

Anti-Doping Reforms Announced By Russia In Bid To Avoid Olympics Ban

Russia has announced reforms in hopes that they will repair the credibility of its anti-doping body and allow its athletics team to compete at the [Rio Olympics](#).

Last November, Russia was suspended by the International Association of Athletics Federation after the country was accused of “state-sponsored” [doping](#) in a report commissioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency. The Russian ministry of sport announced on Wednesday that all Russian track and field athletes who intend to compete at the Rio Olympics in August will now undergo a minimum of three independent, externally administered anti-doping controls before the Olympics. The Russian sports ministry said these anti-doping controls will be carried out by the world governing body of athletics and be in addition to existing anti-doping procedures.

The ministry of sport also remarked two independent international experts who will be nominated by the World Anti-Doping Agency will be based full-time in Moscow from the end of April. These experts will have complete and free" access for as long as necessary to ensure the Russian anti-doping system is free of undue interference and is fully independent. Russia’s minister of sport, Vitaly Mutko, remarked we believe that sport must be clean and fair at all levels, from grassroots through to elite and added we are 100% supportive of WADA’s efforts, alongside the International Olympic Committee and the IAAF and other organizations, to stamp out cheating. Mutko also commented that the dreams of clean athletes must not be allowed to be destroyed because of other people’s mistakes and also said this is an important step in our journey.

Recently, the head of European Athletics says after meeting Russian officials that the Russian team could still compete at the European Championships if reinstated by the IAAF. European Athletics President Svein Arne Hansen, who is on the IAAF Council that should decide the status of Russia on June 17 in Vienna, said there is still time enough for the Russian team to enter. The IAAF will hear reports from its taskforce into the anti-doping progress made by Russia on June 17. A five-strong IAAF taskforce, headed by former World Anti-Doping Agency director Rune Andersen, has been monitoring Russia’s anti-doping progress. The IAAF said in a statement the taskforce is having regular

meetings and conference calls with the ROC (Russian Olympic Committee), the ICC (the Interim Coordination Committee that is coordinating Russia's co-operation with the taskforce) and the RusAf (the Russian Athletics Federation) and will deliver their next report to the IAAF Council when they meet in June.

In another development, the World Anti-Doping Agency disclosed on April 27 that track and field was the sport with the worst doping record in 2014 and Russia had more doping violations than any other country that year. WADA said Russian athletes racked up a total of 148 violations, followed by Italy with 123, India with 96, and Belgium and France with 91 violations each. Track and field led the number of doping violations by sport with 248, followed by [bodybuilding](#) with 225, cycling with 168, weightlifting with 143, and powerlifting with 116.