Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1 Date: 28 September 2013

Reviewer: Diego Moretti

Reviewer’s report:

General: this is an informative study on hepcidin response to a phase of intensive physical challenge and stress in contrast to a phase with more common training and a control phase. The methods utilised are appropriate and the manuscript is concise and well written.

There was no control group in the study, and the implications of this should be clearly stated by the authors.

Major Revisions

More details should be provided on the 'Norwegian arctic combat rations' What were they made of and what was the rough nutritional composition.

Due to the lack of the control group, the authors should only discuss the global effect of the exercise program on inflammation and hepcidin.

Minor Revisions

Ferritin was elevated before hepcidin, was there an explanation for that- Is ferritin more sensitive to inflammation than hepcidin ?

How was a change in Hb of 4% be statistically detectable is such a small number of subjects. The authors should check this.

A line on the discussion should be added on the measurement method for hepcidin. The authors used a kit, but the comparability of the hepcidin measurement is in general hampered by lack of standardisation between methods and this does not allow to compare values between studies.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests to declare