

1 April 2002  
(updated)

### Information Paper

**Subject:** Gifts at Private Organization (P.O.) Conferences (Ethics Paper #01-06)

1. **Purpose:** To outline the rules regarding acceptance of gifts at P.O. conferences.

2. **Facts:** TRADOC personnel are periodically invited to P.O. conferences. Many of these events directly relate to The Army's mission and have valuable training. Often, conference sponsors and participants offer free mementos, refreshments, meals, entertainment, materials, and travel benefits. As such, attendees must be aware of the rules regarding acceptance of these items.

**a. Momentos/Refreshments.** Government employees are generally prohibited from accepting gifts. However, there are exceptions and exclusions. For example, employees may accept:

- (1) light refreshments (coffee, donuts, chips etc);
- (2) presentation items (certificates, plaques);
- (3) unsolicited gifts with a market value of \$20 or less per occasion, so long as, the total value from one source does not exceed \$50 per calendar year.

**b. Meals/Entertainment/Instruction/Fees.** If the event is a "widely attended gathering" (command determined), employees may accept:

- (1) meals, entertainment, instruction and materials furnished to all attendees as an integral part of the event;
- (2) waiver of all or part of a conference fee.

**c. Travel Benefits.** TRADOC may accept unsolicited offers of travel benefits, such as transportation and lodging. This acceptance requires command approval and an ethics counselor review IAW TRADOC Regulation 37-2.

**d. Blanket Determinations.** Periodically, TRADOC issues a blanket determination that employees may attend certain events and accept certain items. This normally coincides with large events. The determination for the 2002 AUSA Industry Day is attached.

3. **Recommendation:** Ensure personnel are aware of these rules as they attend P.O. conferences. Contact an ethics counselor at extension 2302 regarding any ethical issues you encounter.