The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
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WADA 'Bitterly Disappointed' at Russia's Failure to Meet Deadline

By Reuters

January 02, 2019



Mikhail Dzhaparidze / TASS

The World Anti-Doping Agency on Tuesday said that Russian authorities had failed to provide access to laboratory doping data by their year-end deadline and it will consider sanctions against the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA).

RUSADA was stripped of its accreditation in 2015 after a WADA-commissioned report found evidence of widespread state-sponsored doping in Russian athletics. But it was conditionally — and controversially — reinstated in September.

"I am bitterly disappointed that data extraction from the former Moscow Laboratory has not been completed by the date agreed by WADA's (executive committee) in September 2018," said WADA President Craig Reedie.

"Since then, WADA has been working diligently with the Russian authorities to meet the

deadline, which was clearly in the best interest of clean sport. The process agreed by WADA's ExCo in September will now be initiated."

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WADA's Compliance Review Committee (CRC) will meet Jan. 14-15 to review the situation and make a recommendation to WADA's executive committee on how to proceed.

If the CRC recommends declaring RUSADA non-compliant and the executive committee agrees, the Russian agency will have the right to challenge in the Court of Arbitration for Sport, who will hear the case and make the final decision.

Reedie said WADA had written to Pavel Kolobkov, Russia's minister of sport, and Yury Ganus, the director general of RUSADA, to notify them of the situation and to remind them of the next steps in the process.

Kolobkov on Saturday said Moscow and WADA were discussing a date for WADA experts to visit and receive laboratory data in the hopes of avoiding another suspension.

Last month WADA said an inspection team visiting the Moscow laboratory was denied access to raw data after Russian authorities said that the inspection team's equipment was not certified under Russian law.

IOC President Thomas Bach on Tuesday suggested the IOC was ready to move on following Russia's ban from the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in February.

"In Pyeongchang, we sanctioned the systematic manipulation of the anti-doping system in Russia during the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014," he said in a New Year's message.

"With its suspension from the Olympic Winter Games Pyeongchang 2018, the Russian Olympic Committee has served its sanction."

Critics Rally

But critics of Russia urged WADA to take a hard line against the nation for missing the deadline.

"The situation is a total joke and an embarrassment for WADA and the global anti-doping system," Travis Tygart, the CEO of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, said on Tuesday.

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"In September, WADA secretly moved the goal posts and reinstated Russia against the wishes of athletes, governments and the public.

"In doing this, WADA guaranteed Russia would turn over the evidence of its state-supported doping scheme by today.

"No-one is surprised this deadline was ignored, and it's time for WADA to stop being played

by the Russians and immediately declare them non-compliant for failing yet again to meet the deadline."

The United Kingdom Anti-Doping Agency athlete commission and Drug Free Sport New Zealand were among the groups that called on WADA to find RUSADA non-compliant for missing the deadline.

"Time for negotiation and compromise with Russia is now past," said Nick Paterson, chief executive for Drug Free Sport NZ. "Clean sport and clean athletes deserve our support.

"It is time to stand strong, and all those involved in the fight against doping to stand together."

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