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COMDTINST 6510.1A 22 August 2014

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 6510.1A

Subj: USING THE ARMED FORCES REPOSITORY OF SPECIMEN SAMPLES FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF REMAINS (AFRSSIR)

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (series)

- (b) Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Operations, DoDI 5154.30
- 1. <u>PURPOSE</u>. To establish policy and procedures on collecting and submitting deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) specimens to the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) for use in identifying human remains.
- 2. <u>ACTION</u>. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements shall comply with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
- 3. <u>DIRECTIVES AFFECTED</u>. Using the Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Specimen Repository to Identify Human Remains, COMDTINST 6510.1 is cancelled.

4. BACKGROUND.

- a. AFRSSIR stores deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) reference specimens and maintains a database to assist in their retrieval for human remains identification while assuring the protection of privacy interests. AFRSSIR also purchases and distributes DNA collection supplies to field sites for collecting specimens. Under procedures established by the military services, specimen collection from all service members is mandatory.
- b. The Coast Guard will implement the same changes to the mandatory DNA sample collection program in order to align procedures with current AFRSSIR guidelines.
- 5. <u>DISCLAIMER</u>. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.

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6. <u>MAJOR CHANGES</u>. Updated AFRSSIR collection instructions and replaced the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.

- a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Management, and are categorically excluded (CE) under current USCG CE # 33 from further environmental analysis, in accordance with Section 2.B.2. and Figure 2-1 of the National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures and Policy for Considering Environmental Impacts, COMDTINST M16475.1 (series). Because this Instruction implements without substantive change guidance on, and provisions for, compliance with applicable environmental mandates, Coast Guard categorical exclusion #33 is appropriate.
- b. This directive will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from the general policies in this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Policy NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, DHS and Coast Guard NEPA policy, and compliance with all other environmental mandates.
- 8. <u>DISTRIBUTION</u>. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) web sites. Internet: http://www.uscg.mil/directives/, and CGPortal: https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx.
- 9. <u>RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</u>. This instruction has been evaluated for potential records management impacts. The development of this instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements, in accordance with Federal records Act U.S.C. 3101 et seq., National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requirements, and the Information and Life cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series).

10. REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Commandant (CG-112) shall ensure the following responsibilities outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the AFMES and the Coast Guard are performed:
 - (1) Designate a liaison officer to coordinate with the AFMES.
 - (2) Officially request the AFMES conduct a complete medical investigation of death (forensic autopsy) and provide authorization for use of DNA specimens when deemed necessary by the Coast Guard in circumstances where the Coast Guard is authorized to take such action. For DNA specimen request, a DNA analysis form must be submitted to Commandant (CG-112) for authorization. The form can be found at:

http://www.afmes.mil/assets/docs/PM_DNA_Analysis_Request_Form.pdf. The completed form along with the patient specimen must be submitted to AFDIL.

- (3) Obtain necessary authorizations for such procedures from the county, state, local authorities, and next-of-kin.
- (4) Obtain release of remains to the AFMES from the custody of state and local authorities for medical investigation pursuant to this agreement by whatsoever legal means are deemed necessary by the Coast Guard. Secure any additional permits and cooperation necessary for the conduct of medical investigation services.
- (5) Instruct Coast Guard personnel at the scene of death to assist the AFMES staff with local travel arrangements and to provide access to the scene of death.
- (6) Obtain suitable Coast Guard aircraft when necessary to expedite the medical investigation of death.
- (7) Assign a Coast Guard employee to attend and assist at the medical-legal investigation of death. Receive and retain evidentiary material (physical evidence) other than that pertaining to the medical-legal postmortem examination and to escort the remains in order to maintain the proper chain of custody.
- (8) Perform DNA sample collections per instruction provided by AFRSSIR.
- (9) Inform AFRSSIR when DNA specimens may be archived due to changes in personnel, and to collect new DNA specimens upon acquisition of new personnel.
- b. Commandant (CG-122) shall reimburse AFMES for all funds advanced to support operations under the MOA.
- c. Commanding Officer of Training Center Cape May and Commanding Officer of the Leadership Development Center shall ensure their servicing clinics collect specimens from all new enlisted and officer accessions (active and reserve) upon reporting for basic training, Reserve Officer and Enlisted Basic Indoctrination, Officer Candidate School or Direct Commission Officer School. There will not be any distinction between active and reserve components for collection purposes. The Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy shall collect a specimen from all cadets before graduation.
- d. Health, Safety, and Work-Life (HSWL) Regional Practice Senior Medical Executives (SME) shall ensure DNA specimens are collected from all Coast Guard members who have not been confirmed through the Medical Readiness Reporting System (MRRS) or applicable Electronic Health Record (EHR) to have a DNA specimen received and accepted by AFRSSIR per reference (a). To reduce duplicative samples, they will ensure that the service member's health record is annotated with the date a DNA sample is taken in the Adult Preventive and Chronic Care Flowsheet, Form DD-2766. To ensure there are no duplicate samples, an inquiry can be sent to the repository via mail or fax to:

Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR)

ATTN: AFRSSIR Database Query

115 Purple Heart Drive

Dover Air Force Base, DE 19902

DSN: 366-8800 Phone: (302) 346-8800 Fax: (302) 346-8766

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They shall also ensure that reference (b) and AFRSSIR rejection protocols for Coast Guard members whose DNA reference specimens were not accessioned into AFRSSIR are adhered to. When a specimen is rejected by AFRSSIR, the unit where the specimen was collected will receive written notification, which consists of a letter and list of rejected specimens by service member name and social security number. The specimen(s) will have to be recollected by the unit. The rejected specimen(s) previously sent to AFRSSIR will be destroyed and not returned to the collection unit. Typical reasons for a specimen to not be accessioned (entered) into AFRSSIR include:

- (1) Missing, incomplete or incorrect social security number,
- (2) Insufficient or no blood on specimen card,
- (3) Filter paper containing blood separated from specimen card and/or,
- (4) Excessive fungus growth due to incomplete drying at collection.
- e. Coast Guard Commanding Officers shall not deploy any member into a hostile fire or imminent danger zone unless his or her DNA specimen is on file. The AFRSSIR staff will annotate specimens contained in the DNA Repository in the member's Defense Eligibility Enrollment and Records System (DEERS) eligibility file which will be uploaded to MRRS (or applicable EHR).
- 11. <u>SPECIMEN COLLECTION</u>. AFRSSIR controls data and specimen collection procedures and issues collection kits.
 - a. DNA Specimen Collection. Enclosure (1) contains DNA specimen collection and shipment instructions.
 - b. Ordering Specimen Collection Kits. Unit representatives responsible for ordering specimen collection supplies should contact the Repository Ordering Officer via commercial line to discuss orders. This is a sole-source item (no-cost). For all collection supply orders, a Collection Supply Order Form must be completed by the unit and faxed or mailed to the Repository Ordering Officer. The Collection Supply Order Form is located at:

http://www.afmes.mil/assets/docs/afrssir_supply_order_form.pdf.

c. Ordering Information Address.

Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR)

ATTN: Repository Ordering Officer

115 Purple Heart Drive

Dover Air Force Base, DE 19902

DSN: 366-8800 Phone: (302) 346-8800 Fax: (302) 346-8766

- d. Ordering Process. Orders should be placed 30 days in advance. Order only supplies needed, no excess stock. Allow 4 7 days for ground delivery. Rush orders 24 48 hours allowed for deploying units. All venipuncture supplies, including gloves, are the unit's responsibility. P.O. Box addresses will not be processed. Unit representative should sign ordering form prior to submission, print a copy of the supply order form, fill it out, sign it and fax it back to AFRSSIR.
- 12. SPECIMEN STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION.

- a. Storage. AFRSSIR will store DNA specimens under names/social security numbers/code designators as provided by the Coast Guard. DNA specimens will be held for fifty years at the DNA repository.
- b. Destruction. In accordance with Enclosure 2 of reference (b), paragraph E.2.5.5., dated 18 Mar 03, re: Policy for Implementing Instructions for Early Destruction of Individual Remains Identification Reference Specimen Samples, eligible service members may request that their specimen be destroyed.
 - (1) To be eligible, a service member must have completed their military service obligation verified by DEERS and the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, Form DD-214.
 - (2) Upon completion of all military service obligations, a service member may request that his or her specimen be destroyed. Requests must be made in writing and include the service members name, social security number, date of birth, branch of service and mailing address. All requests must include a copy of the service member's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, Form DD-214 verifying separation and end of service obligation. Send service member specimen destruction requests to:

Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR)

ATTN: AFRSSIR Specimen Destruction Request

115 Purple Heart Drive

Dover Air Force Base, DE 19902

DSN: 366-8800 Phone: (302) 346-8800 Fax: (302) 346-8766

13. <u>USING DNA SPECIMENS TO IDENTIFY REMAINS</u>. Using AFDIL and AFRSSIR does not preclude using other techniques, such as fingerprint comparison, serological analysis, or medical and dental radiograph comparisons, to identify human remains. Cognizant medical personnel should use each of these procedures, when appropriate, to ensure accurate identification and expeditious return of the remains to the next-of-kin. If using AFDIL and AFRSSIR specimens becomes necessary, an official written request via the appropriate chain of command with a copy to Commandant (CG-112) may be submitted to:

Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR)

115 Purple Heart Drive

Dover Air Force Base, DE 19902

DSN: 366-8800 Phone: (302) 346-8800 Fax: (302) 346-8766

14. <u>FORMS/REPORTS</u>. The forms referenced in this Instruction are available in Coast Guard Electronic Forms on the Standard Workstation or on the Internet: http://www.uscg.mil/forms/, CGPortal at https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/Pages/main.aspx; and Intranet at http://cgweb.comdt.uscg.mil/CGForms. The Adult Preventive and Chronic Care Flowsheet, Form DD-2766 is not authorized for electronic distribution per DOD Forms Management Officer.

