



CUI

INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense

MARCH 3, 2021



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**REAR ADMIRAL (LOWER HALF)
RONNY LYNN JACKSON, M.D.
U.S. NAVY, RETIRED**

Controlled by: DoD OIG, Administrative Investigations

CUI Category: Law Enforcement

Distribution/Dissemination Control: FEDCON

POC: [REDACTED]

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE

The document contains information that may be exempt
from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of
Information Act.

CUI



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION:
REAR ADMIRAL (LOWER HALF) RONNY LYNN JACKSON, M.D.
U.S. NAVY, RETIRED

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Complaint Origin and Allegations

The President nominated Rear Admiral (Lower Half) (RDML) Ronny Lynn Jackson, M.D., to serve as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on April 16, 2018. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs subsequently interviewed 23 current and former colleagues of RDML Jackson, who "raised serious concerns about [RDML] Jackson's temperament and ethics and cast doubt on his ability to lead the second largest agency in government." The Ranking Member of that Committee, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), released a two-page summary on April 25, 2018, with the concerns grouped into three categories: "Prescribing Practices," "Hostile Work Environment," and "Drunken[n]ess." The Senate Armed Services Committee asked the DoD Office of Inspector General (OIG) to investigate the allegations against RDML Jackson on April 26, 2018.¹

The DoD Hotline received 12 complaints from April 26, 2018, through June 7, 2018. The complaints and additional allegations raised by witnesses generally alleged that RDML Jackson, while serving as Director, White House Medical Unit (WHMU), a DoD unit tasked with providing medical support to the White House, and, while serving as Physician to the President:

- failed to foster and maintain a healthy command climate in the WHMU, and failed to treat DoD subordinates with dignity and respect;
- engaged in alcohol-related misconduct, including wrecking a government vehicle while intoxicated;
- expected rum or other alcohol to be stocked in his lodging room while on official travel, or caused staff members to fear retribution if they did not comply with the expectation; and
- misused Ambien for his personal use.

We initiated this investigation on May 18, 2018. We engaged in a series of conversations with the Office of White House Counsel who would not agree to an interview of RDML Jackson without attorneys from the Office of White House Counsel. Ultimately, we agreed to conduct an interview of RDML Jackson in the presence of his personal attorneys and attorneys from the Office of White House Counsel on October 10, 2018.² During the interview, an attorney from the Office of White House Counsel instructed RDML Jackson not to answer any questions concerning events after his appointment as the Physician to the President in July 2013. Therefore, because a majority

¹ RDML Jackson held the rank of Captain, U.S. Navy, from May 1, 2010, until October 1, 2016, when he was promoted to the grade of Rear Admiral (Lower Half). Although he held different ranks during different periods of time related to the allegations, and retired during the investigation, we refer to him throughout this report as RDML Jackson.

² The AI Investigations Manual "does not allow DoD organization or command attorneys to attend interviews for the purpose of representing the interests of individual employees." In this instance, we authorized an extraordinary exception to DoD OIG policy to allow the presence of Government attorneys at this interview who did not represent RDML Jackson.

of the allegations involved conduct that occurred after his appointment as the Physician to the President, our interview of RDML Jackson was limited in scope and unproductive.

We suspended our fieldwork on October 11, 2018, to discuss with the Office of White House Counsel their concerns about the conduct of our investigation and determine whether the President would invoke executive privilege. After a series of phone calls, e-mail exchanges, and meetings with attorneys at the Office of White House Counsel, we informed the Office of White House Counsel on August 22, 2019, of our plans to continue our investigation into the allegations against RDML Jackson. The Office of White House Counsel did not invoke executive privilege.

In addition to continuing our investigation, we initiated an evaluation of the WHMU as part of a larger evaluation of the National Capital Region (NCR) Medical Directorate Executive Medicine Services on September 3, 2019. We will release the results of that evaluation as a separate report.

We resumed our fieldwork on September 4, 2019, into the allegations against RDML Jackson. In total, we interviewed 78 witnesses and RDML Jackson. We also reviewed documents provided by officials from the White House Military Office (WHMO) and from the WHMU, WHMO's subordinate medical directorate, including policy memorandums and personnel documents, law enforcement records, and applicable standards. We present the applicable standards in more detail in Appendix A. We also reviewed reprisal allegations related to this matter and address them in Appendix B.

Conclusions

We could not review these matters fully because of the Office of the White House Counsel's insistence about being present at all interviews of current WHMU employees who interacted with RDML Jackson and had knowledge relevant to this investigation. We determined that the potential chilling effect of their presence would prevent us from receiving accurate testimony.³ Despite our decision not to pursue testimony from current WHMU employees, we believe the evidence we received from WHMU employees who were no longer employees at the White House and the documents we could access is sufficient to determine the facts and reach conclusions regarding these allegations based on a preponderance of available evidence.

Alleged Failure to Treat Subordinates with Dignity and Respect

We concluded that RDML Jackson's overall course of conduct toward subordinates disparaged, belittled, bullied, and humiliated them, and fostered a negative work environment by failing to treat subordinates with dignity and respect. We also concluded that RDML Jackson failed to conduct himself in an exemplary manner in his treatment of subordinates throughout his tenure at WHMU. His treatment of subordinates created a negative work environment that witnesses said made an unfavorable impact on the overall command climate.

³ We provided a copy of our draft report of investigation to the Office of the White House Counsel to review for any privileged information it believed should be withheld from public release. It identified no information to withhold, but in an e-mail dated January 19, 2021, a representative from the Office of the White House Counsel objected to the first two sentences in this paragraph. They rejected "any suggestion [that their presence] at interviews may have had a 'potential chilling effect' that would prevent the Inspector General from 'receiving accurate testimony.'" They stated that the attendance of White House Counsel attorneys at interviews was "important for preserving Executive Privilege, especially when employees who work in the White House complex are interviewed."

Alleged Alcohol-Related Incidents and Prescription Drug Use

We concluded that RDML Jackson engaged in inappropriate conduct involving the use of alcohol during two incidents. Both incidents occurred during presidential trips while RDML Jackson was in charge of providing medical care and treatment to U.S. Government officials—a trip to Manila, Philippines, in April 2014 and a trip to Bariloche, Argentina, in March 2016.

We found no evidence to support the allegation that RDML Jackson expected rum or other alcohol to be stocked in his lodging room while on official travel, or that staff members feared retribution if they did not comply with the expectation.

We found no evidence to support the allegation that RDML Jackson “got drunk and wrecked a government vehicle.”

We concluded that RDML Jackson used Ambien during long official overseas flights. We are not aware of any specific WHMO prohibitions against the use of Ambien during long official overseas flights. While the WHMO policy memorandum required RDML Jackson to notify his supervisor in advance of taking Ambien, we did not ascertain if he provided such a notification. However, the witnesses, all of whom were WHMU medical personnel, raised concerns about RDML Jackson’s potential incapacity to provide proper medical care during such flights while using Ambien because of the common side effects described in the section of this report titled, “RDML Jackson’s Use of Ambien.”

The following sections provide the detailed results of our investigation. We first provide background information about RDML Jackson, the WHMO, and the WHMU. Second, we discuss RDML Jackson’s alleged failure to treat subordinates with dignity and respect. Third, we discuss alleged alcohol-related incidents. Finally, we present RDML Jackson’s alleged personal misuse of Ambien.⁴

RDML Jackson’s Response to our Conclusions

We provided RDML Jackson our tentative conclusions on January 22, 2021, and gave him the opportunity to comment on the results before finalizing our report. RDML Jackson’s attorney notified us on February 9, 2021, that RDML Jackson had no comment for our report.

II. BACKGROUND

White House Military Office

The White House Military Office (WHMO) provides military support for White House functions, including food service, presidential transportation, medical support and emergency medical services, and hospitality services. The office oversees policy related to WHMO functions and DoD assets, and ensures the White House requirements are met with the highest standards of quality. The WHMO units include the White House Communications Agency, the Presidential Airlift Group, the WHMU, Camp David, Marine Helicopter Squadron One, the Presidential Food Service, and the White House Transportation Agency.

⁴ We based our conclusions on a preponderance of the evidence, consistent with our normal process in administrative investigations.

The WHMU provides worldwide emergency and comprehensive medical care to the President, the Vice President, their families, and other eligible beneficiaries. The WHMU also provides emergency medical services for more than 1.5 million annual visitors to the White House and guests of the President, as well as national and international heads of state and diplomats. The WHMU's staff consists of doctors, physician assistants, nurses, medics, and medical administrators.

Rear Admiral (Lower Half) Ronny L. Jackson, M.D., U.S. Navy

RDML Jackson began his active duty naval service upon graduation from medical school in 1995. He subsequently graduated from the Undersea Medical Officer Program in 1996 and served in numerous operational assignments until 2001, when he began his residency in emergency medicine. In 2004, he completed his emergency medicine residency and stayed an additional year as a clinical faculty physician in the Emergency Medical Residency Program in Portsmouth, Virginia. In 2005, RDML Jackson deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as an emergency medicine physician for a forward-deployed surgical shock trauma platoon.

RDML Jackson reported to the WHMU on June 1, 2006, and served as a physician until May 1, 2008, when he became the WHMU Deputy Director. RDML Jackson was promoted to the WHMU Director position in May 2010 and in July 2013, was selected to be the Physician to the President. RDML Jackson served as both the Physician to the President and the WHMU Director from July 2013 through November 2014. RDML Jackson ended his duties as the WHMU Director on December 1, 2014, but remained the Physician to the President. The President appointed RDML Jackson as a Deputy Assistant to the President as well as Physician to the President on January 20, 2017. RDML Jackson ended his service as the Physician to the President on March 28, 2018, but continued to serve as the senior physician in the WHMU. The President nominated RDML Jackson to be the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on April 16, 2018. The President appointed RDML Jackson as Assistant to the President and Chief Medical Advisor on February 2, 2019.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE ALLEGATIONS

Chronology of Significant Events

Table 1 lists the significant events related to this investigation.

