

Essendon Players Not To Be Charged Immediately

The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) and the Federal government have told the Australian Football League (AFL) that ASADA has no immediate plans to start processing doping charges against [Essendon players](#).

However, it is believed that there still seems to be a possibility of infraction notices sent to individual players with the joint investigation by AFL-ASADA into possible use of performance enhancing drugs at [Essendon](#). In another development, AFL chief Andrew Demetriou says he has no knowledge of imminent bans for Essendon players and officials, but he cannot rule them out. Demetriou also hinted that there is a possibility of sanctions hanging over Essendon for all of next season and possibly longer.

Essendon interim CEO Ray Gunston refuted claims that the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority has plans of putting up infraction notices against players and club officials that could result in lifetime bans from all sport. Gunston said the club understands that there is no factual basis to the story in relation to the issuing of infraction notices at this point in time. An ASADA spokesman said the anti-doping agency is aware of a media report speculating on the issuing of infraction notices in the AFL and it is important to note that under its legislation ASADA is unable to provide specific comments on individual investigations to protect the integrity of the investigation as well as individuals.

Australian Sport Minister Peter Dutton remarked as a general rule ASADA have extensive powers and they will exercise those powers where they see fit and if people have done the wrong thing they will impose bans, they will make sure they investigate matters properly and that's appropriate.

Coach Tim Sheens when asked if he is concerned the ASADA investigation could potentially derail the World Cup campaign of the Kangaroos said you never get ahead of yourself in this business, so it's about playing football with the team we've picked and if something happens we'll consider what happens at that point. He added all you do is to prepare well to play football and that's his role and the team's role.

Meanwhile, Australian Rugby League commission chairman John Grant has revealed contingency plans are in place in case any of the Kangaroos' players receive infraction notices resulting from the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority investigation during the upcoming Rugby League World Cup. Grant confirmed all interviews with NRL players and relevant officials have been

completed and remarked we'll take whatever actions from a Commission point of view that are appropriate. He added if in fact there is a situation that does come where there's an infraction notice issued against a player that's in the squad, there's a process within the Rugby League World Cup rules whereby a nation can apply to have a replacement but that's to be determined at that time.

It is widely believed that Essendon doctor Bruce Reid may escape an infraction notice. A report appearing in *The Australian* suggested that Reid would be cleared of all charges and face no penalty for his role in failing to prevent Essendon players being exposed to health risks and, potentially, anti-doping violations through the injection of [exotic supplements](#).