

SECTION 11.17.0: LINKS SUMMARY

DCC SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR RESIGNATION — EXIT EMAIL RELATED

The source document for everything in 11.17, and the effort to obtain it from the agency that produced it.

2021.11.19 — DCC Special Investigator Resignation Letter to Director Nicole Elliott

Four pages, sent at 8:57 on a Friday morning under the subject line “DCC Exit Email.” The author identifies as one of the two original special investigators hired by CalCannabis for Mendocino County in February 2019, an Army officer returned from Afghanistan where they led 158 soldiers. It is their last day. The name is redacted — by the *Los Angeles Times*, whose reporting brought the document to light in March 2025, not by the Department.

This is a regulator’s own investigator telling the Director, in writing, that the compliance programme is not functioning. It is the reason every other request in this section exists.

Off-ramps — jump straight to the record:

- ▶ The opening question — whether Compliance is a functional regulatory body “or if the accusations that we are a ‘pay to play’ system are accurate.” p. 1
 - ▶ Licences issued to operators the Department itself eradicated — “[m]ere weeks after these warrants, cannabis licenses are nevertheless issued to the same operators.” p. 1
 - ▶ Of 2,900+ annual interactions, “5 or fewer cases generated by investigators result in any legal action.” p. 2
 - ▶ The “no source” programme — field staff directed to enable CCTT entries with no traceable legal source; roughly \$90 million over eight months, presented to Compliance leadership in February 2021. p. 2
 - ▶ The 75,977-plant investigation the author personally led and briefed to leadership — two companies, falsified CCTT transfers, a site holding 20 tons of unlicensed cannabis, licences issued weeks later, no citation ever. p. 3
 - ▶ Why they left — “it isn’t the bad actors that have driven me from this agency, it’s the good ones.” p. 3
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2026.08.24 — Resignation Letter Investigation Summary

A four-page working assessment of the exit email: whether it is authentic, what can be verified independently, and whether the author can be identified from public sources. Its conclusions are deliberately negative where the evidence is thin — it rejects one candidate identification for want of any matching military biography, and abandons an assumption about the author’s sex as unsupported.

Included because a reader should be able to see the reasoning, including where it stopped.

Off-ramps — jump straight to the record:

- ▶ The identifying details the letter itself supplies. p. 1
 - ▶ What is independently corroborated, and what is not. p. 2
 - ▶ The identification attempt — and why no identification is asserted. p. 2
 - ▶ The 75,977-plant search, and why an exact-figure search does not locate the case. p. 3
 - ▶ Current assessment table — sender identified: not yet. p. 4
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2026.09.05 — Cotton to DCC, CPRA Request re the November 19, 2021 Exit Email

Two pages. The email had never actually been requested from DCC. The Department produced it once already, under the Public Records Act, and the redaction now on the public copy was applied afterward by the newspaper. This asks for the record as the Department produced it, plus the Department's own production file for it: any internal reply or transmittal, the request number it was produced under, any redaction or exemption log, and any record of a referral arising from it.

It expressly does not ask the Department to make any disclosure it has not already determined to be proper.

Off-ramps — jump straight to the record:

- ▶ The record sought, and the note that the redaction was applied after the Department's production. p. 001
 - ▶ The four items — the email, internal transmittals, the production record, and any referral. p. 001
 - ▶ On redaction — if the Department redacted the version it produced, the express provision must be stated. p. 002
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2026.09.05 — DCC Email Thread re the Exit Email Request

The transmittal, sent 3:33 p.m. to the Department's records unit as a new request rather than a reply, so that it receives its own tracking number.

Off-ramps — jump straight to the record:

- ▶ The request as transmitted, and the note that the Department has produced this record before. p. 1