NAVY DRUG SCREENING LABORATORY JACKSONVILLE

LAB-GRAM #1

REDUCING SPECIMEN DISCREPANCIES

WHAT: During a recent nine-month period (1 July 2009 – 31 March 2010), the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville (NDSL JAX) reported results for over 770K specimens. Almost 119K discrepancies were identified from these specimens and over 9300 specimens were rejected prior to testing.

The most-commonly applied discrepancies during this period are listed in the table below:

RANK	# APPLIED	DISCREPANCY	CODE
1	34915	Form Chain of Custody entries discrepant*	FN
2	13205	Form or other document shows Member's name / signature	GP
3	13100	Package missing signature / date	PD
4	10691	Form on two pieces of paper – no linking identifiers	FR
5	9024	Form listed specimen, no bottle received	GG
6	7662	Label – SSN discrepant*	LX
7	7598	Form – UIC or BAC discrepant* / does not match bottle	FA
8	3921	Label – collector or observer initials discrepant*	LL
9	3854	Specimen volume < 30 mL	SE
10	2717	Form – SSN discrepant*	FT

Discrepant* = Incorrect, incomplete, illegible, missing, overwritten, not original or not forensically corrected.

WHY: While only one of these discrepancies is consider "fatal" (meaning that no drug positive / negative result is released to the submitting command), processing specimens with any discrepancy requires additional time and resources, delaying the release of drug results for all specimens submitted on the DD Form 2624 with the discrepant specimen(s). Furthermore, the number and type of discrepancy applied to a positive specimen may provide sufficient "doubt" during Courts-Martial and/or administrative proceedings. Periodically, we have been asked to provide lists of discrepancies applied to specimens submitted by specific commands / units as part of responses to Defense Counsel-generated Discovery Requests. Reducing the number of discrepancies can reduce the likelihood that the validity of your Command's urinalysis collection program will be questioned.

HOW: Urinalysis program personnel should review the following ten quality assurance steps to reduce submission discrepancies with the goal of developing a discrepancy-free collection program for their respective commands:

1. Ensure the chain of custody entries on the DD Form 2624 accurately and completely document all changes of custody and end with a means of shipment to NDSL JAX.

2. Ensure that the DD Form 2624 is double-sided or that, if delivered as two separate pages, there is a linking identifier (such as UIC and Local Batch Number) written on the second page.

3. Ensure that documents sent to NDSL JAX do not display the names or full signatures of Service members.

4. Ensure that your UIC is appropriately listed on the DD Form 2624 and accompanying specimen bottles.

5. Ensure that any corrections to DD Forms 2624 and/or specimen bottles are forensically-appropriate: line through the incorrect entry, write the correct information and initial and date next to the correct information. Remember that corrections may be required for both the specimen bottle label(s) and the DD Form(s) 2624.

6. Ensure that all information on the specimen bottle labels (including the member SSN, Local Batch Number and Specimen Number, UIC and collection date) matches the information on the accompanying DD Form 2624.

7. Ensure that the package is appropriately sealed, signed and dated.

8. Ensure that all specimen bottles listed on a particular DD Form 2624 are placed in the same shipping package with that custody form. If any specimens are not collected, line through the barcode and/or SSN and initial and date that line-through. Orphan specimens, those sent without or separate from custody documents, significantly impact receipt and testing and will delay results reporting.

9. Ensure that all specimen bottle lids are tightened prior to placement of the tamper-evident tape to limit the possibility of in-transit specimen leakage. Placement of specimen bottles in individual plastic bags is unnecessary and can render the specimen bottle label unreadable in the event of leakage. Placement of masking or packing tape on specimen bottles is unnecessary, can result in damage to the tamper-evident tape (resulting in a significant discrepancy) and impedes the efficient receipt and processing of specimens.

10. Ensure that each specimen has a volume of 30 milliliters or greater; volumes below this amount are not IAW collection procedures and have the potential to limit the confirmation of any drug results.

QUESTIONS: If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact our Technical Director, Dr. Jim Evans at 904-542-7755 ext. 104 (DSN 942) or our Executive Officer, LCDR Matthew Jamerson at 904-542-7755 ext. 102 (DSN 942).