Table 1. Chronology of Significant Events

Date	Event
June 1, 2006	RDML Jackson reports to the WHMU as a physician.
May 2010	RDML Jackson begins his duties as the WHMU Director.
July 2013	RDML Jackson begins his duties as the Physician to the President and continues to serve as the WHMU Director.
December 2014	RDML Jackson ends his duties as the WHMU Director but continues to serve as the Physician to the President.
October 1, 2016	The Navy promotes RDML Jackson to Rear Admiral (Lower Half).
March 28, 2018	RDML Jackson ends his duties as the Physician to the President.
April 16, 2018	The President nominates RDML Jackson to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
April 26, 2018	The Senate Armed Services Committee asks the DoD OIG to investigate RDML Jackson.
April 26, 2018–June 7, 2018	The DoD Hotline receives 12 complaints against RDML Jackson.
May 18, 2018	The DoD OIG initiates the investigation.

Date	Event
June 20, 2018	The President withdraws RDML Jackson's nomination to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
February 2, 2019	The President appoints RDML Jackson as Assistant to the President and Chief Medical Advisor.
December 1, 2019	RDML Jackson retires from the Navy.

Source: The DoD OIG

A. ALLEGED FAILURE TO TREAT SUBORDINATES WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

RDML Jackson was promoted to the WHMU Director position in May 2010 and in July 2013, he was selected to be the Physician to the President. RDML Jackson served as both the Physician to the President and the WHMU Director from July 2013 through November 2014. RDML Jackson ended his duties as the WHMU Director in December 2014. Although RDML Jackson no longer led the WHMU in a formal leadership position at that time, the WHMU provided logistics and resource support to his position as the Physician to the President. As the Physician to the President, RDML Jackson was the senior medical officer at the White House, interacted constantly with WHMU employees, and signed WHMU employee evaluations until early 2017. As one former WHMO Director told us, "[RDML Jackson] never had a minimal role. He was always there. His personality loomed large [over the WHMU]."

The Senate Armed Services Committee referred allegations that RDML Jackson was responsible, in part, for a poor command climate within the WHMU, which was described as "hostile" and "toxic." We also received allegations that RDML Jackson screamed, yelled, cursed, or belittled subordinate WHMU employees.

We asked all 78 witnesses who served with RDML Jackson from 2012 through March 2018 about these allegations. Of the 78 witnesses, 15 were members of the WHMO headquarters staff, members of other WHMO units, or military aides, and had limited firsthand knowledge of the allegations. The remaining 63 witnesses were former WHMU employees, subordinate to RDML Jackson, and had opportunity to interact with RDML Jackson during the period of the allegations in this investigation.⁵ Although 3 of these 63 witnesses were former WHMU employees, subordinate to RDML Jackson, we found that 2 had little or no interaction with RDML Jackson, and the third witness did not give us relevant information.

We present evidence from the 60 remaining former WHMU subordinates in this section. We asked all 60 witnesses to describe their relationships with RDML Jackson during their service in the WHMU. We asked them if RDML Jackson yelled, screamed, cursed, or belittled them, and if they saw or heard from other WHMU subordinates that RDML Jackson treated others similarly. We also asked them about RDML Jackson's impact on the WHMU command climate.

We asked each of the 60 subordinates if RDML Jackson failed to treat them with dignity and respect, or if they ever saw or heard about RDML Jackson failing to treat other subordinates with dignity and respect. We sorted the witness comments into four groups as shown in Table 2, which summarizes their responses.

⁵ Many of the witnesses we interviewed told us that the passage of 2 to 8 years hampered their recollection of the alleged events.

Table 2. Summary of Experiences of Former WHMU Subordinates

Witness Responses about RDML Jackson Yelling, Screaming, Cursing, or Belittling Subordinates	Number of Witnesses	RDML Jackson's Impact on the WHMU Command Climate (Number of Witnesses)	
<u>Did not</u> experience, see, or hear about RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates.	4	Favorable	3
		Unfavorable	1
		Not Applicable	0
<u>Heard from others</u> about RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates, but did not experience or see it firsthand.	27	Favorable	9
		Unfavorable	14
		Not Applicable	4
<u>Saw firsthand</u> RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling other subordinates, but did not experience it themselves.	19	Favorable	1
		Unfavorable	14
		Not Applicable	4
<u>Experienced firsthand</u> RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or directing belittling comments at them. (All but one of them <u>also saw</u> RDML Jackson treat other subordinates similarly.)	10	Favorable	0
		Unfavorable	9
		Not Applicable	1
Totals:		Totals:	
Did not experience, see, or hear about RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates	4	Favorable	13
Experienced, saw, or heard about RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates	56	Unfavorable	38
		Not Applicable	9

Note: "Not Applicable" reflects statements of witnesses that the WHMU command climate was due to other factors not attributable to RDML Jackson, such as operational tempo and organizational structure.

Source: The DoD OIG

Only four witnesses told us that they did not experience, see, or hear about RDML Jackson yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates. The other 56 witnesses described RDML Jackson's behavior toward subordinates as yelling, screeching, rage, tantrums, and meltdowns. They told us that RDML Jackson would have quick bursts of anger, was prone to cursing, would call subordinates names, had an explosive temper, and established a workplace of fear and intimidation. The witnesses described how RDML Jackson's behavior had a negative effect that permeated throughout the unit, telling us that nurses were stressed, doctors felt demoralized, and that the unit had the worst command climate they had ever experienced. We list a few examples of comments made by the witnesses below and list more in Appendix C.

- If he's in a hurry, and if he's upset ... he is prone to having meltdowns and tantrums. ... and I didn't believe it because I was warned ahead of time ... and this was by far the worst behavior ... I've ever seen [in my medical career].
- [P]eople walked on eggshells quite a bit, and almost had a hard time saying no because if they pushed back on anything, that's when he [RDML Jackson] usually went high and to the right.
- [RDML Jackson's] explosive temper, the demeaning glances, the ... interest in anything to get ahead at either the expense or at the disregard for those under his charge.

- I never saw [RDML Jackson] reward anyone. I only saw him break people down. I never saw him ever put the needs of the mission or another [service member] before his own, ever.
- [RDML Jackson] established a workplace where fear and intimidation were kind of the hallmarks of him, his command, and control of his subordinates
- [RDML Jackson was] a toxic leader because he created an environment below him where people were afraid, where people were on edge, where people didn't want to come to work, people didn't want to work around him and for him in the [White House] Clinic.
- [RDML Jackson] was a crappy manager at best. He was all over the place. Very erratic, very unpredictable.
- [I]n my professional military experience, it was arguably the worst command climate that I have experienced, and I attribute that largely to Dr. Jackson.

In addition to the comments about RDML Jackson's behavior, witnesses also described many incidents to provide context for his yelling, berating, and cursing at subordinates. For instance, one witness described how RDML Jackson yelled and cursed over the telephone at a medical subordinate while the subordinate was dealing with a medical emergency in Africa. In another incident, witnesses described a trip to Martha's Vineyard when RDML Jackson cursed at subordinates for failing to purchase a specific type of bug spray. Witnesses described yet another incident when RDML Jackson cursed at a subordinate in front of his family who were all invited to a White House event, telling the subordinate, "I don't know what the f**k you think you're doing here" and "You need to get out of here, I don't want you here." We provide additional information about those incidents as well as several other incidents in Appendix C.

DoD OIG Conclusions on Dignity and Respect

We concluded, by a preponderance of the evidence, that RDML Jackson's overall course of conduct toward subordinates disparaged, belittled, bullied, and humiliated them, and fostered a negative work environment by failing to treat subordinates with dignity and respect. We also concluded that RDML Jackson failed to conduct himself in an exemplary manner in his treatment of subordinates throughout his tenure at WHMU. His treatment of subordinates also created a negative work environment that witnesses said made an unfavorable impact on the overall command climate.

The U.S. Navy Regulations and the Joint Ethics Regulation (JER) require officers to treat subordinates with dignity and respect, to be a positive influence, and to avoid abusive language. Section 8167, title 10, United States Code (10 U.S.C. § 8167), "Requirement of exemplary conduct," requires Navy officers to show exemplary conduct. RDML Jackson failed to adhere to these standards.

RDML Jackson had a duty to promote and safeguard workplace morale, to treat subordinates with dignity and respect, to be a positive influence, and to avoid bullying subordinates by verbally berating or humiliating them. However, only four witnesses from his unit who

interacted with RDML Jackson told us they did not personally experience, see, or hear about him yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates.

The overwhelming majority of witnesses (56) we interviewed who worked with RDML Jackson from 2012 through 2018 told us they personally experienced, saw, or heard about him yelling, screaming, cursing, or belittling subordinates. Many of these witnesses described RDML Jackson's behavior with words and phrases such as "meltdowns," "yells for no reason," "rages," "tantrums," "lashes out," and "aggressive." These witnesses also described RDML Jackson's leadership style with terms such as "tyrant," "dictator," "control freak," "hallmarks of fear and intimidation," "crappy manager," and "not a leader at all."

A smaller number of witnesses (13) told us RDML Jackson had a somewhat favorable impact on the command climate. They described his impact on the unit with comments such as "ran a strict ship," "demanded things get done correctly," "able to balance so many things at one time," and "had a huge impact on me." However, a much larger number of witnesses (38) told us that RDML Jackson had an unfavorable impact on the command climate. In the following quoted comments, those witnesses described his impact on the command climate with phrases such as:

- worst command climate I have ever experienced;
- nurses were stressed, doctors were demoralized, enlisted [medics] were scared of him;
- never put the needs of the mission or another before his own;
- wanted to eliminate people who were doing a good job;
- wanted to be the most favorite guy to the President;
- never wanted to lose his position;
- afraid others would look more favorable than him;
- we were all walking on eggshells;
- people below him were afraid, did not want to come to work;
- people avoided him at all cost;
- if he was coming, you found something else to do;
- worst command climate in [over 20] years of service;
- so much distrust and poor treatment of people; and
- crappy manager at best, all over the place, very erratic and unpredictable.

