

'Failed Blind Test' For Rio Doping Lab

According to rumors, the Rio de Janeiro doping control laboratory has failed a "blind" quality assessment test. Accreditation of the lab was recently revoked by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in a hugely embarrassing blow for Brazilian authorities.

Under the External Quality Assessment Scheme (EQAS) of WADA, [blood and urine samples](#) are distributed by WADA to accredited labs to be tested for the presence - or absence - of prohibited substances. The lab, in a "blind" test, knows that the sample has been supplied under the EQAS scheme, but not what substance it might contain. This exercise is conducted by WADA for assessing a range of lab performance criteria, such as turnaround time or compliance with documentation package requirements, along with competence of the facility in detecting and identifying prohibited substances.

WADA has not provided information about the reasons that prompted it to revoke the accreditation less than 10 months before the 2014 FIFA World Cup was scheduled to kick off in Brazil. It only remarked that it was because of non-compliance with the International Standard for Laboratories (ISL) and related documents.

The Rio lab was originally suspended in January 2012 for a period of nine months for similar reasons. It was reinstated in September after a site visit. The UFRJ doping control laboratory, also known as Ladetec, is now suspended again in what could present a major difficulty for the organizers of the World Cup and Rio 2016 Olympics who had planned for the lab to test all the samples at the events.

In a statement, the World Anti-Doping Agency remarked the revocation will enter into force September 25, 2013 and means that the laboratory – which is currently suspended – will no longer be authorized to carry out the testing of doping control samples on behalf of Wada or any testing authority. It added the suspension remains applicable in the meanwhile and Ladetec is therefore ineligible to perform analysis of doping control samples for any testing authority. The decision was taken by the executive committee of WADA after an in-depth review. The statement also reads that the decision made by WADA's executive committee marks the second time the Rio laboratory has fallen below the required standards set by the World Anti-Doping Agency and also added the laboratory was also suspended for nine months in January 2012, before being reinstated following a Wada site visit that ensured the proper corrective actions had been implemented.

Ladetec can now either appeal against this decision to the court of arbitration for sport in Lausanne within 21 days or decide to reapply for accreditation, and may seek "fast track" process from the WADA executive committee.

In another development, a leading medical expert of [FIFA](#) has expressed concerns about the WADA decision to revoke the accreditation of the Rio doping control laboratory so close to next year's Brazil World Cup. Michel D'Hooghe, head of FIFA's medical committee, remarked we have to find a solution in Brazil and said there are other possibilities, perhaps Sao Paulo or perhaps an adaptation of the lab in Rio but for the moment, yes, this is a problem for us. D'Hooghe will be discussing the problem at a medical meeting in Zurich on October 1 ahead of the FIFA executive committee session the same week. It was recently announced by FIFA that it had yet to formulate an alternative plan to handle World Cup doping tests in the event of LADETEC being unavailable.