

Russian Probe Is 'Defining Moment' For Doping, Says Tygart

USADA Chief Travis Tygart has remarked findings about the widespread [doping in Russia](#) could prove to be a turning point for all sports.

Tygart told a high-level doping conference in Singapore that the probe into allegations of doping in Russia is looming as the critical battle in the global fight against [drugs in sport](#). The USADA chief remarked this investigation that WADA has undertaken into Russia is so critically important right now. Tygart added there are allegations out there that have been portrayed in the media and there are facts that back some of those allegations.

The chief of USADA also said we can argue about the credibility of those facts at this point but there are facts out there that prompted WADA's investigation. He went on to add that's why it's a defining moment, if not the defining moment, where a country that's alleged, along with its anti-doping organizations, its lab, other sport federations, of doping its athletes in order to win on the world stage.

Tygart added when there's evidence of these types of allegations, it's incumbent upon the overseers of the whole anti-doping program, WADA, and its role under the code, to fully vet and investigate the allegations that have been made and hold any people that have violated the rules accountable. He also remarked that ultimately is what gives confidence to clean athletes around the world who are otherwise being held to the highest standards. Tygart also said if one country is not held to that standard and they go to the (Olympic) Games and they win. He also said if that was not done the right way, and the allegations prove to be true and athletes who won in those events shouldn't have won because they violated the rules, then they've got to be held accountable.

An independent commission has been established by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to investigate claims of systematic doping among [Russian athletes](#).

A few weeks back, a German TV documentary alleged that almost 99 percent of Russian athletes are doping and using banned performance enhancing drugs. Russia has been hit with many doping scandals in the recent past with some of the

big names, including three Olympic walking champions, Olga Kaniskina, Valery Borchin, Sergei Kiryapkin, as well as the 2011 world champion Sergei Bakulin, and the 2011 World silver medalist Vladimir Kanaykin.

The Russian investigation is focused on the national race-walking training centre in Saransk where at least 20 athletes who trained there under the oversight of head coach Viktor Chegin have been banned for doping in recent years. Viktor Kolesnikov, the centre's longtime director, was banned last year for four years for possessing substances outlawed under anti-doping rules. Kolesnikov was briefly replaced by Olympic champion Olga Kaniskina, who resigned after she became one of the five walkers banned for doping.

Russia's Athletics Federation (VFLA) president Valentin Balakhnichev has announced his intention to step down from his job. A few days back, Valentin Maslakov announced he was resigning as head coach.