



READINESS AND FORCE
MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

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MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY FOR MANPOWER
AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Navy Synthetic Drug Testing Program

Thank you for your April 30, 2012, memo requesting to implement a pilot testing program for synthetic cannabinoids ("Spice"). We share your concern with regards to Spice abuse by military personnel and have been in discussions with the Services on this issue.

Since issuance of your memorandum, we understand an agreement has been finalized between the Navy and U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command to conduct testing of Navy personnel for both "Spice" and synthetic cathinones (known as "Bath Salts") at the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System laboratory at Dover, DE. Specimens will be tested when collected under probable cause, command directed, and consent premises in addition to investigative cases. Other testing of Navy personnel for "Spice" abuse will continue under a contract with a commercial laboratory. Also, recent legislation signed into Law on July 9, 2012, renders essentially all synthetic cannabinoid compounds marketed as "Spice"-like products are now illegal and should significantly decrease their availability and use by military personnel.

Concurrently, we have initiated a number of initiatives to include an overall program evaluation, sustained funding support, and integrated policy development to implement synthetic drug testing. We are nearing completion on the evaluation of a commercially available screening technology with possible application to the military drug testing program. On the longer term, we have funded a sustained synthetic drug testing capability to meet the current drug threat and to address future synthetic drugs that may enter the drug culture.

Given these initiatives, a Navy pilot program for routine random inspection testing of synthetic cannabinoids ("Spice") is not needed at this time. I applaud the Navy's collaboration in addressing this pressing issue. My point of contact for the Defense Drug Reduction Program is CAPT Kevin Klette, 703-693-5230, kevin.klette@osd.mil. He stands ready to answer any questions on this important effort.

Frederick E. Vollrath
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Readiness and Force Management)
Performing the Duties of the Assistant
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