

distinguish a program-related requirement from what might otherwise be viewed as a personal gift or offer of reward. Treasury Board has taken the view that the acceptance of free or shared transportation can offend against the accepted standards of behaviour in the public service, and in certain circumstances might even constitute a criminal offence (cf. c.121 of the *Criminal Code*). Heads of Mission, before accepting or authorizing acceptance of such invitations which are not local and clearly program-related, should refer the matter to Headquarters for consideration and advice. For the purpose of this paragraph, free or shared transportation includes the pre-arranged offer to individual employees and their dependants of free upgrading of travel class or the accordance of special privileges as a consequence of an employee's position or responsibilities.

The following guidelines, which stem from the spirit and letter of the *Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for the Public Service* and past Departmental regulations and directives, etc., are applicable to all employees. As they have been agreed by Treasury Board Secretariat any request for exemption from this policy can only be granted by the Treasury Board on the written recommendation of the SSEA.

2.10.2 Travel industry promotion. Acceptance of free or discounted travel for employees, spouses and dependants as part of travel industry promotion, is restricted.

An exception is when an inaugural flight involves:

- (a) a Canadian carrier,
- (b) with a Canadian destination, and
- (c) with an identifiable Canadian Government benefit.

The Head of Mission and spouse or a "program related" officer are usually involved. Heads of Mission will want to satisfy themselves that the three ingredients noted above are in place before accepting, or authorizing acceptance of, participation in an inaugural flight.

Another related exception is for Tourism Officers who, by virtue of their work, accompany travel industry representatives to a Canadian destination, usually on the same complimentary basis offered to those representatives by the participating airline, or transportation company.

2.10.3 Retention of vouchers. Retention by employees or dependants of "vouchers, travel points, coupons or credits" accumulated by travel, including FSD travel, or official business paid for by the Department, is prohibited.

2.10.4 Honorary degrees. When an Honorary degree is offered, the intended recipient advises HQ before acceptance. The practice is to agree to travel being paid by the granting institution for employee and spouse, but no honorarium may be accepted.

2.10.5 Benefits from firms. Employees may not solicit or accept any benefit, including free, discounted or upgraded transportation for themselves or dependants from firms with which they have or may have dealings; this provision includes business trips where companies offer to pay some or all of the expenses. (See exception concerning Tourism Officers above). Where a Head of Mission or Departmental official may be required, for example, to accompany a company official to a remote project by private or charter aircraft, a full report on the trip should be provided. While it could be possible to reimburse the host, or take a circuitous commercial route, often there is no other sensible way to make the trip. In some instances, however, it could be feasible to offer to reimburse the costs of equivalent commercial airfare and a judgment on that would be taken following consultations with Headquarters. Aside from the foregoing example there should be rare occasions when corporate, or private, aircraft could be used instead of commercial carriers: "convenience" is not to be used as a criteria.