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WADA Committee Calls For 4-Year Russia Olympic Ban

By Reuters

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Sergei Bobylev / TASS

Russia should be hit with a four-year Olympic ban and barred from all world championships for the manipulation of data retrieved from a tainted Moscow laboratory, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) said on Monday.

The recommendations were made by WADA's independent Compliance Review Committee (CRC) and will be put to the executive committee at meetings in Paris on Dec. 9.

In a 26-page report CRC said the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) should be declared non-compliant after an investigation found data handed over from a tainted Moscow laboratory was neither complete nor fully authentic.

Weary of a doping saga that has dragged on since 2015, WADA looks prepared to follow through on threats it made to come down hard on Russia if it failed to get control of the

doping crisis.

A four-year ban would prevent Russia from taking part in next year's Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Beijing Winter Games.

The CRC recommendations did, however, leave the door open for the participation of Russians as happened at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Games where some of the country's athletes competed as neutrals under the Olympic flag.

These athletes would have to demonstrate that they are clean and meet a number of other strict conditions.

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The CRC also recommended that Russia not be allowed to host or bid for any major sporting event and any events that have already been awarded should be moved to another country, unless it was legally or practically impossible to do so.

In addition, Russia may not bid for the right to host the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, irrespective of whether the bidding takes place during a ban.

For a four-year period athletes and officials representing Russia, including the president, secretary-general, CEO and any member of the executive board of the Russian Olympic Committee, would not be welcome at any major sporting event.

Russia can appeal any sanctions to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Russia was again under the doping microscope when WADA said in September that historical data supplied by the country's anti-doping authority contained "inconsistencies" that resulted in a decision to open a formal compliance procedure.

In a controversial decision last September, the WADA executive committee voted to conditionally restore RUSADA's accreditation on the agreement that Russia would turn over data in a discredited Moscow laboratory.

The Russian agency missed the December deadline but after last-minute brinkmanship a WADA inspection team was finally allowed to retrieve the data in January, recovering more than 2,200 samples.

That was expected to bring an end to the Russian doping affair until the evidence of tampering was unearthed.

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