



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
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APP 2 8 2017

From: Commanding Officer, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center  
To: Office of the Judge Advocate General, Criminal Law Division  
(Code 20)  
Via: Commander, Navy Medicine East

Subj: FALSE POSITIVES REPORTED BY NAVY DRUG SCREENING LABORATORY  
GREAT LAKES (NDSL-GL)

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1010.16 dated 10 Oct 12

1. Per reference (a), the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Great Lakes (NDSL-GL) was decertified from reporting results for amphetamine and methamphetamine on 12 April 2017, due to reporting a false positive test result.

2. On 13 April 2017, NDSL-GL discovered a specimen was incorrectly reported positive for methamphetamine on 11 April 2017. During confirmatory testing, it was determined that the false positive specimen was co-processed with a batch rejected due to cross-contamination generated from a specimen that contained a very high methamphetamine concentration. As a result, a retest was conducted that revealed no evidence of methamphetamine in the service member's urine. The positive report was withdrawn and the submitting command notified of the error.

3. An investigation into the cause(s) of cross-contamination identified during confirmatory testing is currently underway. NDSL-GL has successfully replicated the conditions leading to the cross-contamination, but is still examining exactly when and how it occurred. The methamphetamine/amphetamine confirmatory method used by Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville (NDSL-JAX) was evaluated under similar contamination conditions found at NDSL-GL with no contamination detected. As a result, NDSL-GL will implement the method used by NDSL-JAX following recertification.

4. To determine whether any other previously reported methamphetamine positive specimens were cross-contaminated, NDSL-GL re-tested all positive specimens that were only in confirmatory batches that contained a highly-concentrated methamphetamine or amphetamine specimen (*i.e.*, above 25,000 ng/mL). The focus of retesting was on specimens originally reported positive with values between 100 ng/mL and 1,000 ng/mL (cutoff to 10 times cutoff). As a result, two additional contaminated specimens were identified: one was not reported as positive due to a subsequent negative intermediate screening result, and the second was reported on 7 June 2016 for an Army Reserve member. The reported result was discovered on 22 April 2017. The positive report was withdrawn and the submitting command and the Army Drug Testing Program Office were notified of the false positive report. The Service Member had not yet been separated.

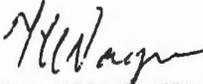
5. Further test result reversals, if any, will be based on an administrative review of laboratory data alone, since positive specimens are discarded after the required one-year retention period per

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reference (a) and can't be retested. This will require NDSL-GL to experimentally determine the lowest concentration where contamination occurs in a drug-free specimen processed in the same confirmatory batch. Based on this determination, a comprehensive review of all specimens processed only with a concentrated specimen since February 2006, when the current confirmatory method was instituted, will be conducted. If uniquely positive specimens are identified with concentrations between 100ng/mL and 1,000 ng/mL in a batch where contamination may have been possible, those results may be determined as false positives and may have to be overturned, pending legal occurrence.

6. These false reports were generated as a result of the confirmatory testing method used only by NDSL-GL since February 2006 for amphetamine and methamphetamine and associated with the infrequent testing of specimens containing very high concentrations of methamphetamine and, possibly, amphetamine. As a result, the Navy Drug Testing Program is committed to implementing procedures to prevent reoccurrence and to ameliorate any false reports that have occurred to date.

7. Points of contact are (b)(6)  
(b)(6)



T. L. WAGNER