

WADA ATHLETE COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

April 13-14, 2007

Athlete Committee Lends Muscle to a Stronger Fight against Doping

The thirteen members of WADA's Athlete Committee convened in Estoril (Portugal) on April 13-14, 2007, to provide their input and recommendations on the proposed changes to the World Anti-Doping Code and related International Standards.

The group was hosted by Laurentino Dias, Portuguese Secretary of State for Youth and Sport, and Committee member Rosa Mota, Olympic and World Champion in Women's Marathon.

The Committee agreed upon the following recommendations and statements:

- **Confidentiality:** The committee stressed the responsibility of organizations and individuals involved in the doping control and results management process to maintain athlete confidentiality when dealing with athlete information. Committee members stressed that athletes need to have absolute confidence in the integrity of the anti-doping system and the protection of confidential information.
- **List of Prohibited Substances:** When asked about views on the List of Prohibited Substances and Methods, the Committee supported the current policy and system for considering substances and methods for banning. Further, members noted that cannabis should always remain on the Prohibited List because it sends a strong message to athletes and youth worldwide. Committee members stressed the responsibility of elite athletes to serve as role models to youth.
- **Tougher Sanctions for Cheats:** The committee reiterated its strong stance for toughening sanctions for first-time serious doping offences. They said that sanctions need to be tougher in order to deter cheating and take cheaters out of competition. In light of the revision of the Code currently underway, they called for increasing the sanction for a first-time serious doping offence from two to four years.
- **Incentives for Cooperation with Investigations:** Also in the context of the Code revision, the Committee discussed the concept of offering incentives (such as reducing sanctions) to doping athletes for providing information and facilitating investigations into serious organized doping schemes. While the committee agreed that such a principle might be helpful to stem the scourge of doping and to catch cheaters, they urged that, out of fairness to clean athletes, such incentives should not encourage the rapid and easy return of doping athletes to competition.
- **Financial Penalties:** Committee members reiterated their desire for financial matters to be fully discussed and considered to ensure that those who are demoted in standing by a doped athlete can recover awards.

- **Whereabouts and Missed Tests:** Committee members were asked to provide their views on proposed changes to the International Standard for Testing (IST) relating to athlete whereabouts information and missed tests. Until now, rules for whereabouts and missed tests have not been dictated by the IST to allow flexibility to national anti-doping organizations and sports federations in setting these rules. Calls are now however been made by the international community to harmonize this part of the doping control process. As a result, proposals for the global policy have been received and drafted into a new version of the IST, which is expected to be approved by November 2007 following extensive stakeholder consultation. The Committee has submitted its feedback on the current draft proposal to the WADA's Standards & Harmonization Department for consideration during revision of the IST.

The Committee received presentations from all members showing major advances made globally in informing athletes of their responsibilities and reminding them of the need to play true. The Committee will be contributing to a special section on the WADA Web site targeted at athletes for the promotion of clean sport.

On 14 April, the Committee visited the accredited anti-doping laboratory based in Lisbon. The Lisbon laboratory is 1 of 34 laboratories worldwide that are accredited by WADA to perform anti-doping analysis under the Code.

Chaired by Vyacheslav Fetisov, Head of the Federal Agency for Physical Culture and Sport (Russian Federation), the WADA Athlete Committee consists of elite international athletes especially concerned about the prevalence of doping in sport. In working with WADA and providing input on anti-doping programs and initiatives, WADA Athlete Committee members represent the voice of clean athletes and work to help level the playing field for athletes worldwide.