

NRL Unveils New Anti-Doping Measures

New drug testing procedures designed to "level the playing field" and stamp drugs out of the game have been unveiled by the [National Rugby League](#).

There is no place for drugs in the sport, league chief executive Dave Smith told reporters at Rugby League Central in Sydney and added that we will do everything we can to have a drug-free game and the new testing measures are just part of our commitment to fans and players to placing integrity and compliance at the forefront of rugby league. Smith added we have been working with ASADA to identify the emerging threats in world sport and we have now developed a comprehensive new testing program that responds to and minimizes these risks.

The NRL has also appointed a general manager of integrity and chief legal officer, Nick Weeks, and established a dedicated integrity and compliance unit for the first time. League chief executive Dave Smith also remarked that NRL will utilize a test that was developed during the 2012 London Olympics to detect the use of human growth hormones (hGH) and the new anti-doping regime will also include an athlete biological passport (ABP) for players, regular testing both during the season and off-season and increased peptide testing. Smith also revealed that the latter will see samples sent to Cologne, in France, to take advantage of leading international developments and added peptides are very advanced drugs and from time immemorial it's been hard to keep up with tests for these drugs. The league chief executive went on to say that he hoped testing would increase in future seasons and the ABP test is in effect as of now and also said we've signed the contract earlier in the week so the new regime is in place, it's actually happened.

Smith said ASADA will do all the things they need to do to carry out the testing and where we start is not where we're going to finish and we will always be able to shift the program. The chief executive added that the ABP tests are different from traditional tests as they look at the effects of doping, rather than directly detecting the prohibited substances or methods used and this means that even if a substance has left the body, the tests will detect if it was there. Smith recently called on the rugby league fraternity to lay off the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority and said the anti-doping body should be left to operate on its own schedule. Smith also remarked that the process is still moving along and also said ASADA know that he continues to want urgently to get the existing investigation done, so he thinks we're all clear in where I stand on that point and ASADA continue to reassure me that they're doing everything they possibly can to get the investigation completed in as timely manner as they possibly can. In a statement, the Rugby League Players Association (RLPA) said it backed the NRL's new testing measures and the way it has gone about investigating [doping](#).