

Doping Widespread In Australian Sport

An [Australian Crime Commission inquiry](#) has identified that drug use is widespread in Australian sport. The damning official probe revealed growing links to organized crime that points to "clear parallels" with the Lance Armstrong case.

The common use of banned substances such as peptides, hormones, and illicit drugs was identified by the inquiry, with no professional sporting codes immune to the scourge of [doping](#).

Sports scientists, coaches, support staff, doctors, and pharmacists were involved in the provision of drugs according to the findings in the year-long investigation. In its report, the commission said peptides and hormones despite being prohibited substances in professional sport are being used by professional athletes in Australia, facilitated by sports scientists, high-performance coaches, and sports staff. It was further revealed that some players were even being administered with banned substances that have not yet been approved for use by humans.

Home affairs minister Jason Clare said the findings are shocking and will disgust fans of Australian sports. Jason added that officials from clubs have also been identified as administering, via injections and intravenous drips, and a variety of substances and this cheating but more than that, it is cheating with the help of criminals. He went on to add that multiple athletes from a number of clubs in major Australian sporting codes are suspected of presently using or having previously used peptides, potentially constituting anti-doping rule violations.

The year-long investigation also disclosed that there were "clear parallels between what has been discovered in Australia and the USADA (US Anti-Doping Agency) investigation into Lance Armstrong", referring to the disgraced Tour de France cyclist, which underlines the transnational threat posed by doping in professional sport, both from a 'fair play' perspective and as a broader integrity issue. The project findings, USADA investigation, and previous high-profile doping cases in Europe and the United States make it clear that it is not only athletes who are involved in doping, but also athletic support staff, organized criminal groups, and complicit doctors. The report also disclosed that criminal networks were increasingly involved in distributing illegal substances and the links may have resulted in match-fixing and fraudulent manipulation of betting markets.

The threat of match-fixing was "extraordinarily serious" with organized crime involved, Crime Commission boss John Lawler said who also added that organized crime has many facets and it will go to where there are lucrative profits to be made, low risk, regulatory weakness, and they will exploit those vulnerabilities.

All sports had committed to work with the government, the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA), and law enforcement agencies to restore confidence in sport, said Sports minister Kate Lundy. She said the government this week introduced legislation to strengthen the powers of ASADA to enable the full and unhindered investigation of these issues and if persons of interest refuse to cooperate with ASADA investigations they will be liable for civil penalties. Kate also added that all major professional sports would establish integrity units to deal with doping, betting and ethical issues.