THE PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE INTELLIGENCE ANALYST COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: MISSION, VISION, ROLE, AND PRIORITIES

Date: November 17, 2023

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KEY EVENTS

On November 17, 2023, Dr. Hugh Henry presented *The Privy Council Office Intelligence Analyst Community of Practice: Mission, Vision, Role and Priorities* for this year's West Coast Security Conference. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer period with questions from the audience and CASIS Vancouver executives. The key points discussed were the composition and goals of the Intelligence Analyst Community of Practice (IACOP); the four pillars of IACOP: training and tradecraft, excellence, human resources and career development, and equity, diversity and inclusion; and the next steps of IACOP to address these pillars through the development and implementation of programs and initiatives.

NATURE OF DISCUSSION

Dr. Henry presented an overview of how IACOP is aiding in the organization, coordination and information accessibility of the Canadian security and intelligence community. Over the past twenty years, the security and intelligence community within Canada has expanded, increasing the need for greater coordination, communication and organization, without which the community cannot operate at its most efficient and effective level. The IACOP is developing and implementing programs and initiatives focused on four main areas of priority to help the intelligence community function most effectively.

BACKGROUND

Presentation

Dr. Henry defined a community of practice as a group of specialists who share the same function, work, purpose and professional interests, and the need for such a community in the Canadian intelligence and security sphere has been in discussion for the past twenty years. Following the events of 9/11, the intelligence community expanded immensely, increasing the need for coordination and analysis among the different agencies. As such, the IACOP is a new secretariat that operates within the Privy Council Office (PCO) under the National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister branch.

Dr. Henry explained that the three pillars of action of the IACOP are training and tradecraft, excellence, and human resources and career development, and stated that the fourth pillar of equity, diversity, and inclusion is incorporated as a priority into all of these pillars. The training and tradecraft pillar addresses the need for more effective, advanced and accessible training and standards and guidelines for actors within the Canadian intelligence and security community. The second pillar of excellence states the need for the highest quality of tradecraft, learning networks, and new tools, such as those used for OSINT collection and analysis. Dr. Henry discussed how the IACOP seeks to increase both organizational cooperation and organization analysis networking. The career development pillar covers all IACOP actions focusing on recruiting, retention, performance management, and mobility. The final pillar of equity, diversity and inclusion is included within all of the IACOP initiatives, and Dr. Henry pointed to the workshop on Gender Based Analysis (GBA+) for intelligence analysts, to educate them on how to incorporate the tools into their work, as an example of this.

Dr. Henry addressed the next steps of the IACOP and stated that they have begun engaging the four pillars of action through the creation and implementation of programs and initiatives, such as the Intelligence Analyst Competency Dictionary which lays out the criteria and competencies that can be used in the hiring and training process, in addition to performance management. IACOP is working to identify common analytical standards, guidelines, and practices to address issues such as probabilistic language and analytical uncertainty. The creation of the Security Intelligence Development Program aims to enhance analyst retention and mobility by providing high performers within an agency to participate in a secondment at another agency within the community. Dr. Henry discussed the planned Intelligence Analyst Career Progression Framework and promoting training opportunities, such as the creation of a virtual leadership series consisting of panel discussions of experts and practitioners to aid in junior management training, in addition to developing working groups to share strategies and methodologies regarding intelligence tradecraft and high-profile themes such as emerging technologies and OSINT.

Dr. Henry stated that the IACOP is increasing its focus on outreach by sending out a monthly *Bulletin*, establishing a web presence and organizing special events, the goal of which is to break down silos and foster ability for analysts and managers to connect. Dr. Henry explained that the IACOP is developing a website, available only to those internal to the government, where initiatives are being posted to provide information to all individuals within the Canadian government.

Question and Answer

Does the Intelligence Analyst Community of Practice have any plans to do academic outreach and cooperation with academia?

The IACOP does have plans to cooperate and work with academia, and the IACOP has already begun to conduct outreach. The IACOP has started making connections within the community of academia and is looking to lay down terms of reference and criteria requirements for potential cooperation participants such as academic, think tank organizations and private industry. The IACOP would like to develop a knowledge hub and network of government, academic and private industry experts. Topics would include intelligence analysis professionalization and tradecraft, and priority themes such as Artificial Intelligence, OSINT and emerging disruptive technologies, economic security and foreign interference.

Are there any plans to generate a critical mass of Arctic intelligence analysts, capable of developing strategic assessments relating to the entire Arctic region? Are northerners/Inuit engaged?

Dr. Henry stated that he is unaware of any such initiatives however, Arctic security is an increasing priority for the Canadian government and the IACOP will suggest it alongside the main themes that IACOP has identified. By suggesting it alongside the main themes the issue may be looked at by the community of practice in addition to the greater intelligence community. (Note: The *Canadian Intelligence Conference* on 30 April 2024 will focus on Arctic security).

Since 9/11 there's been an increase in the number of analysts in the intelligence community. How do you avoid issues of duplication of reports, classification and the concept of open government? Additionally do priorities of the Intelligence Analyst Community of Practice come from the current government and what happens when a new government comes into play?

One goal of the IACOP is to identify who is doing what type of analysis and the number of analysts conducting the analysis which presents a difficult task as it is up to the discretion of the intelligence agencies to disclose this information. The analyst classification issue is outside the mandate of the IACOP. Dr. Henry stated that the priorities of the IACOP do stem from the current government however they take a broad approach to identify the issues that can be realistically met in the next fiscal year and that will be continued no matter what government is in place.

KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- The Canadian security and intelligence community has expanded immensely over the past twenty years requiring an increased need for more central coordination and analysis among the different agencies.
- A community of practice is a group of specialists composed of people who share the same function, work, purpose and professional interests. The goal of the IACOP is to help increase the coordination and organization between all agencies within the Canadian security and intelligence community.
- The IACOP has four main pillars of action: training and tradecraft, excellence, and human resources and career development. The fourth pillar of equity, diversity and inclusion is incorporated as a priority into all the initiatives within the other three pillars.
- The IACOP has begun addressing the four pillars of action through the creation and implementation of programs, initiatives, working groups and communication products.