

Anti-Doping Program Defended By Surfing Officials

World surfing tour officials have defended their anti-doping testing program after legend [Kelly Slater](#) threw questions on how much was done.

The 11-time world champion, Slater, said he was tested only once last year. On Monday, five-time women's world champion Stephanie Gilmore said she was surprised not be tested at all in 2012. Slater remarked they tested us at the first event and I never got tested again all year and added that they should either do it or don't do it. He went on to say that he did not believe surfing had a problem with performance enhancing drugs.

The American professional surfer is best known for his competitive prowess and style has been crowned ASP World Champion a record 11 times, including 5 consecutive titles from 1994–98 and is the youngest (at age 20) and the oldest (at age 39) to win the title. He passed Australian surfing legend Mark Richards upon winning his 5th world title in 1997 to become the most successful champion in the history of the sport.

In reply to Slater's comments, the Association of Surfing Professionals moved quickly to defend their [anti-doping policy](#) that was introduced at the start of the 2012 season with promises of a minimum ban of one year for competitors who test positive for illicit or performance enhancing drugs. New ASP chief executive Paul Speaker said in a statement the association has a very clear stance on doping that is very much consistent with protocols from other international professional sports as well as with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and it remains fully committed to adherence and enforcement to its policy.

The ASP World Tour was in a damage control mode after it was reported via Slater that recreational drug use in the sport was "rampant" and "full-on". However, Slater later issued a statement claiming those comments had been taken out of context and his comments were not referring solely to the ASP World Tour or surfing in general but actually to sport as a whole. The American said he definitely thinks that there are issues for athletes across all sporting disciplines, which are required to be looked at, acknowledged, and serviced. Slater added that he is looking forward to working with ASP interim commissioner Kieren Perrow and ASP chief executive Paul Speaker and ASP Management in further enhancing any process that contributes to the betterment of the sport and its athletes.

The reported comments of Kelly Slater caused a stir at the tournament site at Rainbow Bay on the Gold Coast, with drug use in sport a hot topic in the wake of the recent report by the Australian Crime Commission on doping and potential crime links in some Australian sporting codes.

The ASP interim commissioner and current ASP Top 34 competitor Kieren Perrow said he was confident athletes backed the testing regulations and said he played a significant role as the ASP surfers' representative in the implementation of the ASP's anti-doping policy before his new role as interim commissioner, and know each WCT (world championship tour) surfer supports it. Perrow added that the ASP test at multiple locations throughout the year and candidates are selected at random.