Witnesses told us that RDML Jackson would yell and curse about trivial matters such as a lack of small pill bottles. Witnesses also told us that RDML Jackson called subordinates names such as "idiots," "lazy f**kers," and "mother-f**kers." In Appendix C, we list comments from witnesses who described RDML Jackson's behavior toward subordinates as yelling, screeching, rage, tantrums, and meltdowns, and highlight six incidents in which he failed to conduct himself in an exemplary manner or failed to treat subordinates with dignity and respect.

Some witnesses told us RDML Jackson apologized after some incidents and RDML Jackson said his conduct was not professional or respectful. We agree that his conduct was not professional or respectful.

We concluded that RDML Jackson's overall course of conduct disparaged, belittled, bullied, and humiliated subordinates, and created a negative WHMU work environment. RDML Jackson also failed to conduct himself in an exemplary manner and made an unfavorable impact on the overall WHMU command climate.

B. ALLEGED ALCOHOL-RELATED INCIDENTS AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE

The complaints and witnesses alleged that RDML Jackson engaged in alcohol-related misconduct. Specifically, we received allegations that RDML Jackson:

- while on official travel to Manila, Philippines, made inappropriate comments about a female medical subordinate's anatomy and, while intoxicated, knocked on her door in the middle of the night;
- was drunk on duty in Bariloche, Argentina;
- while under the influence of alcohol, wrecked a Government vehicle; and
- while on official travel, expected subordinates to stock his hotel room with alcohol.

We also investigated witness concerns that RDML Jackson used Ambien while on duty and while on call for providing medical care for Government officials on travel, including the President.

Manila, Philippines

Witnesses alleged that RDML Jackson made a comment about a female medical subordinate's breasts and buttocks during a presidential trip to Asia in April 2014. They also alleged that while staying in a hotel in Manila during this trip, RDML Jackson knocked on the same female subordinate's door, while drunk, in the middle of the night and told her "I need you." We identified and interviewed four witnesses who travelled to Manila and had relevant information about this incident. We refer to the witnesses as Manila Witnesses 1 through 4.

At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was in charge of providing medical care during the presidential trip to Asia from April 22, 2014, through April 29, 2014. Manila Witness 1, a medical subordinate, told us that during the Asia trip, before arriving in Manila, RDML Jackson told him a female medical subordinate (Manila Witness 2), who was also on the trip, had "great t**s," and "what a nice a**," and that RDML Jackson also told Manila Witness 1 that he would "like to see more of her tattoos."

Another witness (Manila Witness 3) told us that shortly after they arrived in Manila, he saw RDML Jackson "drinking in the hotel lobby and ... get[ting] into a car with a drink in his hand to go out on the town." Later that evening, RDML Jackson met Manila Witness 3 and other military medical subordinates at a restaurant.

Manila Witness 1 told us about meeting RDML Jackson at the restaurant that night.

You could smell alcohol. You can see his [RDML Jackson's] flush face, his red nose. It was clear he had been drinking [before meeting at the restaurant] ... So if it was a scale of 1 to 5 like I'd put him at a 3ish. He had a buzz, but he was still functional. He wasn't so drunk he couldn't get in the car or something like that. So he could communicate. He knew where we were going. He knew he was coming to meet with us and where we were.

Both Manila Witness 1 and Witness 3 told us RDML Jackson drank alcoholic beverages with his subordinates at the restaurant, and they observed RDML Jackson drink four to six alcoholic beverages in addition to what he already consumed before arriving. RDML Jackson and the two witnesses returned to their hotel where RDML Jackson and Manila Witness 1 planned to eat balut in RDML Jackson's room. Balut is a fertilized bird egg that is incubated for a period of 14 to 21 days

depending on the local culture, and then boiled or steamed. The contents are eaten directly from the shell.

Manila Witness 4, who had not gone drinking with RDML Jackson, told us that later that night he heard a loud noise, went to RDML Jackson's room, and saw RDML Jackson with two or three other military medical subordinates. This witness said he told them that they "need to be quiet because you're getting too loud. I don't want you bugging the President." The witness also told us that within five minutes, RDML Jackson went to the witness's room and asked if he was out of line. The witness told him that he was not out of line. The witness told us that RDML Jackson "was very concerned that he was being too loud or that the President may be upset with him."

Sometime between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m., RDML Jackson went to the female subordinate's (Manila Witness 2's) room. Manila Witness 1 told us he went to locate RDML Jackson and found him "pounding on [Manila Witness 2's] door ... and ... carrying on." Manila Witness 1 told us that he "thought like, 'Oh, I just need to tell him he's being too loud.' But I remember the look [on Manila Witness 2's face and she] was not okay with what was going on."

Manila Witness 2 (the female medical subordinate) told us RDML Jackson woke her up during the middle of the night with a "loud banging on my door." She said that when she opened her door, she smelled alcohol on RDML Jackson's breath and believed he was "visibly intoxicated." She added:

he was kind of like leaning with one arm against the railing of my doorway, and ... he had kind of bloodshot eyes. You could smell the alcohol on his breath, and he leaned into my room and he said, "I need you." I felt really uncomfortable ... I kind of stepped back but I kept my hand on ... the door but I stepped back into my room because I still wasn't sure what exactly this meant. Did he need me for some medical problem or what exactly was going on? So I kind of reiterated to him, "Sir, I'm sorry, sir. What do you need?" And he told me, he "needed me" again and, "I need you to come to my room."

Manila Witness 2 told us Manila Witness 1 grabbed Dr. Jackson on the shoulder and said, "Hey, sir. What are you doing? We're ... going back to your room." RDML Jackson kept pointing to the female subordinate and said, "No, no. We need her. We need her. Get her. We need her." Manila Witness 1 moved RDML Jackson into the hallway and told RDML Jackson the female subordinate would get dressed and go with them to RDML Jackson's room. According to the female subordinate, she and Manila Witness 1 made eye contact and Manila Witness 1 "kind of reassured me like, 'I've got you. I'm not going to let you be alone [with RDML Jackson].'" Manila Witness 1 told us he remembered the female subordinate looking at him with concern about RDML Jackson's behavior.

The female subordinate told us she changed from her pajamas into clothes and "Got [her] medical response bag ... because I still wasn't sure what the whole situation was about. And went to [RDML Jackson's room]." Once inside RDML Jackson's room, she observed:

Dr. Jackson was in [the room] holding this ... grocery bag of ... balut. [RDML Jackson] said, "Take my phone. Take my phone. We need to take pictures. I want to film this. I want to film myself eating these eggs." And he's screaming. I kind of describe this is like frat boy type behavior.

The female subordinate told us RDML Jackson started to eat the balut and screamed, "It f**king stinks. I can feel its f**king feathers." The female subordinate also told us she looked at Manila Witness 1, thinking, "I'm done. This is not where I want to be. I don't know what this man [RDML Jackson] was coming to my room for in the first place, but this is clearly not related to my job. I'm going." She stated that she grabbed her medical bag and, as she was leaving the room, a Secret Service agent told her he thought RDML Jackson was going to wake the President.

Manila Witness 1 told us that the next day he thought about RDML Jackson's comments about the female subordinate's anatomy. He recalled thinking it was "probably not a good idea" for RDML Jackson "to be around [the female subordinate's] door after he's been drinking." After the trip, Manila Witness 1 told the female subordinate (Manila Witness 2) about the comments RDML Jackson made about her anatomy. According to Manila Witness 1, the female subordinate said she was concerned about RDML Jackson's intentions towards her when RDML Jackson knocked on her door in Manila.

We asked the female subordinate what she was thinking when RDML Jackson knocked on her door in the middle of the night and said "I need you." She told us that "when a drunk man comes to your room and they say, 'I need you,' your mind goes to the worst. I really felt it was a sexually inappropriate comment." She told us "[a Navy officer in RDML Jackson's position] should not be knocking on my door drunk in the middle of the night telling me he 'needs me' no matter what he needs me for."

Bariloche, Argentina

A complaint alleged that RDML Jackson appeared to be drunk on duty as he left Bariloche, Argentina. At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was the Physician to the President and in charge of providing medical care for a presidential trip to Argentina from March 23, 2016, through March 24, 2016.

A WHMO policy memorandum in effect at the time prohibited the use of alcohol for all WHMO personnel during presidential trips. Specifically, the requirement stated that:

during travel or other related support missions directly supporting White House principals, refrain from consuming any alcohol for twenty-four (24) hours prior to the principal's arrival at the trip site and until two (2) hours after the departure of the principal or two (2) hours after the individual WHMO member's completion of post-visit duties (whichever occurs later).

Two witnesses told us RDML Jackson was aware of this policy. One of the witnesses told us that while on a previous Presidential trip in August 2015, RDML Jackson was drinking a beer and told him the policy was "ridiculous."

During the 2016 trip to Argentina, RDML Jackson accompanied the President for a 7-hour visit to Bariloche, Argentina. We interviewed five witnesses who were also on the trip to Bariloche and had relevant information about the incident. We refer to these witnesses as Bariloche Witnesses 1 through 5.

Bariloche Witness 1 told us that when RDML Jackson arrived in Bariloche, he gave his medical bag to the witness, stayed at a hotel with other members of the travelling party, and did not participate in the day's scheduled events. Several witnesses told us that medical personnel in

possession of the medical bag are considered to be on duty and are responsible for providing immediate medical care to the President and the traveling team.

