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MEMORANDUM

1745-42-7 (DLA)

3/ May 90

DARTS


CF POLICY ON SEXUAL  
ORIENTATION - DLA RESPONSE

Refs: A. 1745-42-7 (DARTS) 23 May 90  
B. 1745-42-7 (DCharter) 14 May 90

1. Enclosed, as requested at refs, is DLA's response on the relevance of sexual orientation to the aviation environment.
2. The gist of the response is that the presence of homosexuals in aviation units would adversely affect the ability of units in 10 TAG to carry out their tasks. The rationale for this conclusion is based on ingrained attitudes that cannot be arbitrarily changed. There would be a level of discomfort among heterosexuals that would not be eased by separate accommodations and ablution facilities or education programmes designed to remove what might be considered homophobia among heterosexuals.
3. The discomfort is not based on ignorance; it is based on a clear-cut aversion to a lifestyle that is incompatible with that of most heterosexuals. Even those open-minded heterosexuals, who are prepared to tolerate homosexuals as long as that lifestyle is not forced upon them, will not have that option if they are required to share common quarters and social facilities, or to operate in isolated locations, with homosexuals.

Attachment:

Annex A

  
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ANNEX A  
TO 1745-42-7 (DLA)  
DATED 3/ MAY 90

CF POLICY ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION  
DLA RESPONSE

AVIATION ENVIRONMENT

1. 10 Tactical Air Group (10 TAG) has six helicopter squadrons and is responsible for providing pilots and technicians for 444 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in West Germany and for Peacekeeping Operations.
2. Routine training or tasks of short duration tend to be conducted from the squadron locations. Some missions require the crews to be away from home for several days, in which case the crews operate independently under the detachment commander or the aircraft captain.
3. For prolonged or field oriented tasks a squadron or a portion of it, complete with support elements, deploys to an off-base location. For non-tactical operations or for those situated in a built up area, the helicopters may be operated from an airport and the personnel would stay in hotels or military accommodations, often required to share rooms due to space limitations or budget restrictions. For remote or field oriented operations, the detachment or squadron normally sets up temporary accommodations close to the area of operations. The personnel usually stay in multi-personnel tents, share common ablution facilities, and socialize in a common mess or canteen. Separate quarters and ablution facilities are set-up for any female members.

TYPICAL LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Living Conditions

4. Under field or isolated conditions aviation detachments or squadrons live, work, and socialize in close quarters. Because the facilities are usually carried by the unit and set-up by unit personnel, they tend to be austere and limited. Private accommodations are impractical except for senior ranking personnel. Tentage and ablution facilities are usually set-up for concurrent use by several members of the same sex. Social cohesion is most important for the morale of the unit. In the field the mess is the catalyst for this socialization. It provides the forum for off-duty personnel to interact and relax with their comrades. A poor mess atmosphere is often a sign of poor unit morale.

.../2

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Working Conditions

5. Normally, work in a tactical helicopter is conducted by teams of various sizes. Aircraft are operated by crews of two to four people. Aircraft maintenance is carried out by maintenance teams under the supervision of a non-commissioned officer. Common work, such as setting-up or tearing-down field sites, is done by teams. Cohesion is essential in these teams to ensure that operations are conducted efficiently. Team members must have confidence in each other and they must be comfortable working together. The consequences of poor team cohesion can run the gamut from inefficiency to loss of life. A helicopter crew that is not cohesive can put itself into dangerous situations due to lack of communication or cooperation. A maintenance team that is incapable of working together properly will probably carry out poor maintenance which could result in endangering the aircrew who fly the helicopters.

EFFECT OF THE PRESENCE OF HOMOSEXUALS

6. The fundamental nature of the Canadian Forces tends to attract more people with traditional, conservative viewpoints than do most other occupations. The members of the tactical aviation community reflect that conservative bias. The introduction of declared homosexuals runs counter to their mores. The majority do not approve of the lifestyle of homosexuals and would strongly resent being forced into situations which would oblige them to work intimately with homosexuals. This apprehension would affect every facet of military life. They could not form a cohesive team with a homosexual. They would resent, indeed feel threatened by, the presence of homosexuals in their living quarters or ablution facilities. Socially, any homosexuals in a unit would probably be ostracized. Their presence at social functions would diminish the main purpose of mess life, that is, to relax and interact with ones comrades in a comfortable atmosphere.

7. The negative attitude of most members of the tactical aviation community towards homosexuals is not necessarily based on homophobia, although there is probably an element of it; it is based on an aversion to a lifestyle which is in direct conflict with their own. By definition, a

.../3

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ANNEX A  
TO 1745-42-7 (DLA)  
DATED 31 MAY 90

-3-

heterosexual does not present a threat to a homosexual. He or she is not attracted, physically or emotionally, to a homosexual. Heterosexuals are not uncomfortable sharing living and ablution facilities with members of the same sex as long as they do not perceive that their comrades may be physically or emotionally attracted to them.

8. The converse is not true. A homosexual, also by definition, is attracted, physically and emotionally, to members of the same sex. While homosexuals would be comfortable operating and living with heterosexuals of the same sex, heterosexuals would be distinctly uncomfortable with that situation.

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