



Scenario: Should I Take Action?

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 \(EAP\)](#).

You work at Base Transportation and, as a secondary duty, you act as the base safety supervisor. A good friend and colleague, the Base Orderly Room (BOR) supervisor, has invited you to provide a safety briefing at his weekly staff meeting.

During the meeting, you are surprised to hear your friend “bashing” the recent short-leave policy recommended by the Administrative Officer (Admin O) and endorsed by the Base Commander (B Comd). Furthermore, he publicly expressed the views that were discussed by others at his mess. As the discussion continues, several staff members make derogatory comments about both the policy and the Admin O. You find your friend’s comments disturbing, let alone his laissez-faire attitude towards his subordinates’ comments, which are clearly out of line. Although the short-leave policy has been a hot topic of discussion on the base, what you find disconcerting is your friend’s open disloyalty to his chain of command and his obvious disrespect for the Admin O.

Categories

Principles:	Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Loyalty, Courage, Excellence
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership, Teamwork
Misconduct Types:	Hateful Conduct
GBA Plus Themes:	Not Specific
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligation of “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in the workplace.
- Discuss the ethical values of loyalty, integrity, and courage, as well as duty, a professional expectation in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) ethos, in the workplace.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
 - Allow open discussion from the group.
 - Ethical concerns: Your friend is acting inappropriately. His conduct is very disloyal, disrespectful, and negatively influences the behaviour of his staff.
 - Personal factors: Your friendship with the BOR supervisor makes your decision to intervene very difficult.
 - Environmental factors: The BOR supervisor should be an example for the staff. By bashing policies and being disloyal towards superiors, he encourages his subordinates to do the same. This creates a dysfunctional work environment.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - Your loyalty to your colleague and friend and your professional integrity to your superior. The BOR supervisor is being disloyal by commenting openly on a policy endorsed by a legitimate authority.
 - You are in a very awkward position. You heard the comments, and you know that your friend's and the staff's behaviour is totally unacceptable. You must find the courage to address the situation, even though this might damage your friendship.
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Address the situation in private. The BOR supervisor might take offence.
 - Option 2: Report the incident to your friend's supervisor. It might create tension between you and the BOR supervisor. Some type of administrative action might be taken.
 - Option 3: Look the other way and do not address the situation. The behaviour will most likely continue.
 - Option 4: Speak to your mess colleagues about the indiscrete comments. Other mess members will likely ostracize your friend and his credibility will suffer.