Bariloche Witness 2, who was with RDML Jackson at the hotel, told us RDML Jackson drank a Heineken beer in the early afternoon, and RDML Jackson was not on duty for “at least three hours” after he drank the beer. Bariloche Witness 3 told us that she saw RDML Jackson around lunchtime and that RDML Jackson appeared normal and “[nothing seemed] out of the ordinary.”

At the conclusion of the visit to Bariloche, RDML Jackson took possession of the medical bag from Bariloche Witness 1 and resumed his medical duties for providing immediate medical care to the President and the traveling team. The witness told us RDML Jackson “smelled of alcohol” when he took control of the medical bag. The witness also said, “Was he drunk? I don’t know. I’m not a breathalyzer nor can I do a blood-alcohol level by smelling. But did he smell of alcohol? Yes, he did.”

Bariloche Witness 4 recalled the Bariloche trip but could not remember interacting with RDML Jackson on the trip. Additionally, Bariloche Witness 4 could not remember RDML Jackson’s physical appearance or whether RDML Jackson smelled of alcohol.

Bariloche Witness 5, who was also with RDML Jackson on the flight departing Bariloche, did not remember anything out of the ordinary. Bariloche Witness 5 could not recall how close he sat to RDML Jackson but told us, “At no point with my time with Dr. Jackson have I ever ... smelled alcohol on him, or anything like that.”

Alcohol-Related Accidents with a Government Vehicle

A complaint alleged that RDML Jackson “got drunk and wrecked a government vehicle.”

RDML Jackson denied ever driving while drunk and told us the allegation was “completely false. I have never, ever been in a vehicle accident involving alcohol in my entire life.” We searched law enforcement databases for traffic accident reports involving RDML Jackson. We also asked witnesses if they knew about the allegation. We found no evidence that RDML Jackson was involved in a traffic accident while under the influence of alcohol. We found one police report dated September 1, 2017, which stated that another party vandalized the Government vehicle driven by RDML Jackson.

No information or witness testimony supported the allegation that RDML Jackson “got drunk and wrecked a government vehicle.”

Stocking RDML Jackson’s Lodging with Alcoholic Beverages

Complaints alleged that RDML Jackson expected rum and other alcohol to be stocked in his lodging while he was on official travel, and that staff members feared retribution if they did not purchase alcohol for him.

WHMU medical personnel travelled in advance teams to plan and prepare medical support for presidential trips. We interviewed 29 WHMU witnesses who had direct knowledge of advance team practices. Of the 29 witnesses, 23 served as advance team members and 6 served as medical travel team members.

Witnesses told us the medical travel team accompanied the President and other senior Government officials and often had immediate mission requirements at the travel destination without time to purchase food and beverages. Therefore, members of the advance team regularly purchased light snacks and beverages for the arriving medical travel team. One witness told us the advance team's goal was to provide for those times when the advance team knew the travelling party would not get something to eat or drink. Witnesses stated that the advance team sometimes purchased snacks and beverages that were unique to the country or destination visited by the official party.

We asked witnesses whether RDML Jackson reimbursed members of the advance team who purchased light snacks and beverages for him. Of the 29 witnesses:

- 11 witnesses told us RDML Jackson repaid them or they saw RDML Jackson reimburse other members of the advance team;
- 4 witnesses told us RDML Jackson and other members of the travel team did not reimburse them for the light snacks or beverages, but also told us they spent about five dollars for each member of the medical travel team and had no concerns about supporting to RDML Jackson or any other member of the travel team; and
- 14 witnesses could not provide relevant information about RDML Jackson's reimbursement for purchases of light snacks and beverages.

We also asked witnesses about the advance team's purchase of alcohol for members of the medical travel teams. Of the 29 witnesses:

- 8 witnesses told us they purchased alcohol for medical travel teams,
- 9 witnesses told us they saw alcohol provided to medical travel teams, and
- 12 witnesses neither purchased nor saw alcohol provided to medical travel teams.

One witness told us he saw an advance team member buy rum for RDML Jackson on one or more occasions. The advance team member told us he did not recall buying rum for RDML Jackson, but he usually bought "one can of beer, that was unique to the country" for each medical travel team member. The advance team member also told us RDML Jackson never asked him to buy anything and that RDML Jackson was "very insistent" about reimbursing him.

All witnesses who served as part of an advance team told us that neither RDML Jackson nor anyone else on his behalf directed them to stock RDML Jackson's lodging with alcohol. Witnesses who served on advance teams, but did not purchase alcohol for the travel team, told us they did not experience any adverse actions for not stocking alcohol in the lodging of travel team members.

One medical travel team member told us RDML Jackson stated to the witness, "I don't know why they [bought me alcohol]. I don't ask them to do that." Another witness told us that in the fall of 2016, the WHMU Director informed his staff at a weekly meeting:

I want to make it clear that there is not a policy that you buy Dr. Jackson alcohol and put it in his refrigerator. That is never an expected thing, and he [the WHMU director] kind of put that out there that it was not expected for

us to be doing. So somehow it had gotten back to him that, I guess people thought they were supposed to be doing it, some people had a problem with it. I don't know who would have brought that up to him.

The witness also recalled that RDML Jackson told a group of advance team employees that "if you guys had this impression that I expected you to do this, I'm not expecting it. I don't expect you guys to go stock my refrigerator with beers or anything."

RDML Jackson's Use of Ambien

Witnesses told us they were concerned because RDML Jackson used Ambien while on duty and while on call for providing medical care for Government officials on travel, including the President.

Ambien is a prescription medicine used to treat insomnia. According to a safety announcement published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, common side effects for Ambien include drowsiness and impaired mental alertness the morning after its use. A doctor familiar with the use and effects of Ambien told us that Ambien would "very negatively impact a person's ability to respond to anything in a medical professional capacity." The doctor also told us that Ambien impacts "a person's focus, concentration, and judgment."

A WHMO policy memorandum in effect at the time for all WHMO personnel during presidential trips prohibited the use of drugs that would render personnel unable to perform their assigned duties. Specifically, the requirement stated that WHMO personnel:

Will not use alcohol, drugs, or other substances to the point of becoming unfit or unable to perform assigned duties; [and will] ... notify their site supervisor in advance if the individual WHMO member will ingest any non-alcoholic substance (e.g., medication) which can adversely impact the individual member's duty performance.

Three witnesses told us RDML Jackson told them that he used Ambien. One of these witnesses also told us RDML Jackson stated that after he took Ambien, he needed to take another medication to function properly again.

Three other witnesses told us they saw RDML Jackson take Ambien on several official overseas flights on Air Force One. The witnesses also told us RDML Jackson was in charge of providing medical care for Government officials on those trips, including the President. One of the witnesses also told us RDML Jackson joked about taking Ambien.

We were not able to ascertain whether RDML Jackson notified his supervisor about his use of Ambien. None of the witnesses told us there was a medical emergency during those overseas flights that required RDML Jackson to provide or supervise medical care of Government officials. However, witnesses expressed concerns about RDML Jackson's ability to provide or supervise medical care while using Ambien if an emergency required it.

DoD OIG Conclusions on Alcohol-Related Incidents

We concluded that RDML Jackson engaged in inappropriate conduct involving the use of alcohol during two incidents. Both incidents occurred during presidential trips while

RDML Jackson was in charge of providing medical care and treatment to U.S. Government officials—a trip to Manila, Philippines, in April 2014 and a trip to Bariloche, Argentina, in March 2016.

During the presidential trip to Manila, RDML Jackson made sexual and denigrating statements about one of his female medical subordinates to another of his subordinates. Specifically, he said that his female subordinate had “great t**s” and “a nice a**” and he would “like to see more of her tattoos.”

Later on the trip, while staying overnight with the travelling party in a hotel in Manila, RDML Jackson drank alcohol with his subordinates, became intoxicated, and, while in his hotel room, engaged in behavior that witnesses described as screaming and yelling, and behavior that some complained might wake the President. In the middle of the same night, RDML Jackson pounded on a female subordinate’s hotel door, woke her, and told her, “I need you.”

The U.S. Navy Regulations and the JER require officers to treat subordinates with dignity and respect, to be a positive influence, and to avoid abusive language. RDML Jackson’s sexual comments to a subordinate about another subordinate’s anatomy created a negative workplace environment and failed to show dignity and respect for the female subordinate under his supervision. His intoxicated behavior in the middle of the night, pounding on her hotel room door, screaming, yelling, and overall loud behavior in his hotel room exhibited less than exemplary workplace conduct while on official travel to provide medical care for the President and other members of the travelling party. Additionally, by engaging in this intoxicated conduct during this presidential trip, RDML Jackson failed to show the exemplary conduct that 10 U.S.C. § 8167 requires of Navy officers. The WHMO policy prohibiting the consumption of alcohol took effect on August 29, 2014. We could not find a similar policy that was in effect for WHMO personnel during the presidential trip to Manila in April 2014.

While on the presidential trip to Argentina, a preponderance of the evidence shows that RDML Jackson drank one beer during a stop in Bariloche. Another witness said that RDML Jackson “smelled of alcohol” when RDML Jackson took the medical bag, which signified that RDML Jackson was assuming duties as the primary physician. Two witnesses told us RDML Jackson was aware of the WHMO policy prohibiting all WHMO personnel from drinking alcohol during presidential trips, and, according to one witness, RDML Jackson told him the policy was “ridiculous.” Throughout his duties at WHMU and while serving as the Physician to the President, RDML Jackson’s evaluations indicate he was a DoD employee assigned to WHMU, which is a subordinate organization of the WHMO. Therefore, RDML Jackson violated the WHMO policy when he drank alcohol while on a presidential trip to Bariloche.

We found no evidence to support the allegation that RDML Jackson “got drunk and wrecked a government vehicle.”

