



Scenario: A Private Affair?

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

“Hey Simon, what’s up?” says Sergeant (Sgt) David Yorke as he sits down for his regular morning coffee with his friend Sgt Simon Boudreau. “Why so distracted? Cheer up, buddy! We’ve only got a few more weeks until we leave this operation and head home.”

“Well Dave, something’s come up and it’s kind of complicated,” said Sgt Boudreau. “The day before yesterday I went to work early to finish up some files. I sat down at my workstation, and I hear two people nearby kissing, then talking in whispers. Guess what? It was my supervisor, Captain (Capt) Sarah Roberts, and Warrant Officer (WO) Richard Laplante from our hockey team. They obviously didn’t see or hear me, but I overheard everything they said... and everything they did, if you know what I mean.”

“Well, what were they saying?” asks Sgt Yorke.

“Well first, Laplante says they should have waited until they got home in a few weeks before starting anything,” says Sgt Boudreau, leaning in towards friend. “You know he got his divorce just before starting this tour. Then the captain says her feelings for him are really strong, and things are going to get very complicated when they get back to Edmonton. I guess she’s married to some major on base. Then, Laplante says something about being careful to make sure nobody finds out about the two of them.”

“Yeah, well I think it’s a little late for that,” says Sgt Yorke. “A few people have already commented to me about the way those two smile and stare at each other.”

“You know, it just doesn’t seem fair,” says Sgt Boudreau. “I mean, c’mon, I know married couples here who can’t be together because the policy says no. Already married couples! Even so, I’m not sure what to do about this one. It’s tricky.”

Categories

Principles:	Serve Canada before Self, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Loyalty, Integrity, Courage, Stewardship
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity
Misconduct Types:	General Misconduct
GBA Plus Themes:	Not Specific
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principles of “Serve Canada before Self” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in this operational setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity, loyalty, courage, stewardship, and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) ethos professional expectation of duty in this operational scenario.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the CAF ethos?
 - Open group discussion
 - Discuss the ethical principles of “Serve Canada before Self” and “Obey and support lawful authority” in this setting.
 - Discuss the ethical values of integrity, stewardship, loyalty, and courage, as well as the CAF ethos professional expectation of duty in this scenario.
3. Would this situation be any different, if the Sgt caught the two at home in Canada eating at a restaurant?
 - A person’s personal life is their own business, no matter how distasteful it may be to others. It remains in the private sphere and is not our concern in our public roles. The requirement to respect people’s privacy extends even to activities that may cause marital problems or family breakups. If Sgt Boudreau had witnessed Capt Roberts and WO Laplante being affectionate in a restaurant in Canada, it likely would not be necessary or even appropriate for him to share this information with the chain of command. Any personal close relationship within a same unit should be disclosed in order to respect the [DAOD 5019-1, Personal Relationships and Fraternization](#).
 - This situation changes with deployment to a theatre of military operations. There are very different rules for behaviour in which our private and public lives overlap. Serve Canada before self—the second principle of the Statement of Defence Ethics—means that CAF members have to put aside private interests for the sake of service to Canada. This is never truer than when CAF members are deployed on operations.
4. What action(s) should the three members take in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion
 - Option 1: If Sgt Boudreau cannot convince himself to act based on ethical or practical grounds, Sgt Boudreau may need to remind himself of his simple duty, which is to: “...report to the proper authority any infringement of the pertinent statutes, regulations, rules, orders and instructions governing the conduct of any person subject to the Code of Service Discipline.” (QR&O 5.01e)
 - Option 2: Ignore the situation. If Sgt Boudreau decides not to report the incident to senior authority and if he adopts a ‘wait and see’ attitude, he may be helping the situation get out of control and then must live with the consequences.

*Note to facilitators: Please review [DAOD 5019-1, Personal Relationships and Fraternization](#) and discuss as it applies to CAF members in relation to this scenario.