

Investigation Summary: DCC Resignation Email

Sender identification and public-record investigation

Prepared from the uploaded November 19, 2021 resignation email and subsequent public-web research

1. Source Document

The starting document is a November 19, 2021 resignation/exit email addressed to Nicole Elliott, Director of the California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). The sender identifies themselves as one of the two original special investigators hired by CalCannabis for Mendocino County in February 2019. The sender says they had returned from Afghanistan in 2018 after serving as an Army officer leading 158 soldiers in construction and expansion of coalition bases. The email describes concerns about DCC compliance, illicit-market diversion, CCTT/METRC practices, licensing, and enforcement.

2. Key Identifying Clues in the Email

- One of the two original CalCannabis special investigators assigned to Mendocino County in February 2019.
- Previously served as an Army officer and returned from Afghanistan in 2018.
- Led 158 soldiers involved in constructing and expanding coalition bases.
- Worked extensively in the Emerald Triangle and was among a small group of investigators covering the region.
- Personally led an investigation involving two companies allegedly using nursery licenses to falsify CCTT records.
- The investigation allegedly involved 75,977 illegally grown plants and an application site containing approximately 20 tons of unlicensed cannabis.
- The sender says an extensive investigative report was written and presented to Compliance leadership.
- The sender resigned on November 19, 2021.

3. Public Reporting and Government Follow-Up

Los Angeles Times article: [Contamination fears drive push to remake state cannabis agency](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-03-03/frustrated-by-state-delay-a-county-declares-a-cannabis-health-emergency)
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Public reporting subsequently established that the resignation letter was obtained through a California Public Records Act request and reported by the Los Angeles Times. The reporting describes the author as a DCC special investigator handling cannabis-control cases in Mendocino County.

The letter also led to a governmental review. The available reporting indicates that the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency referred the matter to the California Attorney General's Office. The review interviewed five people and was closed in February 2022. The agencies characterized the referred allegation as unsubstantiated, while the underlying investigative records have not been publicly released.

4. Related Public Litigation and Regulatory Material

Separate litigation around the same period raised related allegations concerning California's cannabis track-and-trace system, METRC/CCTT, diversion into illicit markets, and so-called 'burner distributors.' These proceedings do not establish that the resignation email's allegations were true, nor do they establish that they were caused by the email. They are relevant because they independently document disputes concerning some of the same regulatory mechanisms and enforcement issues.

California regulatory comments also document discussion of 'no-source entry' mechanisms involving plants, clones, genetics, and CCTT/METRC. This supports the conclusion that the terminology used in the resignation letter corresponds to a real regulatory issue, but does not independently validate the sender's allegations.

5. Sender Identification Investigation

The investigation initially focused on identifying the two original Mendocino County investigators from the February 2019 hiring cohort. A California Statewide Law Enforcement Association record confirms that seven new CalCannabis Special Investigators attended a new-employee orientation on February 13, 2019. This provides a concrete cohort for reconstruction.

Misty Rhoads was identified as a CalCannabis Special Investigator beginning in 2019 and appearing in public enforcement-related records. However, no reliable public evidence was found connecting Rhoads to the Afghanistan/Army/158-soldier biography, so she should not be identified as the sender on the present evidence.

An earlier hypothesis that the sender was necessarily female was subsequently rejected because the available public evidence does not establish the sender's sex strongly enough to use it as an exclusion criterion.

6. Investigation of the 75,977-Plant Lead

The exact figure of 75,977 plants was searched across public web sources, including combinations with CCTT/METRC, nursery licenses, DCC/CalCannabis, Mendocino, Humboldt, Sonoma, and other Northern California terms. No independent indexed public record was located that both matches the exact figure and identifies the two companies.

The letter's wording indicates that 75,977 may represent an aggregate of plants entered through falsified CCTT transfers rather than a single physical seizure. This likely explains why searching for a '75,977-plant bust' has not produced a useful match.

The reported 20-ton clue was also compared with prominent California cannabis seizures. A well-known 2019 Santa Barbara County case involving approximately 20 tons and 350,000 plants does not fit the facts in the resignation letter and should not be treated as the same event.

7. Most Promising Next Research Route

1. Reconstruct the February 2019 CalCannabis Special Investigator cohort and determine which two were assigned to Mendocino County.
2. Cross-reference those investigators against Army service, Afghanistan deployment, officer status, and the distinctive 158-soldier command detail.
3. Search Northern California county planning, CEQA, licensing, eradication, and court records for the sequence described in the email: eradication → application/licensing → subsequent state license.
4. Search administrative and court records for nursery operators with unusually large CCTT/METRC discrepancies rather than relying solely on the 75,977 figure.
5. Locate records associated with the two-company investigation or the alleged 75,977-plant CCTT falsification.
6. Once a candidate sender is identified, independently confirm the identity using the military biography and the February 2019 CalCannabis employment record.

8. Jeff Nordahl Lead

Jeff Nordahl was identified as a public commentator who has recently discussed the same resignation letter and has publicly asked who the Northern California operator/network described in it may have been. His public LinkedIn profile and the Jade Nectar/Good Farma business connection provide legitimate public contact routes. No verified personal phone number or direct personal email address was located.

Because Nordahl appears to be independently interested in identifying the operator, contacting him may produce leads that are not indexed by conventional search engines.

9. Current Assessment

Question	Current assessment
Authenticity of resignation email	Strongly supported; independently reported as obtained through public-records process.
Government review triggered by email	Supported by public reporting; review closed in February 2022.

Public investigative report available	Not located. An investigative file/review existed, but underlying records have not been publicly released.
Sender identified	Not yet. Identification remains plausible but unproven.
February 2019 CalCannabis cohort	Confirmed as a useful personnel starting point.
Misty Rhoads = sender	Not established; no military-biography match found.
75,977-plant investigation located	Not yet. Exact figure has not yielded an independent underlying case.
20-ton Santa Barbara case = sender's case	No; available facts do not match.
Related METRC/CCTT issues independently documented	Yes, through litigation and California regulatory materials.

10. Important Caution

The resignation email contains serious allegations concerning named government officials, cannabis businesses, and regulatory conduct. The research summarized here distinguishes allegations in the email from independently verified facts. No company or individual should be identified as the subject of the alleged 75,977-plant investigation without documentary evidence connecting that person or entity to the facts.

- Los Angeles Times — reporting on the resignation letter, DCC, and the subsequent DOJ review.
- California Department of Cannabis Control — regulatory and public-comment materials concerning CCTT/METRC and source-entry issues.
- California appellate/court records concerning litigation over DCC, METRC, diversion, and 'burner distributors.'
- California Statewide Law Enforcement Association — February 2019 CalCannabis Special Investigator orientation record.
- Jeff Nordahl — public LinkedIn posts discussing the resignation letter and seeking identification of the operator described in it.

Verified link: [Los Angeles Times, Paige St. John, March 3, 2025 — the article contains the public-records discussion of the November 2021 resignation letter and the subsequent 2022 California DOJ review.](#)

Selected Public Sources