We also found no evidence to support the allegation that RDML Jackson expected rum or other alcohol to be stocked in his lodging room while on official travel, or that staff members feared retribution if they did not comply with the expectation. While some WHMU personnel who served as members of advance teams purchased alcohol and other food and beverages for members of the medical travel teams, including RDML Jackson, we found no evidence that RDML Jackson requested or expected such items. Additionally, witnesses told us he discouraged his subordinates from purchasing alcohol or other food and beverages, and insisted on reimbursing those who did. Accordingly, the evidence did not show that RDML Jackson violated any JER prohibitions concerning the receipt of gifts of alcohol from subordinates.

We are not aware of any specific WHMO prohibitions against the use of Ambien during long official overseas flights. While the WHMO policy memorandum required RDML Jackson to notify his supervisor in advance of taking Ambien, we were also not able to ascertain if he provided such a notification. However, the witnesses, all of whom were WHMU medical personnel, raised concerns about RDML Jackson's potential incapacity to provide proper medical care during such flights while using Ambien because of the common side effects described in the section, "RDML Jackson's Use of Ambien," above. Therefore, we recommend that the WHMO Director issue fitness for duty guidance regarding the appropriate use of Ambien and similar drugs while medical personnel are on duty or on call to provide emergency medical services.

In summary, we concluded, by a preponderance of the evidence, that RDML Jackson made sexual and denigrating statements about a female medical subordinate to another of his subordinates. He also drank alcohol with his subordinates in Manila, became intoxicated, and, while in his hotel room, engaged in behavior that witnesses described as screaming and yelling, and behavior that some complained might wake the President. He violated WHMO policy by drinking a beer while on a presidential trip to Bariloche, Argentina. RDML Jackson also took Ambien during official travel, raising concerns about his potential incapacity to provide proper medical care.

IV. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

By a preponderance of the evidence, we concluded the following:

RDML Jackson made sexual and denigrating statements about one of his female medical subordinates to another of his subordinates.

RDML Jackson drank alcohol with his subordinates in Manila, became intoxicated, and, while in his hotel room, engaged in behavior that witnesses described as screaming and yelling, and behavior that some complained might wake the President.

RDML Jackson violated WHMO policy by drinking a beer while on a presidential trip to Bariloche, Argentina.

RDML Jackson took Ambien during official travel, raising concerns about his potential incapacity to provide proper medical care during this travel.

RDML Jackson disparaged, belittled, bullied, and humiliated subordinates, and created a negative WHMU work environment.

RDML Jackson failed to conduct himself in an exemplary manner and made an unfavorable impact on the overall WHMU command climate.

RDML Jackson did not get "drunk" and wreck "a government vehicle."

RDML Jackson did not expect rum or other alcohol to be stocked in his lodging room while on official travel. Staff members did not fear retribution if they did not stock RDML Jackson's lodging room.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Navy take appropriate action regarding RDML Jackson.

We recommend that the WHMO Director issue fitness for duty guidance regarding the appropriate use of Ambien and similar drugs while medical personnel are on duty or on call to provide emergency medical services.

Appendix A: Standards

Title 10, section 8167, United States Code, "Requirement of exemplary conduct"

All commanding officers and others in authority in the naval service are required to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination; to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all persons who are placed under their command; to guard against and suppress all dissolute and immoral practices, and to correct, according to the laws and regulations of the Navy, all persons who are guilty of them; and to take all necessary and proper measures, under the laws, regulations, and customs of the naval service, to promote and safeguard the morale, the physical well-being, and the general welfare of the officers and enlisted persons under their command or charge.

U.S. Navy Regulations (1990)

Chapter 8, Article 0802, "Responsibility," states in paragraph 4, "The commanding officer and his or her subordinates shall exercise leadership through personal example, moral responsibility and judicious attention to the welfare of persons under their control or supervision. Such leadership shall be exercised in order to achieve a positive, dominant influence on the performance of persons in the Department of the Navy."

Chapter 10, Article 1023, "Abuse of Authority," states, "Persons in authority are forbidden to injure their subordinates by tyrannical or capricious conduct, or by abusive language."

DoD 5500.07-R, "Joint Ethics Regulation (JER)," August 30, 1993, (Incorporating Changes 1-7, November 17, 2011)

The JER provides a single source of standards of ethical conduct and ethics guidance for DoD employees. Chapter 2 of the JER, "Standards of Ethical Conduct," incorporates 5 CFR Part 2635, "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," August 7, 1992, in its entirety.

Subpart A, "General Provisions," Section 2635.101

Section 2635.101, "Basic obligation of public service," states in paragraph (b)(8) that employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

Chapter 12, "Ethical Conduct"

Section 4, "Ethical Values," states that ethics are standards by which one should act based on values. Values are core beliefs such as duty, honor, and integrity that motivate attitudes and actions. Ethical values relate to what is right and wrong and thus take precedence over non-ethical values when making ethical decisions. DoD employees should carefully consider ethical values when making decisions as part of official duties. These values include accountability, fairness, caring, and respect. Section 4, Paragraph 12-401, "Primary Ethical Values," elaborates on those characteristics as follows:

- Accountability includes avoiding even the appearance of impropriety because appearances affect public confidence.
- Fairness requires that individuals be treated equally and with tolerance.
- Caring demands courtesy and kindness, both to those we serve and to those we work with, to help ensure that individuals are not treated solely as a means to an end. Caring for others is the counterbalance against the temptation to pursue the mission at any cost.
- Respect involves treating people with dignity, honoring privacy and allowing self-determination. Respect is critical in a government of diverse people. Lack of respect leads to a breakdown of loyalty and honesty within a government and brings chaos to the international community.

Subpart C, "Gifts Between Employees," Section 2635.301-304

Section 2635.301, "Overview," states that this subpart contains standards that prohibit an employee from giving, donating to, or soliciting contributions for a gift to an official superior and from accepting a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself, unless the item is excluded from the definition of a gift or falls within one of the exceptions set forth in this subpart.

Section 2635.302, "General standards," states an employee cannot, except as provided in this subpart, (1) directly or indirectly, give a gift to or make a donation toward a gift for an official superior; or (2) solicit a contribution from another employee for a gift to either his own or the other employee's official superior.

Section 2635.302 also states that an employee cannot, directly or indirectly, accept a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself unless 1) the two employees are not in a subordinate-official superior relationship; and 2) there is a personal relationship between the two employees that would justify the gift. Notwithstanding any exception provided in this subpart, an official superior shall not coerce the offering of a gift from a subordinate.

Section 2635.303, "Definitions," provides the following definitions:

- "Official superior" means any other employee, including but not limited to an immediate supervisor, whose official responsibilities include directing or evaluating the performance of the employee's official duties or those of any other official superior of the employee. For purposes of this subpart, an employee is considered to be the subordinate of any of his official superiors.
- "Solicit" means to request contributions by personal communication or by general announcement.

Section 2635.304, "Exceptions," states that on an occasional basis, including any occasion on which gifts are traditionally given or exchanged, an item may be accepted from a subordinate receiving less pay if the item, other than cash, has an aggregate market value of \$10 or less per occasion. In addition, a gift appropriate for a "special, infrequent occasion" may be given to an official superior or accepted from a subordinate or other employee receiving less pay upon

occasions that terminate a subordinate-official superior relationship, such as retirement, resignation, or transfer. An employee may solicit voluntary contributions of nominal amounts from fellow employees for an appropriate gift to an official superior.

Section 2635.304 also states that an employee may solicit voluntary contributions of nominal amounts from fellow employees on an occasional basis, for items such as food and refreshments to be shared in the office among several employees. An employee may accept such gifts to which a subordinate or other employee receiving less pay than himself has contributed.

White House Military Office Policy HQ 3-14, "WHMO Fitness for Duty and Off-Duty Activities Policy," August 29, 2014

Paragraph 5. Responsibilities, a. Individual WHMO personnel:

- (1) Will be fit for duty and present a positive professional image while in support of WHMO missions.
- (2) Will not use alcohol, drugs, or other substances to the point of becoming unfit or unable to perform assigned duties.
- (3) Will, during travel or other related support missions directly supporting White House principals, refrain from consuming any alcohol for twenty-four (24) hours prior to the principal's arrival at the trip site and until two (2) hours after the departure of the principal or two (2) hours after the individual WHMO member's completion of post-visit duties (whichever occurs later).
- (4) Will, during travel or other related support missions directly supporting White House principals, notify their site supervisor in advance if the individual WHMO member will ingest any non-alcoholic substance (e.g. medication) which can adversely impact the individual member's duty performance. In the event of such a notification, the site supervisor will contact White House Medical Unit personnel for appropriate guidance.

Appendix B: Reprisal Allegation

We considered and reviewed reprisal allegations submitted by three military officers under section 1034, title 10, United States Code, "Protected communications; prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions," implemented by DoD Directive 7050.06, "Military Whistleblower Protection," April 17, 2015. We refer to them as Witness 1, Witness 2, and Witness 3. We summarize our analysis of the three complaints below.

Witness 1

A witness, a military officer assigned to the WHMU, alleged retaliation by RDML Jackson and two other WHMU officials. The allegations stemmed from the witness's participation in an [REDACTED] Department of the Navy, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Inspector General investigation and from the witness reporting concerns about RDML Jackson improperly prescribing medications, improperly using medications, and missing medications.

According to the witness, a fellow military officer in the WHMU drafted and submitted an end-of-tour award in [REDACTED] as the witness was departing the assignment. When the witness spoke with the WHMU months after the witness's departure, the WHMU was not aware a recommendation for an award had been submitted, and the individuals who could sign off on the award were no longer assigned to the WHMU. The witness could not confirm that RDML Jackson or the two other officials were involved in any decisions regarding the award recommendation.

