

## Cyber Management Ethics

### Proficiency Code: B

To obtain cyberspace superiority, there must be clearly defined rules of engagement. As with any military operation, we must take legal considerations and international legal obligations into consideration when executing missions. In this section, we will look at the ethical aspect of cyber management.

Ethical terms:

At the basic level, every AFIN or Department of Defense Information Network Operations (DODIN) user has a familiarity with network usage—it is in the execution of his or her everyday duties. When addressing cyber management ethics consider these three terms prohibited use, authorized use, and official use. As cyber support operators and maintainers, we should be familiar with the meaning of these terms:

- **Prohibited Use**—Where use adversely reflects on the DOD; where use interferes with employee or office productivity; or where use is to conduct outside commercial activity
- **Authorized Use**—It does not interfere with the performance of official duties; it is of reasonable duration or frequency; it serves a legitimate government interest, and it does not reflect adversely on DOD.
- **Official Use**—Performance of work associated with your day-to-day responsibilities; performance of only official duties on official time.

***Unethical versus illegal*** - Ethics is the moral framework for determining what is right or wrong. It is different from issues of legality in that legal issues are those that have been determined to be punishable if broken. Therefore, doing something that is unethical usually will not land you in jail unless what you have done was also illegal. Ethics simply guide us to doing what is right rather than what is wrong. Below are some unethical situations that are not necessarily illegal.

***Personal conflict of interest*** - A situation that involves a personal, familial, or business relationship between a government employee and any person, business or entity in which the association to be legally (or otherwise) vulnerable to criticism, embarrassment, or litigation is considered a personal conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest may be real, perceived, and/or involve ethical or moral values.

They are clearly noticeable if one or both of the two factors below are present:

- They usually involve money or profit or otherwise bear on the fiduciary responsibility of another government organization to ensure no government

employees use (or are perceived to use) their government affiliations for personal financial gain, except as policy may explicitly allow.

- They usually involve one or more aspects of the government's programs, real property, personnel, or other federal or federally funded entities.

***Covered relationships*** are employee or employer relationships that can lead to the appearance of impartiality or favoritism, specifically when the relationship interferes with routine transactions or business. Here are a few examples of covered relationships:

- Persons or organizations in which you have or seek a business, contractual, or other financial relationship.
- Members of a household or relatives with whom you have a close personal relationship.
- Persons or organizations in which your spouse, parents or dependent child serves or seeks employment or other financial relationship.
- Organizations in which you served as officer, director, agent, consultant, or employee within last year; or organizations in which you are an active participant.

***Misuse of position*** occurs when a person uses his or her position for private or personal gain. You have heard stories about city officials who used their position to influence contracts for family members or accepted bribes in return for special treatment or consideration—a definite no-no from an ethics standpoint. At this point in your career, you are being shaped, molded and mentored to take on greater responsibility; this is not to be taken lightly. Misusing your position in any capacity adversely affects the good name of the Air Force and the DOD, but can undermine morale and disrupt good order and discipline. Some things to remember as you advance to higher positions and responsibilities:

- Do not use your DOD position for personal gain or for the benefit of others.
- Do not solicit other federal personnel for a personal activity while acting in official capacity.
- Avoid improper use of your official title to state or imply official endorsement or sanction of any non-federal entity, its products, services, or activities.
- Use your official title only in limited purposes, such as providing biographical information.

***Non-public information*** - It is the information age, where access to practically everything is available at the tap of a screen or keyboard. However, just because the information is out there does not mean that it should be made a matter of public record. Inadvertent or purposeful disclosure of non-public information poses risks, especially when our adversaries get a hold of it. This is why the DOD takes so seriously the protection of non-public information. Every military or government member has a duty and responsibility to make every effort to avoid disclosure—either inadvertently or purposefully—of non-public information.

The following are examples of types of data considered non-public information:

- Classified information.
- Internal DOD information.
- Privacy Act-protected records.
- Budgetary records.
- Confidential procurement information (e.g., bid, proposal or source selection).
- Trade secrets.

Just as the Air Force Core Values have a presence in your daily operations, ethics should as well. The previously discussed examples should aid and guide you in determining what is right and what is wrong.