

## Essendon Doping Investigation Criticized By John Fahey

Former World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) president John Fahey has remarked that the Essendon doping investigation that stretched for more than two years was very strange and cumbersome.

Fahey however denied that the investigations are an indictment on the [Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority](#) (ASADA). Fahey said on ABC News Radio there have been months and months and months of inaction whilst court actions were taken by the Essendon club and their coach to prevent the inquiry actually taking place - that was the delay.

The ex-WADA Chief also said that he would like to see an examination of the regulations because there is a very cumbersome process in place in this country. Fahey also said he had not seen it taking place anywhere else where we can see so many preliminary steps taken before we can actually get to an inquiry and that to him is very unsatisfactory.

The former World Anti-Doping Agency President also said the Essendon club escaped liability despite it being apparent that players did receive injections. Fahey commented there were needles given to numerous players and in this instance they were not satisfied that the drug inside was the one that is on the prohibited list and added that the tragedy for him in all of this is that the Worksafe Victoria department didn't look at what this meant from an employer-employee relationship.

The investigation was also criticized by Stephen Amendola, the lawyer for Essendon coach [James Hird](#). Amendola remarked there should be a judicial inquiry into the entire investigation and went on to add that reputations have been trashed. Amendola added participation of the AFL compromised the independence of ASADA's investigation. The lawyer for Essendon coach James Hird said the whole [supplements](#) investigation should be subject to a judicial inquiry.

Meanwhile, Chief executive of Australia's anti-doping watchdog Ben McDevitt has said ASADA would decide on whether to appeal after carefully examining the report. McDevitt also insisted that the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority is not the enemy and said the fight against doping was not a fight against sport. McDevitt added every time an Australian athlete gets set to compete, whether it be at the Olympics or in a junior sport, whether it be at a team sport or at an individual level, our expectation is that the rights of clean athletes to compete against other clean athletes must be protected and said some may find this hard to believe.

The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) have 21 days to lodge an appeal. WADA director general David Howman said it would consider its options, depending on the actions of ASADA. Howman remarked the matter now rests with the anti-doping organization concerned and other associated bodies to decide whether or not to

exercise their rights of appeal. He added once fully reviewed by all parties concerned, and following receipt of the full case file on the tribunal's ruling, WADA will review the reasons for the decision and determine whether or not to exercise its own right of appeal.