A preponderance of the evidence established that RDML Jackson and the two other officials lacked any knowledge that the witness interviewed with the Inspector General, or discussed with WHMO officials the concerns about RDML Jackson's behavior or the command climate. Furthermore, we found that the award recommendation would have been initiated beginning in [REDACTED] and that it stalled administratively while processing. We also found that neither RDML Jackson nor the other two officials would likely have known whether an award was submitted in [REDACTED]. Accordingly, the evidence we reviewed did not support this reprisal allegation.

Witness 2

A second witness, a military officer assigned to the WHMU, alleged that in [REDACTED] RDML Jackson moved the witness to night and weekend duties, and in [REDACTED] reassigned the witness [REDACTED] in reprisal for reporting to WHMU officials RDML Jackson's unethical behavior and drunkenness while on official travel.

A preponderance of the evidence established that RDML Jackson lacked any knowledge of the witness's communications to the WHMU officials. We found that the shift to weekend and night duty did not affect or have the potential to affect the witness's position or career, or constitute a significant change in duties or responsibilities inconsistent with the witness's grade. We also determined that the move to the [REDACTED], which occurred midway through the witness's WHMU tour of duty, was routine for personnel duty assignments at the WHMU. Accordingly, the evidence we reviewed did not support this reprisal allegation.

Witness 3

A third witness, a military officer assigned to the WHMU, alleged that an official in the WHMU removed and later reinstated the witness from the [REDACTED] and altered the witness's evaluation rating chain of command by removing the [REDACTED] as the Senior Rater official in [REDACTED] in reprisal for reporting to that official and a Senate Committee that RDML Jackson violated provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act with respect to a member of the Administration.

A preponderance of the evidence established that following the report of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act violations to the official in the WHMU in [REDACTED], the official instructed the witness in [REDACTED] to provide Memorandums for Record documenting the violations to the Senate Committee reviewing RDML Jackson's nomination for Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

We found that the witness's temporary removal from the [REDACTED] did not affect, or have the potential to affect, the witness's position or career. Furthermore, we found it unlikely that the official who directed the witness to submit documents to the Senate Committee would retaliate against the witness for following that instruction. Finally, we found no suitable remedy for revising the rating chain. The evidence we reviewed showed that the [REDACTED] counsel appears to have endorsed the altered rating chain—in effect, ratifying it—and a performance evaluation was completed afterwards. [REDACTED]. Accordingly, the evidence we reviewed did not support this reprisal allegation.

Appendix C: Examples of Alleged Failure to Treat Subordinates with Dignity and Respect

In this appendix we first provide witness comments about their personal interactions with RDML Jackson, as well as examples of how they saw RDML Jackson act towards other employees, and what other employees told them about RDML Jackson's behavior. We then provide favorable and unfavorable comments about RDML Jackson's impact on the WHMU command climate. Finally, we present six specific instances in which RDML Jackson failed to treat employees with dignity and respect.

Comments from Witnesses Who Did Not Experience, See, or Hear about RDML Jackson Yelling, Screaming, Cursing, or Belittling Subordinates

- [M]y interactions with him were honestly pleasant They were always professional and courteous
- Never once did he treat me without dignity and respect. ... he always treated me, personally, with dignity and respect.
- I never experienced anything that even remotely felt, remotely had me feeling like I wasn't being shown respect [by RDML Jackson].

Comments from Witnesses Who Heard About but Did Not Experience RDML Jackson Yelling, Screaming, Cursing, or Belittling Subordinates

- Sometimes when he was displeased he would have a screaming fit. So those were well described to me over many times with various people describing what had happened.
- I never experienced it, but heard he would curse people out, call them "they're idiots," or "stupid," or "this is unacceptable," ... things like that.
- Some of [medical subordinate's fear] had to do with first of all his [RDML Jackson's] anger because he would get very angry.
- [RDML Jackson's behavior] made the others fearful of interacting with him and fearful of asking questions just because people had heard about him yelling at people in the past.
- Yelling and screaming is really kind of the majority of his baseline. But I definitely know that in meetings if somebody said something that he didn't agree with, there would be yelling and screaming.
- There would be some sort of incident ... and the interaction generally was described as yelling and pacing, and aggressive hand gestures, and maybe screaming at times.
- Some of my predecessors ... told me that they got yelled at and cussed at by Dr. Jackson for the thing they did, which usually was a pretty minor interaction or just kind of if he was frustrated and yelling, they ended up getting in the way.

- [A medical subordinate] said that there were instances where he [RDML Jackson] would counsel someone, a PA [Physician's Assistant], or a nurse or someone at the unit in that office, and then it would be on the level of yelling and screaming.

Comments from Witnesses Who Saw Firsthand but Did Not Experience RDML Jackson Yelling, Screaming, Cursing, or Belittling his Subordinates

- [RDML] Jackson would have kind of a quick burst of sort of anger, frustration directed at that one individual and then would later come back and say ... "Hey I'm sorry that I got so upset."
- So that sort of behavior, even if it wasn't directly at an individual ... would still indirectly affect the rest of the team as a whole in our abilities to push forward because we all work so closely with each other, ... it reverberated, from one individual to the next, and to the next.
- There were numerous times where I would be in the [White House] Clinic where our senior nursing leadership would be called in regarding nursing and behind closed doors you could ... hear him [RDML Jackson] yelling ... at [a medical subordinate]. ... it was more of that hotheadedness. You never got a sense that you could have a discussion [with RDML Jackson].
- If he [RDML Jackson] was talking to somebody and he was angry it would be screaming. He definitely ... has a very loud tone when he's mad. I'd say [RDML Jackson would get angry] once a week.
- It was a common feeling around [the WHMU] that you just had to be careful and try not to do anything that would precipitate [a tongue-lashing]. And the part that none of us liked was, we didn't know what was going to precipitate a tongue lashing or a ... you know, reprimand.
- If he's in a hurry, and if he's upset ... he is prone to having meltdowns and tantrums. ... and I didn't believe it because I was warned ahead of time ... and this was by far the worst behavior ... I've ever seen [in my medical career].
- [RDML Jackson] was yelling and cussing and just kind of had, ... a ... tantrum, ... the screaming and just the overreacting it was shocking. ... it was very shocking to me to see someone behave like that.
- Rage is the word. He would rage all the time Screeching, red in the face, bug-eyed, sweating, ears red, jaw clenched. I mean I'm talking rage, and I'm a clinician. I'm a board-certified physician. Rage.
- [RDML Jackson] added stress any time he was in the room he would find a problem with something, a personal problem with something. He was a tyrant. A true tyrant and like I've said I've known good officers, I've known bad officers. I've only known one tyrant. He was a tyrant. ... He's the only guy in [over 20] years that I would ever say that about.

- [RDML Jackson] was very quick to anger. He would be very short with people. He's kind of one of those that if he gets flustered the first response for him would be to be angry and kind of to lash out. For me I never experienced those. I was never on the receiving end of that, but I would see him do that to ... nurses or to physicians.
- I heard Dr. Jackson screaming at [a medical subordinate] and I don't know what led up to that event, or why he was so angry, but I—it didn't last very long. ... [RDML] Jackson stopped yelling pretty quickly, but I was shocked because I've been in and around the military for 20 years and I've never heard a high-ranking person yell at someone lower ranking than since I left boot camp. And [RDML] Jackson eventually left, and all the people in the office, ... were all rather shocked.
- [RDML Jackson] was definitely yelling. He was yelling the way that—I mean, I've never heard anybody yell, and I don't yell at anyone else that way. It's the way you'd yell at somebody in boot camp. He was really yelling. It was not elevated tone. He was not just excited about something. He was very angry.
- [P]eople walked on eggshells quite a bit, and almost had a hard time saying no because if they pushed back on anything, that's when he [RDML Jackson] usually went high and to the right. ... Yelling at colleagues and making them feel inferior.

Comments from Witnesses Who Experienced and Saw RDML Jackson Yelling, Screaming, Cursing, or Belittling his Subordinates

- [RDML] Jackson [came] over and a medication that he ordered for somebody didn't come on the delivery. Just for whatever reason it didn't show up, and he started screaming at the medics and took the bin and threw it and was like, "You lazy f**kers. You can't do anything right. All I need you to do is get some G** damn medication and you can't even f**king do that. Get in the G** damn car and go up to Walter Reed and get it right now."
- [RDML Jackson's] explosive temper, the demeaning glances, the distracted, this seeming increased interest in anything to get ahead at either the expense or at the disregard for those under his charge.
- [RDML Jackson] said, "What the f**k is going on in here. You guys suck. I cannot f**king believe that there are no small pill bottles in this clinic. This is unf**king believable. Now I've got to get somebody to bring them down from Walter Reed last minute." So it was super aggressive. It was not calm. It was yelling for sure, yeah.
- A Secret Service agent came in ... and he was like, "Your boss ... is an a** hole." He said, "I have never felt so disrespected in my life the way [RDML Jackson] yelled at me because I was trying to take care of [someone]." And he was really upset, but that's just how Dr. Jackson treated people.
- [RDML Jackson] kind of kept yelling at me and to the point where I actually just lost it. I started crying. And so, I ended up leaving the room at that point because I was crying in front of my peers which was obviously embarrassing.

- But I never once had a time where he used expletives toward me or yelled at me on the phone that he didn't circle back and apologize.

RDML Jackson's Impact on the WHMU Command Climate

In the two subsections that follow, we provide favorable and unfavorable quotes from employees about RDML Jackson's impact on the WHMU's command climate. We then present six representative examples to evaluate the allegation that RDML Jackson failed to treat employees with dignity and respect. RDML Jackson was the senior medical officer at the White House and at least two pay grades higher than the employees discussed in the following six instances.

Favorable Comments about Command Climate

Of the 60 witnesses we interviewed, 13 made favorable comments about RDML Jackson's impact on the WHMU command climate. The quoted witness comments relate to his high standards and high expectations. During interviews, these witnesses stated the following.

