



Scenario: Black History Month

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario contains explicit language related to anti-Black racism, 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 \(EAP\)](#).

Sgt Chan has been tasked to help organize the base Black History Month Event, which is a cultural event to celebrate and honour the many contributions that Black Canadians have made throughout Canada's history. It is also meant to be an opportunity for Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and Department of National Defence (DND) employees on the base to learn more about the important achievements that Black Defence Team members have made, both within the military and the public service.

Cpl Smith, who is a white person, is assigned to the team and expresses their reluctance to participate in the event, saying that they don't see the point of celebrating something that has nothing to do with them. "Why isn't there a day to celebrate white people?" they ask sarcastically to their friend, Cpl Theriault. They also make some racist remarks about Black people, implying that they are undeserving of recognition. Sgt Chan is shocked by what they are overhearing and is unsure of what to do.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of All Persons, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Excellence, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Hateful Conduct, Discrimination
GBA Plus Themes:	Race/Ethnicity
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principles of Respect the dignity of all persons and Obey and support lawful authority in this scenario.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity, excellence, and courage in this scenario.
- Discuss hateful conduct and racial discrimination policies.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the ethical dilemma in this scenario?
 - Open group discussion.
 - The ethical dilemma in this scenario is how to deal with Cpl Smith's attitude and words, which are discriminatory towards the Black Defence Team members and the purpose of the event.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the CAF ethos?
 - Open group discussion.
 - Respect the Dignity of All Persons & Obey and Support Lawful Authority: CAF members are subject to the Code of Service Discipline and Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. QR&O sub para. 19.14(2)(a): "No officer or non-commissioned member shall do or say anything that if seen or heard by any member of the public, might reflect discredit on the Canadian Forces or on any of its members..." As the CAF is avowedly an institution which supports respecting the dignity of all persons, and according to human rights laws, expression of views by a member at odds with the institutional ideals will come into conflict with duties to the CAF. Please consider discussing the concept of the principle of Respect the dignity of all persons in a broad view with regards the importance of any visible minority awareness activities.
 - Courage: Sgt Chan will need to be courageous in dealing with what they have overheard.
3. Does Cpl Smith's words constitute hateful conduct?
 - Hateful Conduct definition: An act or conduct, including the display or communication of words, symbols or images, by a CAF member, that they knew or ought reasonably to have known would constitute, encourage, justify or promote violence or hatred against a person or persons of an identifiable group.
 - What can be done to condone, educate, sensitize people that speak at loud disrespectful thinking, biases and behaviours?
4. What courses of action could Sgt Chan take in this scenario? Which is the most appropriate option? Why?
 - Option 1: Act. Sgt Chan could take the opportunity to have a one-on-one discussion to allow the Cpl to express their perspective - to hear what underlying beliefs and bias led to the comments. The Sgt can then provide reasoning and how it relates to the tasking. Sgt Chan should also discuss expectations and explore how they can manage behaviour. The CF Mil Pers Instruction on Hateful Conduct obliges all CAF members to report hate incidents, which include overheard comments.
 - Option 2: Ignore the comments. Everyone has the right to their own private beliefs and Sgt Chan does not want to strain the relationship with Cpl Smith.
 - Note to facilitator: this is NOT an option people can choose. This is hateful and racist behaviour and will not be tolerated at any level within the Defence Team.
 - Option 3: Seek advice. Sgt Chan should try to resolve this problem at the lowest level, when possible. There may be others on the committee with them who could discuss these concerns and explore how best to address them. The Ethics Officer could also support, validating their planned way ahead. This option is not in line with regards reporting of any hateful conduct.

Note*: For CAF members, it can also be appropriate in some situations to have such events documented on a members' PACE feedback note. If the member is not amenable to change, admin and/or disciplinary actions may be required.

Note to facilitators: Please review [DAOD 5019-0, Conduct and Performance Deficiencies](#) and [CF Mil Pers Instruction 01/20](#) (DWAN link) in preparation for this scenario.