

8 March 2024

Dear fellow athletes,

As the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris are fast approaching, we hope that those of you intending to be in Paris are on track with your training. We wish you all the best!

Regarding anti-doping, WADA has received several questions from athletes around many different aspects of preparations for the Games from an anti-doping perspective. As such, we have compiled a list of questions and worked with WADA, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Testing Agency (ITA) to provide you with answers as comprehensive as possible.

We hope you will find it helpful and that it provides you with some reassurance. The truth is there are several organizations working together to help ensure your right to compete on a level playing field in Paris is upheld! While we intend to continue to keep you informed ahead of Paris 2024, we also invite you to reach out to us with any questions at [athlete@wada-ama.org](mailto:athlete@wada-ama.org).

Yours in clean sport,



Ryan Pini, Chair of WADA's Athlete Council & Gaby Ahrens, Vice-Chair of WADA's Athlete Council

## **Q1. What level of testing is going on right now, ahead of Paris 2024?**

**A.** WADA has issued a reminder to all Anti-Doping Organizations (ADOs) to focus their testing efforts on athletes who are scheduled to participate at the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games. Specifically:

As it relates to the **Olympic Games**, a Pre-Games Expert Group is reinforcing testing efforts in the lead-up to the Games. This group, which is led by the International Testing Agency (ITA) on behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) supports worldwide anti-doping efforts to ensure that athletes are subject to a robust and risk-proportionate testing regime that is targeted and intelligence-led. It consists of:

- ITA Management
- Dr. Laura Lewis (United States National Anti-Doping Organization [NADO], USADA)
- Ms. Linglin (Chinese NADO, CHINADA)
- Mr. Alejandro Lozano (World Athletics)
- Dr. Sabrina Schoeps (German NADO, NADA)

The Expert Group is addressing potential gaps and issuing testing recommendations to all relevant ADOs around the world. The work of the Expert Group is now well underway with the full support of WADA. In short, the Expert Group looks at whether an athlete has been tested and, if so, how often and with which method (e.g., urine, blood, etc.). This group started its work in July

2023 and the recommendations have already been issued to **all** relevant ADOs. The ITA informs WADA of any ADO that does not collaborate or fails to implement the recommendations which allows WADA to follow up with the ADO from a compliance perspective. Additional details regarding this Pre-Games Expert Group, including its Supervisory Panel, which has two athlete representatives as members, can be found [here](#).

As it relates to the **Paralympic Games**, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has established an Anti-Doping Taskforce to assist all ADOs in implementing an effective and coordinated testing program for athletes likely to compete at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. This Taskforce is assisting the IPC in providing ADOs with testing recommendations to help ensure that resources are targeted in a way that maximizes both detection and deterrence of doping in Para sports leading up to the Games. The Taskforce is led by the IPC and includes several experts from around the world, including:

- Ms. Saori Ueda (Japanese NADO, JADA)
- Mr. Karim Chtai (NADA)
- Mr. Lasse Vestli Baekken (Nordic Athlete Passport Management Unit)
- Mr. Ryan Morrow (New Zealand NADO, DFSNZ)
- Mr. Alex Bohl (USADA)
- Dr. Elske Schabot (South African NADO, SAIDS)
- Mr. Clive Kennington (World Rugby)

Ex-officio members on the Taskforce include Mr. Richard Perot (athlete representative) and Dr. Matt Fedoruk (expert advisor from USADA). The Taskforce has already begun its work with the first batch of recommendations in the process of being issued to ADOs.

## **Q2. What are ‘testing recommendations’?**

**A.** While every Anti-Doping Organization (ADO) should be implementing a robust testing program year-round and, especially in the lead-up to major events, the pre-Games expert groups or taskforces are there to help ADOs focus their testing resources appropriately and add an additional layer of support and monitoring to the worldwide anti-doping efforts ahead of a Major Event. This is done by identifying and sending testing recommendations to the ADOs. The recommendations are not mandatory, rather they seek to reinforce and/or enhance an ADO’s existing testing plan. When it comes to Paris 2024, these are the sort of recommendations that ADOs may receive:

- That a specific number of samples be collected in-competition or out-of-competition from specific athletes, based on the assessed risk of the sport.
- That out-of-competition samples be collected during a specific period (e.g., one sample to be collected in May 2024 and one sample in July 2024).
- That a specific number of samples be urine samples and others blood samples.
- That specific athletes be included in the ADO’s Registered Testing Pool and therefore be required to provide whereabouts information.
- That a certain number of tests be collected by an International Federation and others by a National Anti-Doping Organization. This fosters collaboration but also ensures that athletes are tested by different Testing Authorities.
- That analysis be performed quickly on certain samples and that any pending analysis results (as the Games get closer) are followed up in time.