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15. <u>REQUEST FOR CHANGES</u>. Units and individuals may recommend changes by writing via the chain of command to: Commandant (CG-112); U.S. Coast Guard; STOP 7907; 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE; WASHINGTON, DC 20593-7907.

Maura K. Dollymore /s/ Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard Director of Health, Safety and Work-Life

ENCLOSURE: (1) AFRSSIR Collection Instructions

AFRSSIR COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

1. <u>Purpose</u>. The following DNA collection instructions are designed to give specific direction to installations/sites on the collection and shipment of DNA reference specimens. Questions concerning collection procedures and supply orders/reorders should be directed to the Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR) at commercial telephone number (302) 346-8800 or DSN 366-8800, or commercial facsimile (302) 346-8766. Duty hours are 0630 – 1730 hrs (EST), Monday through Friday.

2. Collection Supplies.

- a. DNA specimen collection supplies consist of a bloodstain card, single (see-through) shipping pouch with tape and a 1 gram desiccant packet. In addition, self-addressed mailing envelopes, drying racks and 6" x 8" transfer pouches are available.
- b. All unique collection supplies used in collecting DNA specimens must either be provided by the AFRSSIR or approved by the AFRSSIR before use in the DNA collection procedure (specific requirements in fiber composition of the bloodstain card preclude the use of any substitutes).
- c. Supply orders are processed by the AFRSSIR Contract Ordering Officer. Supply requests are normally filled within 30 days after the order is received. If an order has not been received within 30 days, contact the ordering officer for assistance at the telephone numbers listed in paragraph 1.

3. Collection Procedures.

- a. For personal safety, and to prevent contamination of the DNA specimen, collection personnel should wear clean non-powdered gloves when collecting and handling specimens.
- b. Bloodstain Card Data Information (see figure (1)).
 - (1) The service member using a #2 pencil, or ball point pen (do not use felt tip or fountain pens) must complete all information in the requested format on the bloodstain card, and carefully blacken the appropriate blocks corresponding to the social security number (SSN) and branch of military service. The AFRSSIR requests that letters and numbers be made as close to the examples on the bloodstain card as possible. Bloodstain cards should not be discarded if the individual cannot make the alpha/numeric characters as depicted. As a general rule, if collection personnel can read the individual's name, SSN, date of birth, collection date, and branch of military service, then it can be assumed that AFRSSIR personnel can do the same. If collection personnel cannot decipher the individual's writing, then the bloodstain card must be properly destroyed and the process repeated.
 - (2) Have the **specimen donor** sign the card (not the individual collecting the specimen) using either a #2 pencil or ballpoint pen (do not use felt tip or fountain pens). Ensure that the signature corresponds to the name the individual places on the front of the bloodstain card.
 - (3) Verify that all information is correct and complete on the bloodstain card using either a personnel roster or the individual's identification card.
 - (4) Reserve and Guard Service Members must list their branch of service as USA, USMC, USN, USAF or USCG. PHS officers will select the *Other* block.

- c. Blood Specimen Collection. When collecting blood on the bloodstain card ensure that you do not cross contaminate the card with blood from another individual. This will interfere with the DNA identification process. Ensure that all work surface area, gloves and other supplies are clean and free of blood and/or body fluids before proceeding with another collection.
 - (1) Fingerstick Method. Place the bloodstain card so that the filter paper side containing the printed circles is facing up. Before any fingerstick is attempted, ensure that the area to be pricked on the individual's finger is cleansed thoroughly with an alcohol swab. Prick any finger except the right index finger, using the fingerstick device provided in the collection supplies. Each fingerstick device is designed to be used only once for safety purposes. Extra fingerstick devices will be furnished to ensure that collection personnel have enough devices on hand to complete the collection. Squeeze the pricked finger to produce droplets of blood. Touch the blood droplets to the appropriate circled areas of the bloodstain card so that the circled areas are at least half covered with blood. If more than one fingerstick is necessary, use a different finger for each stick until both circles are at least 50% covered with blood.

