the majority of Service Posts examined by SIRC.⁴⁶ Past reviews have commented on CSIS's part in contributing to the efficiency of the immigration program,

This division seemed appropriate given the pre-9/11 security environment and the pre-eminence of domestic priorities for CSIS.

⁴² SIRC Study 2004-01, "CSIS Liaison With Foreign Agencies: Review of the SLO Post August 9, 2005, p.16.

⁴⁵ SIRC 2006/07 Annual Report Question R466.09, File No: 385-466-9, SIRC -1630-1/07 (TD R466), April 25, 2007, p.1.

⁴⁶ The exception would have been SLO- See: SIRC Study 2006-01, "CSIS Liaison With Foreign Agencies – Review of the SLO Post February 20, 2007, p.11.

ATIP version

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5 OUTSOURCING INFORMATION STOVEPIPES

All professional intelligence agencies devote considerable resources towards establishing and maintaining relationships with foreign services. The essence of intelligence is information collection, implying that when a state's independent capabilities end, intelligence liaison must begin. Described in security and intelligence journals as 'intelligence cooperation,'⁶¹ or as a strategic game of 'quid pro quo,'⁶² these exchanges are perhaps best understood as a form of subcontracted intelligence collection based on barter.⁶³

Intelligence exchanges are typically grouped into two categories: bilateral (agency-to-agency) and multilateral (multiple agencies). Multilateral arrangements are often used to share significant quantities of information among close allies.

⁶¹ Stephane Lefebvre, "The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 16, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 2003, pp. 527-542.

⁶² Chris Clough, "Quid Pro Quo: The Challenges of International Strategic Intelligence Cooperation," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 17, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 2003, pp. 601-613.

⁶³ Jennifer E. Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison: Devils, Deals, and Details," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 19, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 2006, pp. 195-217.

ATIP version

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5.1 What is the Price of Liaison?

One of the issues for this Review was how the Post managed relationships with foreign agencies which have questionable human rights practices. We concluded that FO handled this issue appropriately.⁷³ The topic of human rights is a difficult one for Western intelligence agencies generally, requiring services to balance the need to protect their citizens through information-gathering, with that of not contributing to human rights violations through such cooperation.⁷⁴

As CSIS's foreign arrangements expand

so too will the difficulties of managing these relationships increase. One problem with expanded liaison is determining the motivation of the other side to increase its intelligence exchanges.

This process also works in reverse, with the Service having to remain cognisant of the factors driving its interests. CSIS's section 17 arrangement with the is a case in point.

⁷³ dealings with the and were sensitive to this issue, following Policy and Ministerial Directives, as required.

⁷⁴ Past SIRC studies have addressed these concerns at length. Two examples: SIRC Study 2005-06, "Review of Foreign Arrangements with Countries Suspected of Human Rights Violations," July 19, 2006.

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NOV 0 5 2019

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NOV 05 2019

dated: _____

6 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS:

SIRC's examination of FO illustrated the challenges facing CSIS in immigration-generating, geopolitically complex and threat-diverse regions. The Service places high expectations to address these demands, requiring solid time management skills and an entrepreneurial attitude.

Two overlapping issues converged at this Post: strategic restructuring challenges and tactical workload expectations. There is no organizational nirvana for such endeavours, and most certainly for an adaptive intelligence agency like CSIS there should not be one. These issues will become particularly relevant for FO as the region's security intelligence demands continue to evolve, including issues relating to socio-political and economic influences and potential extremist activities.

The question is how to continually balance expanding collection demands with resource realities. SIRC offers three concluding observations from the Review Period that we encourage the Service to consider as it attempts to address these perennial, competing priorities.

6.1 Administration

It will be an ongoing challenge for the Service to determine whether these initiatives go far enough to increase capacity in the region, or if further adjustments will be necessary (such as providing additional resources to FO

administrative capacity building will be required, leaving it an open question as to how to go about adjusting administrative capacity without frustrating attempts at **SIRC believes that the Service should continue to address the issue of human resources in FO if the transition SLO is to be successful in increasing collection capabilities.**

6.2 Building the Intelligence Capacity of Partner-Agencies

There are resource limitations to what can reasonably be expected of the Service in terms of training foreign partners. Additionally, there are risks,

Human rights issues must also be assessed. However, proactive Service

assistance with certain foreign agencies can provide the kind of professional officer training, increased sensitivity to human rights and technological skills which can lead to mutually beneficial intelligence relationships.

SIRC encourages the Service to increase liaison efforts with partner agencies in order to help offset over-reliance on Conscious Relationships in FO

6.3 Further Efforts

It would be too easy to postulate that the quick fix is additional CSIS resources. This is premised on the reality that resource limitations are not germane to FO alone.

International Region's reliance on developing Post requirements from HQ operational branch Annual Plans helps ensure Service continuity of effort beyond Canada's borders. However, Post requirements do not identify intelligence gaps, unlike HQ operational branch plans. Considering that each CSIS Post operates within a relatively unique security environment, one option is a further refinement of Post Operational Requirements to recognize intelligence gaps and develop options to address these challenges. **SIRC believes that the Service should do more to refine its foreign collection plans to aid in focussing the detection lens on threats originating from outside Canada.**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- SIRC believes that the Service should continue to address the issue of human resources in FO if the transition from SLO to is to be successful in increasing collection capabilities. (Section 6.1)
- SIRC encourages the Service to increase liaison efforts with partner agencies in order to help offset over-reliance on Conscious Relationships in FO (Section 6.2)
- SIRC believes that the Service should do more to refine its foreign collection plans to aid in focussing the detection lens on threats originating from outside Canada. (Section 6.3)

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations arising from this review.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADI	Assistant Director, Intelligence
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CR	Conscious Relationships
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
FAO	Foreign Administrative Officer
FO	Foreign Officers
FSO	Foreign Secondment Officer
HOM	Head Of Mission
IAB	Intelligence Assessments Branch
IO	Intelligence Officers
IPM	Immigration Program Manager
IR	International Region
ITB	International Terrorism Branch

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

PA Program Assistant

RCMP Royal Canadian Mounted Police

SLO Service Liaison Officer

SS Security Screening

US United States of America