- [RDML Jackson] kind of ran a strict, a strict ship, ... he had a high level of expectations. He wanted everyone to meet it. ... and if he felt that someone wasn't doing that, then they would be counseled. And I think that people ... felt that he was fostering a negative command climate, in the way that he counseled them.
- [RDML Jackson] demanded, not perfection, but he demanded things to get done correctly. We were trained to do a job, and he expected the job to be done, and he expected it to be done right.
- [RDML Jackson's] not a ... fluffy leader, the soft kind of leader, the engaging. I think he was very effective at what he did. ... He just, he just had a high standard.
- I enjoyed working for [RDML Jackson]. ... I wanted to emulate a lot of the things that he did. I mean, how that man was able to balance so many things at one given time is, to me, amazing.
- I mean, he helped write a letter of recommendation to me to PA [Physician's Assistant] school, and he taught me the facets of medicine, as emergency medicine like he was trained in, ... he had a huge impact on me, personally, not only for, ... technical expertise of the job, and the art of being a clinician, but as a person as well.
- A tough leader. He demanded high standards and so his personality was—could come off abrasive at times and sometimes difficult to please. I don't feel like he was disrespectful and didn't treat people appropriately. I think he was direct and told people when he didn't like something and a lot of people didn't necessarily prefer that leadership style.

Unfavorable Comments about Command Climate

Of the 60 witnesses we interviewed, 38 witnesses made unfavorable comments about RDML Jackson and his impact on the command climate. The quoted witness comments related to

his unprofessional behavior, intimidation, and poor treatment of subordinates. During interviews, these witnesses stated the following.

- I never saw him [RDML Jackson] reward anyone. I only saw him break people down. I never saw him ever put the needs of the mission or another [service member] before his own, ever.
- The behavior, the conduct, the unprofessional way that he [RDML Jackson] handles himself, ... to see that, to see somebody promoted, to know that they act this way it goes against everything that we, that I value and the way ... that I believe that an officer, particularly a flag officer should be, and that's tough to accept.
- He had no interest to teach you. He had no interest to build you. He had no interest to assist you. ... He was more frustrated that somebody walked over to you and said, "Hey, you're doing a good job." ... he's the guy that wanted to be the most favorite guy [to] the President, liked to take care of him and wanted to control and go after anyone even who was doing a good job. ... it became clear what he was doing to eliminate people who are doing good and capable things, because he ... never wanted to lose his position, or didn't want anyone else to look like they're doing a good job.
- Passionate could be construed as a positive thing, but I think in this case I'm saying that ... it was more of a negative kind of passion in the sense of [RDML Jackson] yelling and being a hothead.
- [RDML Jackson] established a workplace where fear and intimidation were kind of the hallmarks of him, his command, and control of his subordinates That it's just the toxic environment. ... Kind of dealing with Dr. Jackson whims. It was just a matter of understanding that on any given day he's just going to flip his s**t on you and freak out He is a control freak. He wants to know everything. He has to be involved. He's afraid that you might be looked upon more favorably than him. I've witnessed this on a daily basis.
- [RDML Jackson] got things done by intimidation I think for the most part. At no point in the three years there did I ever get any sort of what I would consider traditional military leadership.
- [RDML Jackson's behavior] made me want to leave the unit when my time was up and not stay any longer than I had to. ... [P]eople would be very tenuous around Doc Jackson and would really try to make sure they didn't do anything that would precipitate one of these yellings; reprimands. People were frequently on edge. ... Dr. Jackson would occasionally kind of let people know they didn't do what was expected by yelling or exploding at them in the moment, so people were cautious around him.
- I think for the most part, there definitely was a heaviness over the unit, ... sometimes a lot of people kind of felt like we were all kind of walking on eggshells. [RDML] Jackson was up or down, and you always, kind of had to gauge him on his day. You'd walk in the office and he was, you know, you could really tell what kind

of day the team was going to have based upon his, his attitude and his personality that morning.

- [RDML Jackson was] a toxic leader because he created an environment below him where people were afraid, where people were on edge, where people didn't want to come to work, people didn't want to work around him and for him in the [White House] Clinic.
- Most people avoided him [RDML Jackson] completely because they did not want to—they just didn't want to be caught if he was in a bad mood, or whatever. Basically people avoided him at all cost unless they had a reason to talk to him, or, like mission requirements.
- I personally had never tried to avoid leadership to the extent that I had at the White House ever before. I, even now, and prior to that, I never jumped out of the way when I saw an officer coming. But with Dr. Jackson, it was like, hey, he's coming. Like, if you don't need to be here, find something else to do.
- I think without question, my tenure at WHMU would be the most stressful period in my professional military career. ... I suppose, to summarize, in my professional military experience, it was arguably the worst command climate that I have experienced, and I attribute that largely to Dr. Jackson.
- I left that job unhappy, ... [T]he nurses were very stressed when they had to work with him. ... the doctors felt demoralized and pressured by what was expected of them. And I know that the enlisted people were scared of him, because he would apparently, you know, do things like yell at them for no reason. ... I would say that it was the worst command I've ever worked for in my entire military career. I would say it was a toxic work environment.
- Without a doubt ... the worst command climate I've been in [over 20 years] of service.
- [T]his was the worst command climate that I think there could have been. There was so much distrust and poor treatment of people and retaliation And I still to this day hate thinking about it. ... [W]hen you see people that are yelling and screaming and red-faced, you don't really know like, can they, can they reel that in and just focus on what's upsetting them, or is something else going to set them off at that point in time. And it just made the climate even worse for me. And it made me very standoffish and that's why I tried to distance myself from him [RDML Jackson]. ... I think he's an awful leader. I think he is more of a dictator than anything.
- [RDML Jackson] was a crappy manager at best. He was all over the place. Very erratic, very unpredictable. ... He would curse quite a bit at his staff within the Medical Office that sat in the White House itself. ... So, in general I don't believe him to be a leader at all.

In addition to the comments above, witnesses also described many incidents to provide context for RDML Jackson's yelling, berating, or cursing at subordinates during his tenure at

WHMU. The following examples came from different witnesses who served with RDML Jackson from 2012 through March 2018. Due to the passage of time, some witnesses told us they could not remember the details of every single incident, but we provide the details they gave us.

2013 Africa Multiple-Casualty Event

One witness told us that RDML Jackson yelled and cursed over the telephone at a medical subordinate while the medical subordinate was responding to an urgent medical emergency in Africa in “June or July” 2013. At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was serving as the WHMU Director.

The medical subordinate was in charge of providing medical care during an official trip by senior Government officials to Africa. While in Africa, the medical subordinate and his staff provided immediate medical attention to several official travelers who suffered injuries in a multiple-casualty event. The medical subordinate told us the urgent medical issue took 30 to 60 minutes to resolve “because things went very quickly.”⁶

The medical subordinate told us that while he was providing medical treatment, three senior officials, including RDML Jackson, tried to contact him for an update about the medical issues. Once the medical issues were stabilized, the medical subordinate returned the call to each senior official. The medical subordinate described his conversation with the two other officials as “reasonable and professional.”

The medical subordinate described his conversation with RDML Jackson much differently. He said RDML Jackson’s tone with him was “somewhere between yelling and screaming.” The medical subordinate said:

Somehow word had gotten around through different channels so [RDML Jackson] wasn’t the first or among the first to be able to tell senior folks about [the medical situation] and that bothered him, but then the tongue lashing that I got from Jackson was varsity level. ... If I took every cussword that’s ever been lobbed against me my whole life [RDML Jackson] may have matched it in one minute.

The medical subordinate told us RDML Jackson’s biggest concern was that he wanted to be “the face and voice of the situation to the senior people” and to “be the one to say and deliver the news [about the injuries].” When asked to describe what RDML Jackson said, the medical subordinate told us:

The “F” word was there multiple times. [RDML Jackson said], “This is f**king unsat” over, and over, and over, and over just this is, I think he said sh*t several times, and [he was] just erratic explosive, uncontrolled [RDML Jackson] seemed to have no interest in the injuries that we were handling, but just wanted to drop a bomb on me is the way it felt.

Based on his conversation with RDML Jackson, the medical subordinate thought he would be fired. He described his conversation with RDML Jackson as “one of the most distressing, if not the most distressing situations I’ve ever had from a boss.”

⁶ The witnesses did not discuss specific patient details due to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act concerns and focused their comments on RDML Jackson’s behavior during the multiple-casualty event.

The medical subordinate told us, “[T]his was my introduction in many ways to the medical unit. I was informed later that well, step one is not really to take care of people or to do the medical care, but it’s actually to make sure that [RDML Jackson] knows ... what’s going on so that [RDML Jackson] can be the voice of it.”

Another witness who knew about this incident and its effect on personnel within the WHMU told us that RDML Jackson’s actions “fostered a lot of mistrust because [his medical subordinates] were doing their jobs and they still got in trouble ... and that really stuck with a lot of people, even though they did a great job at handling the [injuries].”

2013 Martha’s Vineyard

Other witnesses told us about three incidents during a presidential trip to Martha’s Vineyard in August 2013 when RDML Jackson yelled and cursed at subordinates. The first incident dealt with a transportation matter, the second incident concerned care and treatment of dogs, and the third incident involved insect repellant. Four WHMU members who were on the trip to Martha’s Vineyard gave us details about the incidents. They told us RDML Jackson was in charge of providing medical care for the presidential trip to Martha’s Vineyard.

The first incident involved transportation from the airport to the visit destination. After arriving at Martha’s Vineyard, RDML Jackson rode in a vehicle with other staff and exited the vehicle at the wrong location. One witness, a medical subordinate, told us that RDML Jackson called him on the phone and yelled “lots of expletives” at him. The subordinate told us that RDML Jackson said “Where the f**k are you at? I’m f**king standing here in the driveway. I don’t see anybody.”

