

Russia Doping Reforms Not Happening Quick, Says WADA Chief

World Anti-Doping Agency director general Olivier Niggli has remarked that the anti-doping reforms of Russia are not happening quickly enough. Niggli said though the country is making changes but he is not pleased with the speed he would have liked to see.

Speaking at the Tackling Doping in Sport conference, Niggli said it is too early to comment whether Russia will be allowed to compete at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. The World Anti-Doping Agency director general said we are working with them to see if things can be put into place and a credible system be reinstated in Russia in the coming months. Niggli added we will see where they are when we get closer to the Games and added they still have a number of months to do the right thing. The WADA director general commented the ball is in their camp and they know what they have to do.

Niggli also added the World Anti-Doping Agency is considering a complete ban on [corticosteroids](#). Presently, athletes are allowed to make use of the anti-inflammatory medicines out of competition and can even take them in competition if they can prove a medical need, called a 'therapeutic use exemption' (TUE).

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently admitted to some shortcoming in the anti-doping system of the country. Putin however denied any state-sponsored program of [systematic doping](#) and cheating. The country claims to have implemented a series of changes to address the "roadmap" laid out by the World Anti-Doping Agency that will see it return to competition.

Last year, a WADA-commissioned McLaren report claimed that more than 1,000 Russians benefited from a state-sponsored doping program between 2011 and 2015. Several sports federations, including the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), have banned Russian athletes from international competition until the anti-doping efforts of the country have met requirements.

On the other hand, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) opted not to enforce a total ban on Russia.

In another development, the World Anti-Doping Agency added caffeine to its Monitoring Program for 2017. The addition means experts would now study whether athletes are using the substance "with the intent of enhancing performance."

Caffeine can enhance speed and stamina. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) currently limits the consumption of caffeine for college athletes to 15 micrograms per milliliter, or roughly six to eight cups of coffee ingested two to three hours before a competition.

A report published by the [Collegiate & Professional Sports Dietitians Association](#) states caffeine consumed at very high levels - 6-9 milligrams of caffeine per kilogram of body weight - can cause gastrointestinal issues, nausea or shaking, as well as 'overstimulation' that can negatively impact training, sleep and performance.

Russian Federal Microbiological Agency chief Vladimir Uiba said Caffeine is currently on WADA's waiting list of prohibited substances. Uiba added we will be forced to recommend everyone against drinking coffee as well as soft drinks containing caffeine if it eventually makes its way into the list of the prohibited substances. The Russian Federal Microbiological Agency chief added it can theoretically happen this year.