**Q3. Can WADA mandate that athletes be subject to a certain minimum number of tests to participate in the Olympic and Paralympic Games?**

**A.** No. WADA does not have the jurisdiction to impose eligibility criteria for athletes to compete as it relates to anti-doping. Determining eligibility criteria for Paris 2024 rests solely with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the relevant International Federations.

**Q4. Does WADA have a role to play in ensuring Anti-Doping Organizations are testing properly?**

**A.** Yes. While WADA cannot mandate eligibility criteria, it does monitor ongoing compliance of Anti-Doping Organizations (ADOs) via several [compliance monitoring initiatives](#). This means that WADA reviews all areas of ADOs' anti-doping programs on a regular basis to ensure they are functioning well and will continue to push them to implement the testing recommendations as the Games approach.

**Q5. How can we be certain that the samples are analyzed promptly and that results are in before the Games? Should Anti-Doping Organizations stop testing a certain amount of time before the Games start to make sure that all test results are in?**

**A.** It is important that ADOs test athletes year-round and up until their departure for major events, in accordance with their testing plans. The weeks and months before the Games is a higher-risk period for potential doping so it is important to be able to test at the best time, which could be very close to the beginning of the Games. What ADOs must do is request the WADA-accredited laboratories to prioritize the analysis of urgent samples and agree on a timeframe in which they will receive the results. If results are pending, they should follow-up with the laboratories to confirm when they will be reported. Lessons have been learned following the case of figure skater Kamila Valieva in 2022 and WADA recently reminded ADOs of this important requirement to avoid a repeat occurrence.

**Q6. What if there are still some athletes that have not been tested in the months leading into Paris 2024? Who is responsible for monitoring this and what can be done to ensure those athletes are tested before the Games start?**

**A.** For the Olympic Games, the ITA Paris 2024 Pre-Games Expert Group is monitoring athlete test history. Where potential gaps are found (i.e., an insufficient level of testing) the Expert Group may issue further recommendations to remedy the situation. To assist with this, the International Testing Agency (ITA) can test any athlete directly three months ahead of the Games thanks to the extended testing authority of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The ITA will also consider the outcome of the pre-Games testing program for its Games-time testing plan that begins on 18 April 2024 with the opening of the Olympic Village. In- and out-of-competition doping controls will be distributed depending on various risk factors, including potential gaps during the pre-Games phase.

For the Paralympic Games, the Anti-Doping Taskforce is primarily focused on ensuring robust testing is in place across medium-to-high-risk sports. The Taskforce is responsible for monitoring ADOs' response to the testing recommendations and identifying gaps. While the period of testing jurisdiction for the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is limited from 21 August to 8

September 2024, the IPC can test athletes in sports where the IPC is also the International Federation at any time (i.e. Para athletics, powerlifting, shooting and swimming).

**Q7. Given the history and the ongoing war, how can we be sure that Russian athletes have been tested ahead of Paris 2024?**

A. The International Testing Agency's (ITA's) Paris 2024 Pre-Games Expert Group and the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC's) Anti-Doping Taskforce are ensuring that all athletes are appropriately tested ahead of the Games based on intelligence, science, research, available data, and proven strategic testing initiatives.

Several International Federations (IFs) along with the ITA and the IPC, acting in its IF capacity, are also collecting samples from Russian athletes, either inside or outside Russia, regularly using private sample collection providers or other NADOs. In addition, the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) is conducting testing, and samples are being transported, with a strict chain of custody, for analysis at WADA-accredited laboratories in other countries.

Between 1 January 2023 and 27 February 2024, RUSADA collected 12,873 samples from Russian athletes in Russia. In addition, the ITA and the IFs collected 1,232 samples within Russia. During the same period, Russian athletes training or competing outside of their country have also been tested by international authorities.

