

PROTECTED B

COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

SEXUAL ORIENTATION SURVEY (INTERNAL)

Aim

The aim of this document is to provide communications guidance for responding to inquiries on DND's internal sexual orientation survey.

Background

DND was heavily criticized in the media for its position vis a vis the Michelle Douglas case. The Marin Report on the SIU focused more negative attention on the treatment of homosexuals in the military. All editorials produced on homosexuals in the Forces have been unanimous in their condemnation of the CF. In Parliament the department has been consistently rebuked for its position on homosexuals.

Strategic Considerations

There is some risk that the survey will be leaked either during the administration or after its completion. If that happens, DND will be required to respond to media queries. Initially the survey results will be protected by solicitor/client privilege. In any event, the survey will be placed in the public domain at some stage.

Although scientifically based, some of the survey questions may prove controversial if made public.

Target Audiences

Media

The media favours a wide interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and sees the CF policy on homosexuals as inconsistent with the times. This becomes very apparent when reading the many editorials that have been generated on the subject.

Gay Rights Groups

Gay Activist/Human Rights Groups view the military as out of touch with the times. Any controversial questions contained in the survey will be fully exploited by these groups. The media will seek out representatives for their opinion on the survey and the nature of the questions.

Parliamentarians

Opposition MPs may capitalize on the controversy that could arise in the media should the questions be made public.

.../2

PROTECTED B

000907

PROTECTED B

-2-

Internal Audience

Previous surveys have shown a substantial majority of CF personnel to be opposed to allowing homosexuals into the Forces. While it is possible that some members may take exception to what might be seen as intrusive questions contained in the survey, a similar survey in 1986 did not give rise to any significant complaints.

Communications Objectives

To limit or counter potential criticism from target audiences.

Messages

- a. The survey on sexual orientation is part of a DND review of its policy on sexual orientation in the Canadian Forces.
- b. The questions in the surveys have been scientifically designed to determine the effects of a policy change on the operational effectiveness of the Canadian Forces.

Activities/Action

A Response to Query and Qs & As have been prepared to explain the purpose of the survey.

A clipsheet article should be prepared to explain the purpose of the internal survey to CF Personnel, should it become an issue.

PROTECTED B

000908