

## Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska

### **AIRMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGES OF DRUG USE, DISTRIBUTION, & VIOLATING A LAWFUL ORDER**

#### **Sentenced to**

#### **Bad Conduct Discharge, 30 days confinement, and a Reprimand**

On 13 December 2019, Airman Basic Bradley J. Bruner, 354th Maintenance Group, pled guilty in a Special Court Martial to three charges and six specifications in violation of Articles 92 and 112a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for wrongful use and distribution of drugs and wrongful use of synthetic illegal substances. AB Bruner was sentenced by a Military Judge to a Bad Conduct Discharge, 30 days confinement, and a Reprimand.

The charges against AB Bruner were the result of a Security Forces (SFOI) investigation that uncovered several civilians, Army soldiers, and other airmen using synthetic cannabinoids. Synthetic cannabinoids are basically chemical “copies” of the active ingredient in marijuana. Synthetic cannabinoids and other marijuana derivatives are commonly found in “vape” juices, and they are *illegal* for military personnel to ingest or consume.

When questioned by SFOI investigators, AB Bruner admitted to using the illegal “vape” juices, even at work, as well as using marijuana and giving marijuana to a civilian. AB Bruner also admitted to using ecstasy (MDMA) and LSD while on leave back home. To aggravate matters, AB Bruner was caught using marijuana even after the initial charges were preferred.

At trial, AB Bruner was represented by Capt Victoria Smith, the Eielson ADC. Prior to trial, AB Bruner signed a plea agreement which stated that in exchange for pleading guilty, he would serve between 30 and 90 days of confinement.

“Justice was served in this case,” noted the lead prosecutor in the case, Capt Jacob Beeman. “It is not surprising that AB Bruner’s sentence included a BCD, given the variety of drugs he admitted to using.” AB Bruner was immediately transported by Security Forces to the Fairbanks Correctional Center where he will be incarcerated until he completes his sentence.

*The stigma of a punitive discharge is commonly recognized by our society. A Bad Conduct Discharge will affect an individual’s future with regard to legal rights, economic opportunities, and social acceptability. Such a discharge deprives one of substantially all benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Air Force establishment. A bad conduct discharge is a severe punishment and may be adjudged for one who, in the discretion of the court, warrants severe punishment.*

#### **Other Military Justice News<sup>1</sup>**

- On 26 November 2019, court martial charges were preferred against four Eielson airmen, all related to drug use. As many as eight additional airmen may be facing court martial charges for drugs.
- On 27 November 2019, an airman under drug related charges was placed in pretrial confinement. A hearing was held on 3 December 2019. Pursuant to Rule for Court Martial 305 and Article 10, UCMJ, the hearing officer determined that the airman should remain in confinement until the court martial.
- A General Court Martial, *United States v. Plaster*, is scheduled to convene on 6 January 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> Airmen are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt by legal evidence in a court of law.