

CASE STUDY – Just the Facts

Trace Detection Consumables

A posting in 2018 by an explosive trace detector (ETD) manufacturer has recently resurfaced. This time, DSA Detection will set the record straight with facts and Department of Homeland Security supportive documentation to allay any fears that ETD consumables purchased from non-OEMs are inferior. Always be skeptical of dubious in-house surveys intended to lay doubt and protect market share.

“Use Genuine [OEM] Consumables to Ensure Equipment Readiness”

DSA: This proclamation is a stretch for OEM instrument manufacturers. Our most common complaint by customers and distributors around the world is poor OEM customer service and uncertain delivery. The other complaint is high prices. Just after 9/11, a package of OEM sample media cost nearly \$100. Twenty years later, DSA has brought the price down 60-70%.

“The high performance and reliability of [OEM] trace explosives and narcotic detection systems depend on the use of genuine OEM trace consumables.”

DSA: The Department of Homeland Security oversees the Transportation Security Laboratory (TSL) testing facility for explosive detection products - including DSA ETD consumables. DSA has had 71 OEM ETD products approved by the TSL that are critical to the instruments' levels of detection. Each approval letter emphatically states in these words or similar, “Test results reveal no significant differences between this product and the comparable OEM product, when tested side-by-side under identical conditions using a certified OEM system.” Those are the words of Dr. Sheldon Brunk who for 20 or more years has certified every ETD instrument and all DSA ETD consumables in use by the TSA and other high threat, high security U.S. government agencies.

“Using non-[OEM] swabs during sampling is a primary way in which debris may contaminate these trace detectors. [...]Third party supplies are not approved by [OEMs] and may hurt system reliability, increase support costs, reduce system life, and affect security mission readiness.”

DSA: The fact that the OEM has not approved our consumable products is irrelevant. Does Hewlett Packard approve third-party printer cartridges or printer paper? The only approval one should rely on is the approval of the world's lead laboratory for explosive detection products – the United States Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Laboratory. System availability and downtime metrics suggests that downtime is primarily caused by operator error or lack of preventative maintenance. The following are examples of what the approval document says. Focus on the last two sentences of each.

The Trace Detection Laboratory at TSL has completed an evaluation of a Nomex sample swab for the Smiths 500DT Explosive Trace Detector, provided by DSA Detection, North Andover, MA. Item evaluated:

<u>DSA Part #</u>	<u>Description</u>
DSW8055	Sample swab for Smiths 500DT

The test results reveal no significant differences in performance between this DSA product and the equivalent OEM product. The DSA product is an acceptable substitute for the OEM product.



Sheldon Brunk, Ph.D.
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The Trace Detection Laboratory at TSL has completed an evaluation of a sampling swab for the Checkpoint/Checked Baggage configuration of the L3 QS B220 Explosive Trace Detector, provided by DSA Detection, North Andover, MA. Items evaluated:

<u>DSA Part #</u>	<u>Description</u>
ST1267	Sample swab for L3 QS B220 ETD, 100 ct.
ST1268	Sample swab for L3 QS B220 ETD, 300 ct.

These sample swabs (ST1267 and ST1268) are approved for use with the QS B220 ETD Checkpoint/Checked Baggage configuration.

DSA Part # ST1269 is a different product that is approved for use with the QS B220 air cargo configuration.



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“Tight compliance with rigorous quality standards really matters.”

DSA: DSA Detection has been assessed by the Boston Manufacturing Group, an independent organization which we paid to assess DSA’s compliance with production best practices. They determined DSA functions much like an ISO-certified company. Bear in mind the government does not require any ISO certifications. Our products are approved for use by the world’s lead laboratory for explosive detection technology, the TSL. Secondly, after DSA products are approved, we send products critical to the ETD’s level of detection back to the TSL for retesting as part of an ongoing quality program. Throughout this program’s 13-year history, the TSL has never revoked any of DSA’s approvals.

“Repeated use of non-OEM swabs can lead to productivity losses and increased service costs to repair damaged units.”

DSA: This theory is just restating the same false claims made by all elsewhere. Wouldn’t we all like to see the instrument manufacturers’ data on lost productivity.

“Using lesser quality consumables will lead to equipment failures.”

DSA: This claim is unsubstantiated. From the beginning of DSA’s operation in 2005, we have set the highest warranty standard in the trace industry. It states the following:

“DSA Detection guarantees its consumable products will not harm or in any way compromise the performance of an ETD instrument. Should it be proven by the instrument manufacturer that DSA’s product was the direct cause of any instrument failure or cause it to not perform to specification, DSA will reimburse the instrument owner for the full cost of repair.”

Throughout 16 years of operation, this warranty has never been exercised.

“Reducing the risk of equipment downtime depends on using the right verification supplies.”

DSA: Downtime can also mean supply chain problems. Let me explain. In 2016, a major ETD OEM purchased about three quarters of a million dollars of ETD consumables from DSA, because their production lines were shut down during the company’s move from Canada to the United States. Every single piece of this sale was used by the TSA and other customers. In another instance, DSA supplied large quantities of ETD consumables over many years to another OEM as part of their instruments’ certification package to TSL. In this instance, DSA consumables were approved along with the OEM’s instrument being certified. A solid and reliable supply chain managed by people with decades of trace detection experience empowers DSA to ship every trace order the same day we receive it. That’s dependability and up-time.

“Save time and money associated with costly repairs by using genuine [OEM] trace consumables.”



DSA: See above - more repetition. Remember, we have to pass the same tests as the OEM. Please read Dr. Brunks' letter explaining the approval process. We've never had a single security incident, nor have we caused a detector failure.

Please feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Rutter", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dave Rutter
President & CEO

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