

T.A.'s already issued to these instructions and which were extant at the time this T.A. went to press are as follows: 2/70, 3/70, 4/70.

O.W.O. 38/1971 (Sept.)  
Sec. 5398/1971

C.4-8 Drugs  
T.A.1/71

### Modified Ehrlich reagent field test for hallucinogens

#### 1. General

The Government Chemists had developed a sensitive chemical test to assist in the tentative identification of a number of hallucinogenic drugs restricted at importation by the Drugs (Prevention of Misuse) Act 1964, as amended. This test is normally to be used in preference to the ultra-violet lamp test referred to in Vol C4, Part 8 Appendix M (see Note below). It is not intended that this field test should replace testing by professional analysts and all substances giving a positive reaction to the field test must be submitted to the Government Chemist (or other approved analyst) before any prosecution is brought.

#### 2. Modified Ehrlich reagent

The chemical used in the new test is a modified form of Ehrlich reagent and is contained in screw-top plastic bottles; the reagent is highly corrosive and for this reason the dropping bottle is small to avoid any large spillage.

If any reagent is spilt, wash off as soon as possible under running water. *In the case of splashes into the eye, medical treatment is imperative. Immediate first aid should be copious irrigation with clean water.* Dust liberally any contaminated clothing with the neutraliser provided; rub in well, allow to dry and brush off.

#### 3. Supply of equipment

The only equipment needed in addition to the reagent is a filter paper such as is used for the cannabis test. Initial supplies of the reagent (and neutraliser) are being prepared by the Government Chemist and will be distributed to the ports, airports, and parcel post depots already supplied with cannabis testing equipment. Requests from other ports and airports for initial supplies are to be sent to GC Section 5. Replenishment stocks are to be ordered from the Superintendent of Stores.

#### 4. Prohibited drugs which react to the test

The following hallucinogens respond to the modified Ehrlich reagent tests:-

Psilocybin  
Psilocin  
Bufotenine  
Lysergamide  
Lysergide (LSD)  
NN Diethyltryptamine (DET)  
NN Dimethyltryptamine (DMT)  
5-Methoxydimethyltryptamine )  
5-Benzyloxydimethyltryptamine ) Ethers of Bufotenine

Of these, Lysergamide and Lysergide also fluoresce, when in sufficient strength, in ultra-violet rays. The other substances are not fluorescent in ultra-violet light.

#### 5. Method of use

- (a) Take a clean filter paper.
- (b) Place a portion of the crushed sample (about the size of a match-head but where the substance is in table form, *never exceeding a quarter of a tablet*) on the centre of the filter paper.
- (c) Add *one* drop of the reagent to the sample on the filter paper and allow the paper to dry (*DO NOT allow the dropper to touch the sample or the reagent will be contaminated for subsequent use*).

If blue-purple striations radiate from the sample onto the paper within the time taken for the reagent to dry (3 to 4 minutes) there is presumptive evidence for an hallucinogen being present.

**NOTE:** The Ehrlich test is to be used in preference to the ultra-violet lamp in view of its greater sensitivity although, where available, a lamp will be useful in scanning large areas. Where local concentrations of fluorescence are observed when viewed with the lamp, a *portion* of this area should be selected for carrying out the Ehrlich test. A combination of the test and the lamp will, upon negative response from the test, eliminate such licit substances as detergents, quinine and caffeine, which fluoresce under the ultra-violet lamp, from further investigation. Some illicit but nonfluorescent substances will, however, respond to the test.

#### WARNING

Filter papers are not in any circumstances to be stored in the same confined space (box, cupboard etc) as the Ehrlich reagent. Vapours from the reagent render the filter paper too acid to develop the colour if used for the cannabis test.

Wherever possible the Ehrlich reagent is to be stored in a wooden or plastic cupboard or container. Where it is necessary for it to be stored in a metal cupboard or container the reagent bottle must first be placed in a stout cardboard box. No valuable documents are to be stored in proximity to the reagent.