



National Security
and Intelligence
Review Agency

Office de surveillance des
activités en matière de sécurité
nationale et de renseignement

March 12, 2025 //

Introduction to NSIRA



NSIRA Role and Impact

MISSION

Established in 2019 to serve as the trusted eyes and ears of Canadians – through independent, expert review and investigation of the Government of Canada’s national security and intelligence activities.

PUBLIC TRUST and ACCOUNTABILITY

By reviewing national security measures and making findings and recommendations on whether activities are reasonable, necessary and comply with the law, we contribute to building and maintaining public trust.

INDEPENDENCE

As an independent agency which reports to Parliament through the Prime Minister or appropriate Minister, NSIRA determines what to review, our procedures, and what information we require in order to conduct our reviews.

TRANSPARENCY

Our work sheds light on national security accountability and contribute to the public conversation.

NSIRA structure

MEMBERS

Appointed for a five-year term, the Members oversee reviews, make key decisions, and adjudicate complaints as part of the quasi-judicial process.

SECRETARIAT

Led by an Executive Director, the Secretariat is composed of experts in national security, law, policy, privacy, and technology. The Secretariat supports the Members in fulfilling NSIRA's mandate.

NSIRA Mandate

INDEPENDENT REVIEWS

We assess compliance, reasonableness, necessity, and efficacy, applying additional criteria when necessary, and issue non-binding recommendations on the activities and their broader context.

INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS

We investigate national security-related complaints with consistency, fairness, and timeliness, addressing complaints about CSIS, CSE, denial or revocation of security clearances, and immigration referrals or referrals from the CRCC and CHRA.

NSIRA in numbers



Triage and Planning of Review Topics

NSIRA's review considerations Matrix

- **14 core considerations**

1. Referrals
2. Compliance History
3. High-risk Activities
4. Follow-up on a past finding or recommendation
5. Changes in legal landscape
6. Fulfilling commitments
7. Follow-up on issues identified
8. Horizontal themes
9. New and Novel
10. Current/emerging activities or issues
11. Links to previous reviews
12. Concerns from another organization or the public
13. Working with others
14. Diversity

- **5 technology considerations**

1. Dual-Use
2. New and Novel
3. Big Data,
4. AI and Algorithms,
5. Bycatch

NSIRA's Reporting

- NSIRA may submit to the appropriate minister a report on any matter subject to review
- An unclassified report on all NSIRA activities must be submitted to the Prime Minister for tabling in Parliament each calendar year.
- An unclassified report to the Minister of Public Safety, to be tabled in Parliament, on the disclosure of information under the *Security of Canada Information Disclosure Act*.
- A report concerning CSIS activities to the Minister of Public Safety and a report concerning CSE activities to the Minister of National Defence.
- If NSIRA is of the opinion that it is in the public interest to do so, NSIRA may at any time submit a Special Report on any matter relevant to its mandate to the appropriate Minister, to be tabled in Parliament.
- If NSIRA is of the opinion that a department's activities are not in compliance with the law, a compliance report is submitted to the appropriate Minister, who must send a copy to the Attorney General.
- NSIRA publishes redacted copies of reports to its website.