



# PROTECT YOUR RESEARCH



## SASKATCHEWAN

A SAFE, SECURE AND PROSPEROUS CANADA THROUGH TRUSTED INTELLIGENCE AND ADVICE.  
DES RENSEIGNEMENTS ET DES CONSEILS FIABLES POUR UN CANADA SÛR ET PROSPÈRE.

/ As a core part of its mandate, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) investigates and advises the Government of Canada on threats posed by espionage and foreign-influenced activities. As the world becomes more competitive, states are seeking every advantage. In order to fulfil their economic and security or military priorities, some foreign states engage in espionage. This foreign espionage has significant ramifications for Canada, including lost jobs, corporate and tax revenues, as well as diminished competitive and national advantages.

In 2019, Saskatchewan contributed approximately \$81 billion to Canada's GDP; research conducted in 2020 indicated that Saskatchewan's technology sector generated direct GDP of \$4.7 billion in 2018. Saskatchewan's Growth Plan recognizes the impact that innovation will have on the province's economic future, and the province has set an ambitious goal of tripling the growth of Saskatchewan's technology sector by 2030. It is vital that these investments in innovation, research and development are protected.

At present, there are approximately 5,000 tech companies in Saskatchewan operating primarily in Saskatoon and Regina. The province's vibrant academic sector, centred around the University of Saskatchewan, has positioned the province as a world leader in life sciences, biotechnology, biomass research and development. The province is home to VIDO-Intervac, a world-class research facility which gained renown across Canada during the pandemic as a result of its vaccine research and role as Canada's Centre for Pandemic Research. Other leading research centres located in Saskatchewan include the Global Institute for Food Security, the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre, and the Canadian Light Source (CLS). The CLS houses Canada's only synchrotron light source, drawing

scientists from around the world to conduct research in areas such as nanotechnology, environmental technologies, and pharmaceuticals. The Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) is also an important fixture in Canada's research ecosystem and the second largest research and technology organization in the country. The SRC is conducting leading research, including in important areas like strategic metals and rare earths, carbon capture, small modular reactors, and advanced mining.

Drawing on a strong life sciences and research cluster and strong investments in innovation, the key sectors driving Saskatchewan's economy include agriculture and agri-value, energy, biotechnology and biomass, forestry development, manufacturing, mineral exploration and processing, and oil and gas. The province is also diversifying into the renewable energy sector, and encouraging private investments and private-public collaboration projects along all areas of the clean energy supply chain. Unfortunately, several of these sectors have been identified by CSIS and its partners as being of significant interest to hostile foreign actors. Sectors of the knowledge economy are particularly vulnerable to interference by hostile foreign actors, given that creativity and innovation thrive best in open and collaborative environments.

As difficult as it is to precisely measure, this damage to our collective prosperity is very real. As a result, it is important that Canadians are better-informed about the threat so that they can continue to innovate, collaborate, partner and prosper with a clear understanding of the risks and the knowledge they need to protect themselves. CSIS is engaging with stakeholders in targeted sectors to increase awareness of the current threat context in Canada and in your province. This information is provided to support those in industry, academia, government, and non-governmental organizations in taking the necessary actions to protect their information, the fruits of their research and intellectual property, and their investments. The government, business, and academic communities have a shared interest in increasing awareness of state-sponsored espionage targeting Canada to mitigate the potential negative impact on our economic growth and ability to innovate. We want to work with you to protect your organization's assets, reputation and people.

### / WHICH SECTORS ARE TARGETED?

- Technology
- Biopharmaceuticals
- Health
- Transportation (Aerospace, Rail, Green Vehicles, Maritime Equipment, Supply Chain)
- Academia
- Energy
- Manufacturing

### / WHAT IS TARGETED?

- Advanced research and equipment in STEM fields
- Intellectual property
- Critical infrastructure assets
- Personally identifiable information (e.g. financial or health information)
- Government information
- Communications capabilities

More specific examples could include: designs; test results; manufacturing or marketing plans; proprietary formulas or processes; employee information; vendor and supply information; software; investment data; corporate strategies; access protocols; and patent or funding applications.

### / WHAT METHODS ARE USED?

- Cyber Espionage
- Human Espionage
- Theft and Illicit Transfer of Technology & Know-How
- Acquisition and Exploitation of Sensitive Canadian Data
- Foreign Access and Control over Critical Infrastructure
- Insider Threats
- Hostile Foreign Investment
- Reverse Engineering
- Sabotage and Disruption
- Exploitative Licensing Agreements
- Elicitation

Please note this list is not exhaustive.

### / HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

- Identify your most valuable information and protect it – don't share unless essential
- Enhance and regularly test or audit your cybersecurity policies and practices
- Do your due diligence
- Vet your vendors, funders, partners, employees and visitors
- Promote a security-conscious culture
- Take a risk-management approach
- Employ strong physical security protocols
- Ensure agreements, such as contracts or partnership agreements, are equitable and reciprocal, and that conflict resolution provisions are enforceable
- Protect your assets
- Beware of unknown solicitations
- Contact authorities if you have concerns

### / WHAT IS HOSTILE FOREIGN INVESTMENT?

While the vast majority of the foreign investment in Canada is carried out in an open and transparent manner, a number of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and private firms with close ties to a foreign government and / or intelligence services can pursue corporate acquisition bids in Canada or other economic activities. Corporate acquisitions by these entities pose potential risks related to vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure, control over strategic sectors, espionage and foreign influenced activities, and illegal transfer of technology and expertise. The involvement of SOEs or state-linked enterprises in these investments may be covert or concealed.

### / WHAT ARE INSIDER THREATS?

Threat actors can use trusted insiders (employees, contractors, suppliers, partners, etc.) to gain access to your organization's most valuable information. You can also hear these individuals referred to as "non-traditional collectors". These insiders can also be coerced, manipulated, compelled or incentivized to provide information or access. Behaviours that could indicate a possible insider threat risk include: irregular hours; attempted computer intrusions; showing unusual interest in information outside the scope of the individual's responsibilities; concealment of foreign affiliations or contacts; and unexplained absences or affluence. You know your organization best. Be alert to unusual or suspicious activities and behaviours.

### / WHAT IS CYBER-ESPIONAGE?

Threat actors can use cyber means such as phishing attacks or installation of malware to clandestinely obtain confidential information or steal intellectual property.

### / WHAT IS ELICITATION?

A threat actor may try to elicit information by using flattery, indicating interest, asking leading questions, claiming a mutual interest or feigning ignorance. These techniques may be employed in both professional and personal settings.



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