FACT SHEET - #14

SUBJECT: Improper Superior/Subordinate Relationships

1. PURPOSE. To inform commanders about improper superior/ subordinate relationships.

2. FACTS.

a. Army Policy. Relationships between soldiers of different rank that involve or give the appearance of partiality, preferential treatment, or the improper use of rank or position for personal gain are prejudicial to good order, discipline, and high unit morale. It is Army policy that such relationships will be avoided. Commanders and supervisors will counsel those involved or take other action, as appropriate (AR 600-20, para 4-14, 15 Jul 99 version).

b. Definition of senior/subordinate relationship:

(1) Direct command or supervisory authority.

(2) Capability to influence personnel or disciplinary actions, assignments, or other benefits or privileges.

c. Specific prohibitions:

(1) No partiality or preferential treatment. If there is actual favoritism, adverse action is appropriate. For potential or appearance of favoritism, the commander should initially counsel the superior.

(2) No improper use of rank.

(3) No relationships that have an actual or clearly predictable adverse impact on discipline, authority or morale.

(4) Relationships between permanent party personnel and IET soldiers not required for training purposes are prohibited (AR 600-20, para 4-15a).

(5) Relationships between recruiters and recruit personnel not required for training purposes are prohibited (AR 600-20, para 4-15b).

(6) No dating, living together, or intimate sexual relationships between officers and enlisted personnel (AR 600-20, para. 4-14c).

(7) No gambling between officers and enlisted personnel (AR 600-20 para.4-14c3).

(8) No ongoing business relationships between officers and enlisted personnel. This prohibition does not apply to landlord/tenant relationships or to one time transactions such as the sale of an automobile or a house, but does apply to borrowing or lending money, commercial solicitation, and any other on-going financial or business relationship (AR 600-29 para 4.14c1).d. The Bottom Line. Commanders' actions should not result in an unfavorable OER/NCOER, relief from command, or other significant adverse action unless the above prohibitions can be proved by a preponderance of the evidence. The adverse action must address the actual or clearly predictable results of the relationship, and not merely the relationship itself.

3. POC is the Administrative Law Division at 4-7414/4668.

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