

## **Russia May Be Completely Banned From Sochi Olympics**

Former WADA president Dick Pound has remarked it is very much possible that Russia could be completely excluded from the [Rio 2016 Olympics](#).

The country will face Olympic exile if the allegations of state-sponsored doping at the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi are proven. An investigation funded by the World Anti-Doping Agency into allegations made by Grigory Rodchenkov, the former director of Moscow's anti-doping lab, is presently being led by Canadian legal expert [Richard McLaren](#). This report by McLaren will be completed by July 15, which will be two weeks before the Rio Games get underway but McLaren has already disclosed that he has been able to corroborate some of the claims made by Rodchenkov. The IAAF task force leader Rune Andersen remarked evidence had already been found by McLaren that samples of Russian athletes were being 'filtered' in the build-up to the 2013 World Athletics Championships in Moscow so that only clean samples get tested.

Rodchenkov's interview with the *New York Times* brought Russia to the brink of international low and humiliation. The ex-director of Moscow's anti-doping lab detailed an alleged conspiracy by government officials to ensure success at the Winter Olympics in Sochi.

WADA president Sir Craig Reedie said at a conference in London the results of the McLaren investigation may present a precedent-setting opportunity to demonstrate our collective commitment to clean sport. Reedie added we will respond thoroughly and effectively if the allegations are found to be true. The WADA president also added we are encouraged that the IAAF recognized its responsibilities and also remarked it suspended the Russian federation because of (WADA) code breaches and they have decided to continue that. Reedie added if there is clear evidence of other sports being involved then clearly you would hope that the relevant international federations might take the same view.

On Friday, a global ban on the athletics federation of Russia that was in place since November was upheld by the world governing body of athletics in a unanimous vote. Many in the Olympics fraternity are of the view that athletics is not the only sport of Russia engulfed with doping with a recent surge in doping positives in Russian swimming, weightlifting, and wrestling.

Russian Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko condemned decision of the IAAF to uphold the ban on Russian athletics and said the IAAF should be disbanded. Mutko remarked the IAAF has exonerated itself from responsibility by shifting the responsibility to the All-Russia Athletics Federation.

US Senator John Thune, the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, has pressed the World Anti-Doping Agency to explain why it took it so long for them to initiate an investigation

into systematic doping and cheating by the Russian Olympic team. Thune remarked the US Office of National Drug Control Policy has contributed more than \$25 million since 2003 to WADA in the form of dues for protecting the rights of athletes to participate in drug-free sports and therefore the Senate Commerce Committee has oversight and legislative jurisdiction over sports.

In another development, IAAF President Sebastian Coe has remarked the hard-line athletics has taken on state-sponsored [doping in Russia](#) and this can act as a blueprint for other sports.

Norwegian Rune Andersen, who led the IAAF taskforce of five investigators that recommended against reinstating Russia, remarked he would soon share evidence of drug taking in other sports.