(2) Venipuncture Method

- (a) Prior to venipuncture, ensure that the vacutainer tube bears the name and SSN identifiers specific to the service member who is providing the blood specimen. Using standard sterile venipuncture techniques, draw the blood into a purple-top vacutainer tube which contains only EDTA. No other type of vacutainer shall be used. The AFRSSIR offers a 6" x 8" transfer pouch that can be used to keep an individual's bloodstain card and vacutainer of blood together. The use of this pouch will facilitate keeping a service member's collection material together until it can be spotted. **Do not send vials of whole blood with specimen cards to the AFRSSIR.** The specimen card must be spotted with blood prior to submission to the AFRSSIR. After spotting the specimen card, discard the tube/blood draw instruments in accordance with standard universal precautions concerning biohazard waste.
- (b) To transfer blood from the vacutainer tube, place the bloodstain card with the filter paper side containing the printed circles face up. Ensure that name and SSN on vacutainer tube matches the donor card. Take precautions to prevent splatter or surface contamination, remove the top of the vacutainer. For personal protection, if available, laboratory blood spatter shields should be used. Using a standard plastic disposable transfer pipette, place blood in the center of each circled area on the bloodstain card.
 - Allow the blood to migrate throughout the circle to completely fill the circled area (for difficult blood draws attempt to fill at least 50% of the circled area). If required, additional blood droplets may be applied to fill the circle. It is acceptable to have blood outside the designated circles. Once the blood transfer is completed, dispose of the remaining blood, vacutainer, and pipette in an approved biohazard container. Do not reuse the plastic transfer pipette.
- (3) Drying the Bloodstain Card. After affixing the blood to the bloodstain card, allow the blood to dry at room temperature, using the drying racks furnished by the AFRSSIR. **NOTE:** Do not stack the bloodstain cards or touch the bloodstained areas of the card while transferring the cards to the drying racks. Ensure that gloves and all surface areas of the drying rack are clean and free of blood or other body fluids. While placing the cards onto the drying rack,

ensure that the wet bloodstained ends do not come into contact with other cards. This can be accomplished by alternating the bloodstained end of the card on the left and right sides of the drying rack.

d. Specimen Kit Reassembly.

(1) Once the bloodstain card has dried, remove one bar code label from the individual's bloodstain card and place it in the appropriate block on the side of the card that contains the blood pad circles.

NOTE: To prevent bacterial growth, do not seal the bloodstain card in the see-through shipping pouch with tape until it has dried completely. A minimum of 20 minutes is required. Depending on humidity and other environmental factors, more time may be required.

- (2) The remaining bar code labels can be used to identify the vacutainer tube of blood or the 6" x 8" transfer pouch. It does not matter which alpha character (A C) is placed on the bloodstain card.
- (3) Separate and discard the instructions and any remaining unused bar codes from the bloodstain card by tearing along the perforation.

NOTE: If the filter paper containing the bloodstain is separated from the donor's identification portion of the card, the card is invalid and another specimen card must be completed. It is unacceptable to reattach the bloodstained filter paper to the card with tape, staples, or by any other means.

(4) Place the bloodstain card with a 1 gram desiccant packet into the shipping pouch. Place the blood spotted end of the card into the pouch first. To prevent bulging, excess air should be removed by gentle hand pressure over the pouch prior to sealing. If using a self-sealing pouch, seal the pouch by first folding the lip closure on the perforated line that is located approximately ¼" from the opening of the pouch. Remove the tape from the lip of the pouch to expose the adhesive and fold the lip of the pouch along the perforated line so that the adhesive adheres to itself. Press along the adhesive to ensure proper closure.

4. Shipment of Specimens to the AFRSSIR.

a. Place the sealed shipping pouches containing the bloodstained cards in the mailing pouch (maximum of 75 specimens per pouch) or other suitable mailing container. **If personal data on the bloodstain cards is visible through the single shipping pouch, than the shipped specimens should be "double wrapped."** The use of other suitable mailing containers (i.e. cardboard boxes) is permitted and encouraged. If using cardboard boxes it is not necessary to package the specimens in the mailing pouches; however, the box should be lined with a plastic bag. When ready for shipment, seal the box and place the furnished address label on the box.

NOTE: Shipping box size should not exceed 16" x 16" x 18".

- b. Before sealing, place a sheet of paper in the shipping container with the following information:
 - (1) Point of Contact (person responsible for specimen collection),
 - (2) Mailing Address,
 - (3) Telephone Number (Commercial and DSN) and,

- (4) Fax Number (Commercial and DSN).
- c. It is not necessary to provide a list of donors with each shipment. The specimens can be mailed through the US Postal Service or shipped by an express carrier. **The shipper is responsible for all shipping charges.** If shipment cannot occur immediately, the shipping container should be stored in a cool dry place, away from direct heat. Specimens should be mailed within 10 days of collection to:

ARMED FORCES MEDICAL EXAMINER SYSTEM ATTN: AFRSSIR
115 Purple Heart Drive
Dover Air Force Base, DE 19902

Figure (1) Donor Specimen Card

