



HEALTH AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON DC 20301

12 AUG 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (MRA&I)

SUBJECT: Drug Urinalysis Testing Levels

Reference: ASD(HA) Memorandum, subject: Transportation of
Specimens and Drug Urinalysis Testing and Retesting
Levels, 23 April 1985

The drug urinalysis testing levels used by the drug testing laboratories to report a specimen positive or negative for a given drug or metabolite were established by the above reference. For the past year the laboratories have been using gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) for confirming the presence of drugs in urine specimens. GC/MS is a specific and sensitive analytical technique that provides a positive identification of a substance at extremely low concentrations. This capability should be used to the greatest extent within our program to identify the maximum number of drug abusers.

The Biochemical Testing Advisory Committee has discussed the levels used for confirming the presence of cocaine and marijuana which are two of the most widely abused drugs. A review of confirmation data provided by the laboratories indicates that an additional 10 to 20 percent of the specimens positive by radioimmunoassay would be reported positive using lower confirmatory levels. The use of lower confirmatory levels will maintain a strong deterrence against drug abuse by identifying a greater number of individuals. Based on the Committee's recommendations the following confirmatory test levels are established:

	Confirmatory Test Level (ng/ml)
11-nor-delta 9-tetrahydro- cannabinol-9-carboxylic acid	15
Benzoyllecgonine (Cocaine metabolite)	150

These new levels are effective 1 October 1986. All other test levels in the above reference remain in effect. Each Service will ensure that its laboratories validate their

confirmatory procedures at these new levels. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology will adjust the concentrations of its spiked open proficiency testing samples, as appropriate.


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cc:
Director, AFIP