

World Athletics Fines Russia \$10M, Caps Neutral Russian Athletes at 10

By [AFP](#)

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Only 10 Russian nationals will be allowed to compete as neutrals at the Tokyo Olympics. **Vladimir Smirnov / TASS**

World Athletics on Thursday fined Russia's track and field federation \$10 million for breaching anti-doping rules and capped at 10 the number of Russians allowed to compete as neutrals at the Tokyo Olympics.

The system of allowing Russian athletes to take part as Authorized Neutral Athletes, World Athletics president Sebastian Coe warned, "will be suspended if \$5 million of the \$10 million fine is not paid by July 1, 2020."

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"The remaining \$5 million of the fine will be suspended for two years, to be paid immediately

if during that period RUSAF (the Russian Federation) commits a further breach of the Anti-Doping Rules or fails to make meaningful progress towards satisfying the reinstatement conditions set by Council."

Coe said the Council felt "severely let down by the previous RUSAF administration, which is why it has approved a new set of criteria for reinstatement of the federation."

"This requires the new administration to set a clear roadmap for reinstatement, to be approved by Council, and greater oversight of the roadmap process by independent international personnel based in Russia."

World Athletics' decision-making Council had last year put a freeze on the system of allowing Russian athletes to compete as neutrals, simultaneously suspending the process of reinstating RUSAF over charges against its officials that they obstructed an anti-doping investigation.

Those decisions prompted wholesale change at RUSAF.

The Russian body has just appointed a new head, Yevgeny Yurchenko, who quickly agreed with accusations made by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) against RUSAF on the wrongdoings in the tipping-point case of high jumper Danil Lysenko, in which "forged documents and false explanations" were provided as an alibi to his whereabouts.

That contrite acknowledgement, paired with wholesale personnel change within RUSAF, opened the door for Rune Andersen's World Athletics Task Force to deliver a more positive option for Russian athletes, albeit just 10 of them, just 19 weeks away from the Tokyo Olympics.

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