

## FRGs and Informal Funds/Fundraising Issues By John James, 10<sup>th</sup> SG OSJA

(Paragraph references comes from Appendix J of Army Regulation 608-1).

Military units are funded with appropriated funds (US tax dollars at work).

Appropriated funded units cannot engage in fundraising. Military units are funded to fight and win wars not to fundraise for social events or charity. Limited exceptions allowed by law are Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and Army Emergency Relief (AER) campaigns.

Military members and civilian employees can voluntarily form private funds such as office cup and flower funds to finance social events. These private funds are called Informal funds.

FRGs receive appropriated funded support, hence they cannot fundraise on their own behalf (J-3 and J-6).

Members of FRGs, like other appropriated funded units, can form informal funds, and fundraise “internally”. (J-7) The fundraising is done by the FRG informal fund, not by the FRG, this distinction is important.

“Internally” has been defined by the Army to mean fundraising from among the members of the FRG informal fund and from all persons benefiting from the FRG. For example, an entire installation may benefit from a Unit FRG. Fundraising must be (1) for the FRG informal fund, as apposed to a private charity, particular military member, or similar cause; and (2) approved by the Garrison Commander. Therefore, on a case by case basis, the Garrison Commander may allow FRG informal funds to fundraise at Army installation wide events.

External fundraising is strictly prohibited (J-7). Open-Post events, events open to the Japanese public, are considered external events and FRG informal fundraising would not be allowed. Off-post (not on a military installation) fundraising is also external fundraising and is prohibited.

Informal funds cannot be commingled with appropriated funds or other private funds such as a unit’s cup and flower funds or unit MWR funds. Cannot use informal funds to pay for items that should be funded with appropriated funds (such as office equipment) (J-7).

### Informal Funds Management Issues

- Fund custodian and alternate appointed by commander (cannot be Cdr, deployable Soldier, or FRG leader)
- Fund custodian is personally liable for any loss of funds

- Establish non-interest bearing account in FRG informal fund name
- Commander not a signatory on the account
- Accounting reports required by Appendix J
- Must have an SOP for the informal fund
- Annual gross receipt cap of \$10000 per calendar year

Fundraising Issues:

- No external fundraising (J-8) (but “internally” can include the entire Army installation community if the installation benefits from the FRG and the fundraising is for the FRG informal fund. Subject to Garrison Commander approval). Open-Post events, events open to the Japanese public are external events.
- Fundraising event must be consistent with FRG informal fund purpose. FRG social activities can enhance Family and Soldier camaraderie, provide stress relief, and reduce family loneliness during deployments
- Cannot fundraise on official time (while on duty), in the workplace, or in uniform
- Cannot use official government email, letterhead, or other government resources to promote informal fundraising
- Requests for permission to conduct a fundraiser should come from someone who is not acting in their official government capacity (therefore requests should not come from a commander). Why? Because fundraising is a private and not an official matter.
- Unit commanders may accept donations of \$1000 or less for informal fund. Solicitation of gifts is strictly prohibited.

Fundraising on Kadena Air Base or Camp Foster:

These are not Army installations. The FRG informal funds has to get approval for fundraisers from the Installation Commanders for the Air Force or Marines. For fundraising on Kadena Air Base, the fundraising POC is at the 18<sup>th</sup> Force Support Squadron (telephone 632-7215). For fundraising on Camp Foster or other Marine installations on Okinawa, information is contained on the Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) website at <http://www.mccsokinawa.com/index.asp>. The POC in MCCS for fundraising is the Community Relations Support Assistant (CRSA), telephone 645-2494.