Athletes from Russia (or Belarus) who may qualify to compete as Individual Neutral Athletes (AINs) for the Olympics and as Neutral Paralympic Athletes for the Paralympics will have to meet the eligibility criteria as laid out by the IOC and IPC. So far, for the Olympics, among the thousands of athletes from around the world who have qualified for Paris 2024, only a small number are AINs and teams of athletes from Russia or from Belarus are not eligible. The IOC has [eligibility conditions for Individual Neutral Athletes at Paris 2024](#) while the IPC has also published its [Neutral Athlete and Support Personnel Regulations for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games](#). As with the Olympics, only individual neutral athletes (no teams) can compete at the Paralympics.

While attention is being paid to Russian athletes, they are by no means the only athletes ADOs need to focus on.

**Q8. There was a group, of which WADA was a part, ahead of the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 where anti-doping-related eligibility criteria were established for Russian athletes... So, why is that not in place this time?**

A. There is no need for such a group this time because of the work being carried out by the Pre-Games Expert Group. The independent group in place ahead of PyeongChang 2018 was set up to ensure, as best as possible, that no Russian athlete would be eligible to compete at PyeongChang if they had avoided sanction for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation due to the institutionalized doping scheme uncovered by WADA (see '[Operation LIMS](#)' where more than 240 sanctions have been issued so far). We are in a very different situation today. Firstly, athletes from Russia (and Belarus) are competing as neutrals in Paris 2024 for reasons unconnected to doping. Also, WADA and the International Federations have had time to investigate and prosecute athletes who were implicated in the Russian doping scheme or subsequent cover-ups, with priority having been given to cases involving active athletes.

### **Q9. The Russian Anti-Doping Agency is non-compliant, so why are they allowed to test?**

**A.** When an Anti-Doping Organization (ADO) is declared non-compliant, different consequences may apply as outlined in the [International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories](#) (ISCCS). In this case, while WADA monitors its activities, RUSADA can and is implementing its anti-doping program. A few key points to note:

- RUSADA provides WADA with monthly reports on its anti-doping activities (i.e., all anti-doping areas and not simply testing) which WADA reviews and provides regular feedback on;
- RUSADA publishes testing statistics on its website, which include the names of athletes tested (WADA can validate this via the Anti-Doping Administration and Management System that it oversees). Russian athlete test information can be found [here](#); and
- While RUSADA is collecting thousands of samples (i.e., urine, blood, and blood for the Athlete Biological Passport), it is worth noting that those samples are being analyzed in a WADA-accredited laboratory outside of Russia and that the passports of those athletes are being reviewed by an independent Athlete Passport Management Unit (APMU) also located outside of Russia.

### **Q10. What will happen during the Games to protect the integrity of all competitions?**

**A.** The International Testing Agency (ITA), on behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), has developed a robust and risk-based anti-doping program for the Olympic Games. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is also implementing its own testing program for the Paralympic Games. During the Games, WADA will have its Independent Observer teams on-site to ensure that implementation of both programs is compliant with the Code and the International Standards. It should also be noted that WADA works with these organizations ahead of time to review the planning and provides feedback as needed. WADA is also working in close collaboration with the WADA-accredited laboratory in Paris to ensure it is ready. WADA's athlete-led engagement program will also be in operation at both events. You will see our booth at the Athlete Village. Come see us!

### **Q11. What can I do as an athlete to support clean Games?**

**A.** So many things! We urge you to ensure you are well informed regarding the anti-doping rules in place for the Games ([IOC Anti-Doping Rules](#) and [IPC Anti-Doping Code](#)). WADA has many resources designed with you in mind (e.g., our Anti-Doping Education and Learning platform, known as [ADEL](#) is full of useful and easily accessible info to help you understand the process) and has also worked with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), and the International Testing Agency (ITA) to develop e-learning programs (see courses for the [Olympic Games](#) and [Paralympic Games](#)). Make the most of those! You can also reach out to your National Anti-Doping Organization or International Federation with any questions you may have. The ITA has issued a dedicated Paris 2024 Education [Guidebook for National Olympic Committees](#) and is hosting a dedicated webinar in May on testing at the Games to assist preparation for athletes. The IPC also has anti-doping information on its website for athletes – [check it out!](#) But also, please simply be champions for clean sport – advocate for all athletes in your sport or country to receive the values-based education they deserve; push for all participants to be tested ahead of the Games and for test results to be promptly dealt with; and if you see or suspect doping, report it in confidence via WADA's [Speak Up!](#) platform.