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BEHAVIOURAL RESEARCH STUDY SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT: National Defence

DIVISION: Personnel Policy Task Force (DGPPTF)

1. STUDY TITLE

Canadian Forces External Survey on Homosexual Issues

2. BACKGROUND

There are several court challenges against the present Canadian Forces (CF) policy of neither enrolling nor retaining practising homosexuals. Although trial dates have not yet been scheduled, discovery for the lead cases has been completed and it is anticipated that court proceedings will commence in May or June 1991. A 1986 survey of Canadian attitudes toward military service for minorities suggested that allowing homosexuals to enrol and serve in the CF would lower public confidence in the CF as an effective force and would have a negative effect on recruiting. Department of Justice counsel assigned to the present court cases have requested that a more detailed survey be conducted.

3. RESEARCH PURPOSE

The research purpose is to contribute to the evidentiary foundation of the CF policy on sexual orientation. If appropriate, the survey results will be introduced and interpreted in federal court by an expert witness. If the survey results are not supportive of the impugned policy, that will be a factor in determining whether or not to proceed with the policy defence.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research objective is to determine the potential consequences for CF recruiting if the present CF policy concerning the enrolment and retention of homosexuals is changed.

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5. COLLECTION METHODS

The study will consist of a telephone survey of an adult sample (15 questions) and a youth sample (19 questions). Each sample will consist of approximately 500 individuals (exact sample size to be determined).

6. TARGET POPULATIONS

Two populations will be sampled: an adult sample of individuals age 26 or above from the general Canadian population and a youth sample age 17 to 25 inclusive from the general Canadian population.

7. DATE

The survey results are required by 1 February 1991. It is proposed to let a contract for survey administration by approximately 1 December 1990.

8. COLLECTION AGENT

Survey administration will be contracted. A request for proposal will be issued, proposals will be evaluated, and a contractor selected.

9. BUDGET

Funding in the amount of up to \$75K has been allocated to the collection activity.

10. DISTRIBUTION/RELEASE PLANS

The study results will initially be protected from access by solicitor/client privilege. The results may be released to plaintiffs' counsel approximately one month before trial and could become accessible at that time. If the survey results are introduced during the trial, they will be in the public domain from that time. Otherwise, they will be released upon trial completion. The trial date has not yet been established but is unlikely to be before May 1991.

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11. OTHER RESEARCH

Responses to three questions concerning homosexuals in the military formed part of a report entitled "Canadian Attitudes Towards Military Service for Minorities" prepared by Environics Research Group Limited in July 1986.

It is intended to conduct a separate study of CF members to determine attitudes, the basis for those attitudes, and the potential behavioural consequences of a policy change.

12. CONSULTATIONS

Informal consultations were undertaken with the office of the Coordinator, Public Opinion Research in June 1990. The questionnaire has been improved and the age bracket of the youth sample has been modified (from 15-25 to 17-25).

13. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

George L. Logan, 995-0014.

14. INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATOR

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