

POVB – Drug-testing update

The Executive met with CSNSW Professional Standards Branch, Senior AOD Testing Officer, Barry Sheens on Monday, 6 May 2019. The following was discussed:

Drug-testing Officers

Some members may be aware that CSNSW has recently introduced the use of mouth swabs to do drug testing on staff. Until we met with CSNSW and discussions took place Officers have been given the option of either swab or urine testing.

Swab testing is not replacing urine testing completely. However, saliva testing is the preferred option and will be used more often than urine. Therefore, we will see a decline in urine and an increase in swab testing being used, but not an increase in testing overall. The overall testing rate will remain the same. The testing officer will advise what type (swab or urine) they intend to do for random urines when they arrive at the centre and all officers selected on the day will do one or the other not a combination of both.

Urine testing will remain in place for target testing and also after any critical incident. The reason for this is the urine test captures a wider range.

- » Swab testing: indicates illicit drugs only (used only for random)
- » Urine testing: indicates synthetic drugs as well (used for random, target and after any critical incident)

The swabs being used are Drugwipe 6S, these are the same as NSW Police uses for roadside testing.

The swab tests take 3-8 minutes for an indication. A negative indicator means nil detected. If a non-negative is indicated, a second swab is then taken and sent to the laboratory for further testing. The results for the second sample will usually be back the next working

day (much quicker than the six-week turn around for urine testing).

If an Officer indicates a non-negative and has a second swab taken they are NOT stood down from duty for the day, unless they admit to taking an illegal substance (then the usual procedures are followed in standing the Officer down).

How is a centre/person selected for testing?

This is computer generated randomly. When this is generated, it will print out a page for the location with some lines highlighted. These highlighted lines are the percentage of staff that are to be drug tested. All officers at the location are alcohol tested. When you go in for the breath test, if your name is written on one of the highlighted lines you have landed on the random line for drug testing.

When advising your medication to the testing officer, this information is placed on the laboratory report only. This is not kept on any database or your personal files.

CSNSW has indicated that, going forward, the option of urine or swab for any officer tested will cease.

The POVB Executive is not against swab testing. It is less invasive and the process is simple for staff.

Contact details:

- » **Nicole Jess** – Chairperson - 0427 609 199
- » **Jason Charlton** - Vice Chairperson - 0401 500 976
- » **Thor Sutherland** - Country Chairperson - 0447 633 476
- » **Raylene Thompson** – Secretary - 0430-110-239
- » **Natalie Howes** – Secretary - 0407 011 441
- » **Darren King** - Assistant Secretary - 0407 935 039
- » **David McCauley** - POVB Industrial Officer - 0419 022 767
- » **David Bartle** - POVB Industrial Officer - 0418 425 976