The subordinate told us he took a golf cart to pick up RDML Jackson, and drove him to the correct location. The subordinate told us that during the ride RDML Jackson did not say anything to him, but that his earlier “[comments and] reactions were disproportionate to the ... situation.” The subordinate told us that RDML Jackson “didn’t say anything, ... to me personally like he didn’t say, ‘[subordinate], you’re piece of crap.’ Or he didn’t say, ‘Hey, you’re such a F**kup.’ He didn’t say anything towards me just the situation.” A second witness heard RDML Jackson yelling at the subordinate for the transportation issue for “a couple of minutes.” The second witness told us that the subordinate’s face was “kind of drawn” and “looked like someone had just got their butt chewed out.” The second witness said the subordinate told him that “Dr. Jackson was upset at something that was really outside of [the subordinate’s] control.”

The second incident involved the medical care of two dogs who were also on the trip. RDML Jackson was responsible for providing medical care for the dogs. The subordinate who was involved in the first incident was also involved in this incident. The subordinate told us RDML Jackson called him and was upset about the care of the dogs. Another witness who overheard part of the phone conversation said he heard RDML Jackson “screaming” at the subordinate and saying “you stupid mother f**ker. Why didn’t you ... have this taken care of?” The witness said he told the subordinate, “It sucks but ... he does that” and that RDML Jackson screamed and cursed also at him [the witness] in other situations.

The third incident involved two other subordinates and the purchase of insect repellant. One of the subordinates told us that RDML Jackson asked them to purchase a “bug spray that you don’t spray on yourself” for a member of the White House staff. The subordinates said they went to the only store on the island that was open and “bought every bug product they had.” They said that when they returned, RDML Jackson got very irate because they did not find the specific spray he

wanted. The subordinates told us that RDML Jackson was yelling and swearing at them; “flew off the handle”; and “He just could not calm himself down.” One subordinate thought RDML Jackson was mad because he already told the White House staff member that he had the “bug spray” when he did not actually have it and the subordinates could not find it for him.

All four employees described RDML Jackson’s angry reaction to the three incidents as an overreaction. They characterized RDML Jackson’s behavior as “not appropriate and too extreme for what had happened,” and “disproportionate to the ... situation.” One subordinate told us it was RDML Jackson’s habit to get very upset over things, and then “eventually calm down, and then get a little bit more level headed and think things through.”

The witnesses told us RDML Jackson apologized to them the next day, and told them he shouldn’t have gotten upset and his conduct was not professional or respectful.

2013 White House Social Event

A witness told us RDML Jackson cursed at a subordinate at a White House party in 2013 in front of the subordinate’s family. At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was serving as the WHMU Director and the Physician to the President.

We identified and interviewed the subordinate. The subordinate told us a senior White House official gave him tickets to attend a White House social event. The subordinate said when RDML Jackson saw him at the event, he approached the subordinate and his family and said:

How did you get tickets to this? You’re not supposed to be here. I don’t know what the f**k you think you’re doing here. I don’t know what your kids are doing here but this is wrong. You need to get out of here. I don’t want you here.

The subordinate told us his spouse and children were present for RDML Jackson’s comments. After hearing the comments, the employee’s spouse told the subordinate, “We need to leave. We need to leave.” The subordinate told his spouse, “No. We don’t have to leave. The kids are here.”

The subordinate said there was no reason for RDML Jackson to confront and belittle people. The subordinate told us:

Usually [RDML Jackson’s] rants and his problems were just either his perception that he didn’t have ... control ... or information, or that he was left out of something Nobody kind of understood what this was all about. Everybody was just trying to do a good job and [RDML Jackson] would routinely kind of bust into these tirades over things that were just not that important. It was just a normal occurrence. I don’t know how else to explain it.

2014 Yelling at a WHMU Employee on Two Different Occasions

One of RDML Jackson’s medical subordinates told us RDML Jackson yelled at her in the White House clinic on two separate occasions in 2014. The first incident involved a former White House staff member and the second incident involved a then-current White House staff member. At

the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was serving as the WHMU Director and the Physician to the President.

In the first incident, the subordinate said a former White House staff member visited the clinic and told the subordinate that RDML Jackson told him to pick up medications for himself. The subordinate told us the medications were prescription drugs, a doctor had not examined the former staff member, the former staff member was not traveling on official business, and the former staff member was no longer eligible for medical care at the clinic. The subordinate told us she did not issue the requested medications to the former staff member and she left RDML Jackson a voicemail to notify him of the situation and her concerns. The subordinate told us that when she returned to the office RDML Jackson was “really upset” with her and “verbally abusive” because she did not give the former staff member the medication.

The second incident took place two to three months after the first incident. The subordinate told us a White House staff member, who was eligible for treatment, visited the clinic and said, “RDML Jackson told me I could come in and get an inhaler here. I left my inhaler at home.” The subordinate gave the White House staff member an inhaler because RDML Jackson had seen the staff member, the staff member had an existing prescription, and RDML Jackson told the staff member to pick up an inhaler, and because of the subordinate’s earlier encounter with RDML Jackson.

The subordinate said when RDML Jackson returned to the clinic he “was really angry. I mean red in the face.” She said that RDML Jackson:

came in and tore me apart. Screamed and yelled at me. ... He kind of cornered me in the clinic, and he would kind of position himself often in like kind of a superior position. So, I was actually in the corner of the clinic and he was yelling at me saying, “Are you a nurse practitioner? Are you a physician’s assistant? Are you a doctor? Can you write orders?” And I was like, “No, sir.” “Why were you giving out medication ... You don’t even know what you’re doing. You’re just a nurse.”

The subordinate told us that RDML Jackson was mad because he wanted credit for “rendering the care to the [patient, who] he deemed was important.” The subordinate also told us, “So, you’re like, ‘I thought I was doing the thing that wasn’t going to get me yelled at but now I’m getting yelled at.’ You ... never really knew what you were going to expect [from RDML Jackson].”

2015 Martha’s Vineyard

A complaint alleged that RDML Jackson had a “screaming fit” at a medical subordinate on a return flight from Martha’s Vineyard in August 2015. At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was the Physician to the President and in charge of providing medical care for all official travelers.

One of RDML Jackson’s medical subordinates was in charge of preparing the pallet of medical equipment for the return trip from Martha’s Vineyard to Washington, D.C. The subordinate told us RDML Jackson asked him to put RDML Jackson’s personal luggage with the medical equipment. The subordinate stored RDML Jackson’s bag in the pallet with the medical equipment, but was not responsible for loading the pallet on the aircraft.

Once the aircraft was in the air, the subordinate was notified that the pallet of medical equipment with RDML Jackson's luggage had been loaded onto another aircraft, which was not scheduled to return until 2 a.m. the following day. According to the subordinate, he told RDML Jackson and RDML Jackson reacted by saying, "I can't believe this f**king s**t. I can't believe this f**king happened. This is f**king bulls**t. Now I've got to wait for my bag. I've got to fly out the next morning."

The subordinate told us he later discovered that RDML Jackson stored his computer and wallet in his luggage. The subordinate described RDML Jackson's reaction as "almost like a temper tantrum" and said that RDML Jackson was upset for several minutes and was "directing his anger towards me ... throwing all these curse words up in the air and looking at me."

Another subordinate who observed the incident on the airplane told us that RDML Jackson was "overly upset and he couldn't be consoled."

A third subordinate told us about talking to the subordinate shortly after the incident, and described him as "really shaken" by RDML Jackson's words and actions.

2015 Health and Wellness Clinic Opening

A medical subordinate told us that RDML Jackson yelled and cursed at him in 2015 about the scheduling of an opening ceremony for a health and wellness clinic. At the time of this incident, RDML Jackson was the Physician to the President.

The subordinate told us that while arranging a ceremony to mark the opening of the health and wellness clinic, he coordinated the schedule to ensure that RDML Jackson was available to attend. The staff for the official giving a speech at the ceremony asked the subordinate to reschedule the ceremony because of a scheduling conflict. According to the subordinate, he selected a new date and confirmed RDML Jackson's availability.

The subordinate said that later that day, RDML Jackson called him at home about the rescheduled ceremony and yelled at him, claiming, "You scheduled this on a day that I'm not there on purpose." According to the subordinate, RDML Jackson said,

You motherf**ker. If you f**king think you're going to get one over on me I will crush you. I will f**king ruin your career. I will kill you. You are not cutting me out of this s**t. I don't know who the f**k you think you are.

The subordinate said he pulled the phone away from his ear because RDML Jackson was yelling so loud, and his family could hear RDML Jackson ranting over the phone. The subordinate told us that his [young] son asked him who was "bullying" him on the phone, and his wife said, "You do not need that in your life" and "you need to leave this job." After the phone conversation, the subordinate said he initially decided to leave his position at the WHMU, but was convinced by a senior White House official to stay.

Whistleblower Protection

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Whistleblower Protection safeguards DoD employees against retaliation for protected disclosures that expose possible waste, fraud, and abuse in government programs. For more information, please visit the Whistleblower webpage at <http://www.dodig.mil/Components/Administrative-Investigations/Whistleblower-Reprisal-Investigations/Whistleblower-Reprisal/> or contact the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator at Whistleblowerprotectioncoordinator@dodig.mil

For more information about DoD OIG reports or activities, please contact us:

Congressional Liaison
703.604.8324

Media Contact
public.affairs@dodig.mil; 703.604.8324

DoD OIG Mailing Lists
www.dodig.mil/Mailing-Lists/

Twitter
www.twitter.com/DoD_IG

DoD Hotline
www.dodig.mil/hotline

CUI

DODIG-2021-057

REAR ADMIRAL (LOWER HALF)
RONNY LYNN JACKSON, M.D.
U.S. NAVY, RETIRED

+



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE | OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22350-1500
www.dodig.mil
DoD Hotline 1.800.424.9098

CUI