



Scenario: It's Only a Hotdog

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 \(EAP\)](#).

Colonel (Col) Stephane Barbeau, the Wing Commander (Comd) of a very active Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Wing Stan Pritchard is an executive at a large company that provides maintenance services to several Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) air fleets.

Col Barbeau and Mr Pritchard met at a chamber of commerce luncheon last year when Stan gave a presentation on the local and regional benefits of buying services from Canadian companies.

Mr Pritchard: "Congratulations on your promotion and appointment as Wing Commander."

Col Barbeau: "Great to see you too, Stan. How's business going these days?"

Mr Pritchard: "We got a lot of visibility at the airshow last fall," replies Stan. "Speaking of which, if you've got a minute, let me buy you a coffee so we can discuss the next airshow."

Col Barbeau: "I would love a coffee, so let's talk!"

Mr Pritchard: "Well Stéphane, you have several thousand people working and living at your base and I noticed that you hold a family day barbeque every June. I've been thinking about how we could contribute to that event. We'd love to provide the hotdogs and hamburgers to the crowd, along with a small display highlighting the work we do for the RCAF. We've been partners for many years! It gives us a chance to build a stronger relationship with those who serve our country. There will be absolutely no cost to the Crown. What do you think?"

Col Barbeau: "That's a very generous offer, Stan. The folks at the wing always appreciate the special day for the family and the public recognition. We like to do as much as possible for the wing family day. I will need to check on protocol here so let me get back to you. Nice to see you again."

The following week, Col Barbeau is reviewing the operation order for the wing family day and remembers his conversation with Mr Pritchard and his offer of free hotdogs and burgers at the upcoming event. It certainly seems like a win-win situation: free food for his members and their families at no cost to the taxpayer. However, he feels a little uneasy about the offer, so decides to consult the Wing Administration Officer (WAdminO). The WAdminO advises the Wing has accepted donations like this from local companies in the past for events, noting it is really a great way to foster our relationship with the local community.

Although Col Barbeau is reassured, he still feels uneasy. Although he has not personally had much experience with contracting services between the CAF and private companies, he wonders if, as Wing Commander, Stan will expect special treatment or something else in return for the donation.

Categories

Principles:	Serve Canada before Self, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Stewardship
Cultural Themes:	Service
Misconduct Types:	Conflict of Interest
GBA Plus Themes:	Not Specific
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how a Conflict of Interest (COI) can arise with the acceptance of donations to the CAF. Policy is contained in [DAOD 7021-4, Solicitations, Sponsorships and Donations - Canada.ca](#)
- Understand how a Conflict of Interest (COI) can arise with the acceptance of gift. Policy contained: [DAOD 7021-3, Acceptance of Gifts, Hospitality and Other Benefits - Canada.ca](#)
- Recognise that the appearance of bias and favouritism can be damaging to the reputation of the Department of National Defence (DND)/Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) as being an organization with high ethical standards of conduct.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the problem in this scenario?
 - Is there an issue with the acceptance of the free coffee by the WComd given they are about to talk business?
 - Is there an issue with the acceptance of such a donation from a defence contractor to the CAF? Does policy allow for this and if so under what conditions?
 - Is there an issue with the request for an advertising display at the airshow? Would a reasonable person seeing this display think that the CAF is endorsing the business?
2. What considerations are at play with respect to Defence Ethics and the CAF ethos?
 - Discuss the values of integrity, and stewardship in relation this scenario. In asking questions is the WComd upholding these values in a meaningful way?
 - Discuss how one might avoid or prevent situations that could give rise to personal or organizational conflicts of interests.
3. What action should the Wing Commander take in this situation?
 - If the WComd decides it is OK to proceed with the donation, does he need higher level approval?
 - As the Wing Commander should he accept the terms offered and seek approval for the donation to be made?
 - Would the offer be more acceptable if the request for the promotional display was removed from the offer?
 - Where could the WComd get expert advice on any matter related to COI?

Notes from the COI Analyst to the Facilitator:

Regarding the coffee: Policy allows for an offer of hospitality, including a coffee, to be accepted if certain conditions are met. Two key considerations are the frequency and the value of the hospitality/gift. However, the context in which any such acceptance of a gift occurs must also be a consideration. Policy can't tell you how to respond to every scenario, but judgment should be used when accepting a gift or hospitality, even one of minimum value. In this case, where they are having coffee might be a consideration (public, private, business location, fancy café). In this situation it seems clear the coffee offer would be fine to accept as it meets the minimal value requirement, obviously they meet infrequently and there is public interest in them discussing the airshow.

The following are examples of items of a minimal value that may be accepted by a DND employee or a CAF member without written approval:

- A promotional item or incidental gift of minimal value, such as a mug, pen, T-shirt, ball cap or other general article;
- An occasional dinner or lunch at the expense of a contractor or foreign representative to discuss business or defence affairs, as long as the associated costs are reasonable;

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- An invitation to a corporate or association reception at the expense of the event organizer, if the hospitality provided is modest, such as a happy hour, and a representational cross-section of the private sector and of the GC is invited; and
 - An invitation to a conference or professional development activity if there is a mutual benefit that respects the criteria in paragraph 5.2, particularly as to value, frequency and the business context; or an invitation to a government-sanctioned event, such as the Vimy Award, if there is a significant benefit to the GC, the DND or the CAF.

Regarding the request for a promotional display at the airshow: The promotional display request by the executive would invoke general prohibition from the DND/CAF being seen as advertising and/or endorsing a product or service. However, there are ways to recognize the contributions of the company to the event without breaching those policy elements. In this case it would be fine to recognize the sponsorship in relevant communication materials, but the display would be too much like advertising or endorsement so would have to be excluded in any arrangement.

- The DND or the CAF, or a DND employee or CAF member acting on behalf of the DND or the CAF, must not accept a sponsorship from a non-defence agency in exchange for advertising the goods or services of the sponsor. Displaying the products or services of the sponsor at a DND or a CAF event constitutes advertising. Displaying a sponsor's name or logo in communication materials, without promotional taglines, does not constitute advertising.
- A sponsorship or donation for a DND or a CAF event or initiative must be applied for the intended purpose only. Unused resources must be returned to the sponsor or donor or, if this is not possible, disposed of in a manner consistent with applicable financial legislation.
- If a non-defence agency with which the DND or the CAF has past, present or potential official dealings offers a benefit to DND or the CAF, such as funding for an event (which constitutes a sponsorship) or a donation of goods or services, DND employees and CAF members must consider if a COI or potential for adverse public perception exists, and obtain the prior written consent of the DM or the CDS, or their delegates, as applicable. A request for written consent must be staffed through the chain of command of the relevant L1 advisor.