Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of a 7-day military training exercise on inflammatory biomarkers, serum hepcidin, and iron status

Version: 1 Date: 12 September 2013

Reviewer: Michael Hoppe

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting observational study of Norwegian male soldiers measured hepcidin, IL-6 and markers of iron status and related factors during a 7-day winter training exercise.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
Page 5, last sentence: What was the daily energy content of the arctic combat ratios? Could it be characterized as a state of starvation, which is a kind of physiological stress in itself? This needs to be addressed.

Minor Essential Revisions:
Page 5, line 1-2: Incorrect statement. The effect of military training on hepcidin and iron status has been investigated earlier (reference 16).

Page 6, Results: Where any measurements of hydration grade (e.g. hematocrit)? Excessive loss of body water (i.e. dehydration) can affect serum/plasma concentrations. This needs to be addressed.

Discretionary Revisions:
Figure 1: In my opinion, this figure is unnecessary. These visualized data can be presented in table 2 together with the other biomarkers. By presenting all data together in one and the same table makes it more lucid.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.