

WADA Accuses Russia of Obstructing Anti-Doping Tests

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) claimed Wednesday that hundreds of attempted doping tests have been thwarted by Russian authorities and athletes.

A newly published report states that over 700 tests were either declined or cancelled between Feb. 15 and May 29, 2016. Athletes often provided "insufficient" information on their location and "evaded" or even "ran away from" facilities and venues to avoid tests. Russian authorities were also accused of providing institutional cover for athletes. WADA Doping Control Officers (DCOs) were intimidated and on occasion threatened by armed Federal Security Service (FSB) agents, the report said.

Fifty-two tests turned up positive for performance-enhancing drugs, mostly for meldonium. DCOs reported being unable to enter many facilities due to inaccurate information or obstructed entry by venue officials. Many athletes' locations were listed in military cities requiring special access permits, a move WADA reports may have intentionally been carried out to deter testing.

Tests were also tampered with by both athletes and customs officials, who opened packages containing samples. One sportswoman who was caught attempting to cheat a urine test went on to try and bribe officials, the document said.

The report was published on the same day as a New York Times investigation into WADA said that the organization had repeatedly ignored reports of doping by athletes and officials for nearly a decade.

In one 2012 case, former Russian Olympic athlete Darya Pishchalnikova wrote to WADA to report systematic doping in the country and to offer her cooperation. The organization allegedly forwarded her email to Russian sports officials. Four months later, the Russian Athletics Federation barred Pishchalnikova for 10 years.

The New York Times article also reported on conflicting interests between WADA officials and those who fund them: the International Olympic Committee and various governments.

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