

## **RUSADA Could Be Soon Reinstated, Hints WADA**

The Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) that has been suspended over widespread doping in Russian sport since 2015 could be reinstated soon, according to World Anti-Doping Agency president [Craig Reedie](#).

RUSADA was suspended after a damning report by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren uncovered widespread doping in Russian sport. The WADA President has now remarked that the Russian Anti-Doping Agency had taken concrete steps to clean up its image. Reedie added RUSADA could resume testing next month based on compliance criteria requested by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

Reedie told a press conference following WADA's Foundation Board meeting that there is a huge amount of work being done. Reedie also commented that the board decided if we receive, and he is sure we will, the necessary information that the Russian anti-doping agency would be able to resume its testing program. Reedie also commented that what has been done at this stage is really important and he is grateful to the Foundation Board for providing, subject to Russia's roadmap, its green light for the resumption of the testing program. The WADA President RUSADA may resume its work "hopefully" in early June.

The commitment of Russia to comply with the demanded improvements of WADA was called into question by the appointment of [Yelena Isinbayeva](#), former pole vault star as president of RUSADA last December. The former vault star has been extremely critical of the McLaren report and had claimed the report unfairly targeted Russia in what she described as a "political act." The report by McLaren had uncovered vast evidence of doping across Russian sport that took place with the connivance of the Russian Anti-Doping Agency.

Russia track and field athletes were barred from the Rio Olympics last year after the report, following a ban from the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

In a different development, the World Anti-Doping Agency announced the creation of a new independent testing body but admitted it could not compel sports federations to come under its authority. The plan for an independent testing authority (ITA) was backed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that said it would be operational in time for the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang.

Valerie Fourneyron, chairman of Wada's Medical Committee, headed a working group for studying the creation of the new testing agency. Valerie remarked it was a "piece of the puzzle" in the [fight against drugs](#) and added the body would allow greater efficiency to ensure that tests improve. However, the chairman of Wada's Medical Committee added international sports federations could choose whether or not to come under the jurisdiction of the testing body. Fourneyron added it is not legally possible to force them to join, which means that powerful sports federations that already have their own testing regimes may choose not to join. The representatives of the anti-doping establishment still welcomed the move.

Travis Tygart, the chief executive of the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), said the move was a step in the right direction. Tygart, a long-time advocate of a fully independent and properly funded global drug-testing body, remarked this is the first glimmer of hope for clean athletes after months of pushing for reform. Tygart added the devil will be in the details, of course, but it is an improvement on the status quo.