

Russia Operated Doping Program At Sochi Winter Olympics, Says Report

A report issued by Canadian law professor and sports lawyer Richard McLaren has confirmed evidence of widespread state-[sponsored doping](#) by Russian athletes at the Sochi Olympics.

The report, which was commissioned by of the World Anti-Doping Agency and was unveiled at a Toronto news conference, disclosed that Russian athletes were protected by the Moscow laboratory during the 2014 Sochi Winter Games.

McLaren, who was a member of the independent commission of WADA that last year exposed widespread doping and corruption in Russian track and field, disclosed the manipulation of athletes' analytical results and sample swapping was overseen by the Russian Ministry of Sport. The recent findings would further deepen the doping crisis surrounding Russian athletes that has already sparked a growing movement to have a blanket ban of the country from the August 5-21 Rio Olympics. The track and field team of Russia is banned from international competition, including the Olympics.

The report of McLaren addressed accusations made by former Moscow Anti-Doping Laboratory head [Grigory Rodchenkov](#). The former anti-doping lab chief had remarked dozens of Russians made use of performance enhancing drugs in Sochi with approval from national sports authorities. Rodchenkov had claimed that he operated on instructions from Russia's sports ministry. Last month, McLaren had remarked his preliminary findings supported allegations that the Russian sports ministry was involved in manipulating test results before, during and after the track and field world championships in Moscow in 2013.

McLaren said he cannot name specific athletes and did not mention specific sports but remarked that the report lists summer and winter sports that are affected. It was added by McLaren that every positive sample was sent up the chain of the command so the system in place at the Moscow lab would have affected the vast majority of sports.

The World Anti-Doping Agency can now push for further action against Russia. Former WADA president Dick Pound recently remarked the possibility of the entire Russian

Olympics team being excluded from the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro would be the "nuclear option".

In another development, a leaked draft letter has disclosed the United States and Canadian Anti-Doping Agencies want a complete ban on Russia competing at the Rio Olympics. United States Anti-Doping Agency CEO Travis Tygart in the draft letter addressed to the International Olympic Committee, which was to be sent once McLaren's report is presented called for a ban on all Russian athletes, not just in track and field. The draft letter signed by Tygart and Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sports CEO Paul Melia reads we write on behalf of a community of clean athletes and anti-doping organizations with faith that the IOC can lead the way forward by upholding the [principles of Olympism](#). The draft letter further reads that we consistent with the Principles, Charter and Code request that the IOC Executive Board take the action to suspend the Russian Olympic and Paralympic Committee from participating in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. The letter also reads the only appropriate, and permissible, course of action in these unprecedented circumstances is for the IOC to immediately suspend the Russian Olympic and Paralympic Committees from the Olympic Movement and to declare that no athlete can represent Russia at the Rio Olympic Games.