

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER
ON
**ANG Drug Demand Reduction Program (DDRP) Hemp & Cannabidiol (CBD) –
Military Perspective**

PURPOSE: To provide some guidance on Hemp and CBD products.

BACKGROUND:

- A lot of interest has been shown lately with the rapid introduction of hemp and CBD products into the mainstream marketplace. What was once rare and in fact illegal has transformed into a multimillion dollar industry that is gaining widespread acceptance. What are the facts about hemp and CBD? What is the difference between marijuana and hemp? Can CBD make someone high? Will my urine drug screen turn positive for THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) if I use CBD? Finally, what does the military say and what should I do?
- **First, what is hemp?** It is a subspecies of *Cannabis sativa* (which includes both marijuana and hemp) that has less than 0.3% THC, the active ingredient that produces a high. If the hemp truly has trace THC present, hemp cannot make you high and should not result in a positive drug screen.
 - **CBD** is one of the many cannabinoid compounds produced by these plants. You can find it in both marijuana and hemp.
 - **THC** is another cannabinoid compound that produces a high, is a Schedule 1 drug and is federally illegal while accepted on a state-by-state basis for medical and recreational uses. It is predominantly found in marijuana.
- The interest in hemp as a crop has recently resulted in a section of the **2018 Farm Bill** that was signed into law by President Trump in December 2018 to take hemp off of the Schedule 1 drug list along with the products of the plants such as CBD. Hemp has many uses with the main non-CBD use being rope production. Under section 10113 of the law, hemp cannot contain more than 0.3% THC, otherwise it is considered marijuana and not protected under the new law. *The law also sets specific guidelines for states in authorizing the growing of hemp under strict regulation with federal violations of the law resulting in possible punishments.* So hemp while now legal still is regulated in who can grow it and must follow the law's requirements.¹
- So what does **CBD** do for health-related conditions? There is a lot of buzz around CBD but the bottom-line is *there are minimal scientific studies that show specific benefit for many conditions.* Most studies have been done in a less than scientific way. It is known that humans have an endocannabinoid system which means that our metabolism utilizes cannabinoid compounds naturally which means it may affect many areas of the body. How, exactly is not clear at this time, further rigorous study is needed.
- The medical conditions that are touted as being positively affected by CBD use include Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, Huntington's disease, hypoxic tissue injury, pain, psychosis, anxiety, depression, cancer, nausea, inflammatory diseases, rheumatoid arthritis, infection, IBS/Crohn's disease, cardiovascular disease, and diabetic complications.²

RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION:

- **The bottom-line for those in the military** is while CBD may be desired to take care of your anxiety, chronic pain or other conditions, **it is still illegal under the military system. DO NOT USE these products!** More study is being contemplated for military members; if and how to allow the use of CBD in a very structured way. No use is allowed until the study is officially sanctioned and completed. The strength of various CBD compounds can vary widely and may, if not properly prepared, have too much residual THC present resulting in a positive drug screen. If that happens, you have no recourse! **There is no legal use of THC in the military** except in very rare circumstances related to a couple of prescription medications that have fallen out of favor. So no use is the only requirement.

¹Hudak, John, Brookings Institution, "The Farm Bill, hemp legalization and the status of CBD: An explainer", 12/14/18, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2018/12/14/the-farm-bill-hemp-and-cbd-explainer/>

²Cannabidiol (CBD) Pre-Review Report, Agenda Item 5.2, Expert Committee of Drug Dependence, 39th Meeting, World Health Organization, Geneva, 6-10 Nov 2017, https://www.who.int/medicines/access/controlled-substances/5.2_CBD.pdf