

Sporting Community Must Maintain Its Support For Substantial Assistance

[UK Anti-Doping](#) Chief Executive Andy Parkinson recently emphasized on the importance of substantial assistance and why sporting community must maintain its support for it in a serious fight against doping.

Parkinson remarked the world will have a new anti-doping Code from January 1, 2015 and the purpose of these rules is to bind sports, anti-doping organizations, athletes and athlete support personnel to an agreed approach to tackling the global problem of [doping in sport](#). The UK Anti-Doping Chief Executive added this New Code reinforces accepted principles and practices from the past decade and introduces new ways in which all those involved in sport can protect athletes at risk of making the wrong decision.

The UK Anti-Doping Chief Executive went on to add that the first thing to recognize is that a doping athlete does not always, or indeed normally, work in isolation and added that all too often we see that the athlete is just the tip of an iceberg of highly profitable and illegal activities. He further remarked this is why we work with law enforcement agencies, to shape our understanding of the trafficking, importation and manufacture of performance-enhancing substances and this information influences how, when and who we might pursue, and where our focus needs to lie and added that sufficient evidence can lead, and has done in many jurisdictions including in the UK, to the successful prosecution of both athletes and their entourage.

Parkinson also said it follows that those that we catch can also provide us with invaluable information and evidence, such as how they sourced doping substances, or who else was involved and this can help us prevent other athletes going down a similar path in the future and can assist all anti-doping organizations in refining their strategies to prevent doping. He also said the Code states that, if the information provided does not result in such an outcome, the suspension can be lifted with the original ban returned and this provision exists in the current rules and will remain largely unchanged from 1 January 2015, except for one significant modification where, in truly exceptional circumstances, the World Anti-Doping Agency may agree the suspension of bans greater than those permitted to be agreed by other anti-doping organizations.

While explaining the role of substantial assistance, Parkinson added we understand that this is sometimes a difficult concept to support, the idea of lessening a doper's ban in return for information but remarked if we really want to prevent [doping](#), we must recognize that as the end user, the doping athlete may not be exclusively culpable for their activities. He also said athletes regularly tell us that the entourage involved in doping need to be held to account and substantial assistance offers one means to receive the evidence to achieve this aim.

UKAD Chief Executive Andy Parkinson added that recent media coverage shows varying degrees of understanding and acceptance of the World Anti-Doping Code provision for substantial assistance, a tool that allows for credit to be given to athletes

and support personnel who assist anti-doping organizations pursue others involved in doping. He said in any such situation, part of a ban imposed on an individual can be suspended on the basis that information provided results in discovering or establishing an anti-doping rule violation or criminal conviction of another person.