



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**STATE PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT EARNS INTERNATIONAL
ACCREDITATION FOR NARCOTICS LAB**

HONOLULU – The state Public Safety Department (PSD) Narcotics Enforcement Division's (NED) forensic lab, located in the airport area, is now amongst the top NED labs in the world. PSD Director Jodie Maesaka-Hirata accepted the international accreditation recognition from the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB)

The Department applied to the ASCLD/LAB for accreditation of its NED forensics lab in April 2011. On August 9, 2011, the Board officially awarded accreditation, under its International Testing Program, to the NED Forensic Laboratory.

"NED is one of only two forensic laboratories in Hawaii to achieve ASCLD/LAB International accreditation," said PSD Director Jodie Maesaka-Hirata. "Today, the NED Forensic Laboratory continues its commitment to professional excellence by providing reliable, timely and quality forensic laboratory services for agencies across the state."

In 2005, the Legislature appropriated funds for the construction of a NED forensic laboratory. Four years later, in November 2009, the new laboratory started operations. Prior to its existence, the Department of Health and the Honolulu Police Department provided forensic drug analytical services for the State.

"The PSD's increased statewide law enforcement responsibilities contributed to a larger drug analysis load for NED," said PSD Deputy Director of Law Enforcement, Keith Kamita. "This lab has not only serviced that need but is also making other contributions on the justice system."

Accreditation by ASCLD/LAB is recognized by international and U.S. criminal justice systems as a means of determining that a laboratory has met a set of internationally recognized standards of operation for forensic laboratories.

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“These recognized laboratories provide additional credibility to judicial proceedings,” said Governor Neil Abercrombie. “I congratulate the hard work of the NED on this accreditation and the work it does to ensure public safety on all levels.”

Since it’s opening, the forensic laboratory has conducted drug analyses for its own investigations and the Sheriff’s Division, as well as assisted other agencies in their drug analytical needs. Those outside agencies include the Kauai Police Department, the Naval Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS) and the Department of the Attorney General. In addition, the NED lab also routinely handles all of the Promoting Prison Contraband drug cases for Hawaii, which helps PSD crackdown on contraband entering the prisons.

The other ASCLD/LAB accredited lab is the Central Identification Laboratory at Hickam Air Force Base.

ASCLD/LAB is the oldest and most well known crime/forensic laboratory accrediting body in the world. ASCLD/LAB has been accrediting crime laboratories since 1982 and currently accredits most of the federal, state and local crime laboratories in the United States plus forensic laboratories in six countries outside of the United States.

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