

RE: Community Advisory

Please be advised that agents from the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) have been contacting individual members of the Muslim community recently to request “meetings” with them.

Their ‘targets’ are typically Muslim men, between the ages of 18-60, who are either active in the Muslim community, or known to attend congregational prayers regularly at mosques.

In their calls, they may not always identify themselves as being from CSIS, but that they are calling from the “Government of Canada.”

Once they make a connection, they will request a face-to-face meeting with you at a coffee shop or other public place. Some of their “baiting” points may include one or more of the following:

- “Your name came up and we would like to meet with you.”
- “You haven’t done anything wrong and are not suspected of anything, but we just want to talk to you.”
- “We want to talk to you about someone you may know.”
- “You have an online connection with someone who is of interest to us.”
- “We want to show you some photos of people you may know and we want to get your thoughts about them.” (Note: The people they inquire about and show pictures of may just be ordinary members of the community who have done nothing wrong and are not suspected of anything, but they are still compiling information on them for their files.)

The odd time, they may even mention specific names of people, whom you may or may not have even heard of. Their key objective is to get you to meet with them privately for a conversation.

While being contacted by CSIS can be unnerving, it is important to know that you are NOT obligated to meet with them. They are an intelligence gathering organization, and not a law enforcement agency.

If, however, you do choose to meet with them, it is not advisable to do so without a lawyer present — even if you feel you “have nothing to hide.” They will object to this and try to talk you out of it, but it is your right as a Canadian to be represented by legal counsel in any meetings with them.

For more information on your rights as a Canadian, or if you have been contacted and would like to seek advice, please contact one of the local civil rights groups — such as the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) or the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA). They are both valuable resources available to the Muslim community (free of charge) in this regard.