



Q&A: The World Anti-Doping Agency

What is WADA?

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is the international independent organization created in 1999 to promote, coordinate, and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms.

Composed and funded equally by the sports movement and governments of the world, WADA coordinated the development and implementation of the **World Anti-Doping Code (Code)**, the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.

WADA works towards a vision of the world that values and fosters a doping-free culture in sport.

Why is it important to combat doping in sport?

Doping is one of the most important and difficult problems confronting sports today.

Doping threatens athlete health. In most cases, the substances/methods abused in doping have not been tested or approved for use by healthy individuals. Often, the substances/methods used for doping have not yet been determined safe enough for therapeutic use. Even more alarming is the abuse of counterfeit or designer drugs—drugs that are not regulated for safety. All of these factors lead to serious health risks to athletes who engage in doping.

Doping also threatens the integrity of sport. Doping, the use of artificial enhancements to gain an advantage over others in competition, is cheating and is fundamentally contrary to the spirit of sport. Further, doping robs athletes who play by the rules of their right to competition that is safe and fair.

Doping affects not just top athletes, but youths influenced by what the stars do. It is a growing problem of public health proportion that cannot be ignored by any country or any sport.

Only by taking a concerted and comprehensive approach to fight against doping in sport is it possible to protect the integrity of sport and the health of athletes and youth worldwide.

Why is worldwide coordination of the fight against doping in sport necessary?

A uniform approach to ridding sport of doping, coordinated on a global scale through a partnership between Sport and Government, is the only effective strategy to help stem the scourge of doping, protect the health of athletes, and preserve the spirit of sport. This was the consensus of Sport and Government in 1999, in response to the 1998 Tour de France scandal that rocked the world of sports. It was then that WADA



was established as the international body to harmonize and marshal the global fight against doping in sport.

Prior to the creation of WADA and the globally harmonized fight against doping in sport, it was extremely difficult to know just what substances and procedures were being used and to what degree. The financial resources necessary to conduct research and testing were extremely scarce and inadequate. In some cases, the desire for continued “progress” in a sport went unchecked. Similarly, the “underground” and clandestine use of drugs and methods proliferated without threat of serious penalty. Certain organizations actually participated in doping, if not tacitly approving of it. The perception that a positive result constituted a “failure” or an embarrassment to the sport persisted and may have even influenced decisions. Even more frightening was that some governments instituted doping programs so that their own athletes became mere pawns in campaigns for national sports glory.

Prior to the creation of WADA, it was primarily the sports organizations which led the fight against doping within their own respective realms of influence. The perception then was that—with the propagation of conflicting definitions, policies and sanctions—too many mixed messages were being sent. The somewhat isolated and disjointed efforts to combat doping, no matter how well-intentioned, did little to stem the scourge of doping.

Who’s Who in the global harmonized fight against doping in sport?

One of the primary achievements of the World Anti-Doping Code was the organization of roles and responsibilities of the many entities involved in the anti-doping process. Click [here](#) to view the Global Anti-Doping Organization Chart which provides a broad overview of the various players and a brief description of their roles.

What has WADA achieved since its establishment in November 1999?

In February 1999, the first World Conference on Doping in Sport was convened with the participation of government representatives, certain intergovernmental organizations, alongside sports organizations. The Conference led to the creation of WADA to act as the independent international agency to coordinate efforts to rid sport of doping.

WADA’s first order of business was to set about working with Sport and Government to draft a consensus document for all sports and governments to use in the fight against doping. This process culminated in the unanimous acceptance by all stakeholders of the World Anti-Doping Code in 2003 as the core document that provides the framework for harmonized anti-doping policies, rules, and regulations within sport organizations and among authorities. The goal of harmonization is for all athletes and members of the athlete entourage to benefit from the same anti-doping procedures and protections, no matter the sport, the nationality, or the country where tested, so that athletes worldwide may participate in competition that is safe and fair.

Since the Agency's establishment and the subsequent acceptance of the Code, WADA has achieved a number of milestones. Click on the dates below for a list of highlights. For an overview of WADA's priorities and programs, see below.

[1999](#)
[2000](#)
[2001](#)
[2002](#)
[2003](#)
[2004](#)
[2005](#)
[2006](#)

1999

- The World Conference on Doping in Sport is held in Lausanne on 2-4 February 1999 and produces the Lausanne Declaration on Doping in Sport. This document provides for the creation of an independent international anti-doping agency to be fully operational for the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000.
- Pursuant to the terms of the Lausanne Declaration, the World Anti-Doping Agency was established on 10 November 1999 in Lausanne to promote and coordinate the fight against doping in sport internationally.

2000

- In its first year, WADA operates in Lausanne while establishing its organizational structure.
- Its Out of Competition testing program is launched, including tests carried out in the lead up to the Sydney Olympic Games.
- Also in 2000, WADA sends its first team of Independent Observers to the Summer Olympic Games in Sydney.

2001

- Work commences on drafting the World Anti-Doping Code, and WADA's Board votes to establish the Agency's permanent headquarters in Montreal.
- The Athlete Outreach program is launched at the European Youth Olympic Festival in Finland.

2002

- Code consultation continues.
- In Salt Lake City, WADA sends an IO mission to the Olympic Games and, for the first time, to the Paralympic Games.
- Other firsts include a pilot Pre-Games Testing Taskforce involving the IOC, WADA, and the Games Organizing Committee, and Outreach booths at the Games in Salt Lake City.

2003

- At the World Conference, hosted in Copenhagen, the World Anti-doping Code, and its International Standards, are accepted by all major sports federations and nearly 80 governments.
- As a result, the IOC amends the Olympic Charter so that any sport wishing to be part of the Olympic program must accept and implement the Code.

- As for governments, they embark upon a two-step process to harmonize domestic policy with the Code: first by signing the Copenhagen Declaration; second by commencing the drafting of an international instrument.

2004

- On January 1, 2004, the World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards come into force.
- WADA begins management of the Prohibited List, introduces the international TUE process, and takes over responsibility from the IOC for accrediting and reaccrediting laboratories to analyze doping controls.
- That Summer in Athens, the first Olympic and Paralympic Games are held under the Code, and the Pre-Games Testing Taskforce program is formalized. Scientific research activities are intensified.

2005

- 2005 was the first fully operational year under the Code, an important milestone in and of itself.
- In 2005 we also achieved many other important milestones: the commitment of record sums to scientific research, the launch of the ADAMS web-based anti-doping database and coordination program, the expansion of anti-doping programs into regions previously underserved, the establishment of WADA's presence in Latin America, the initiation of WADA's Education Symposia, etc.
- On October 19, 2005, we welcomed with great satisfaction the unanimous adoption by 191 nations of the International Convention against Doping in Sport at the General Conference of UNESCO. The Convention, among other matters, enables governments to align domestic legislation with the Code, thereby harmonizing sport and public policy in the fight against doping in sport. By the close of 2005, 184 countries had signed the Copenhagen Declaration, stating their political commitment to adopting the Code through the ratification of the international convention. We look forward with anticipation to the Convention's coming into full effect and its ratification by each government in 2006.
- One of the most important endeavours of 2005 was the bringing together of 13 elite international athletes under the banner of the WADA Athlete Committee to incorporate the voice of the Clean Athlete into WADA programs and global anti-doping initiatives. The Committee has rapidly established itself as a strong advocate for those athletes who resist the temptation of shortcuts, embody the virtues of "fair play," and simply want the playing field to be level for all athletes.

2006

- Progress continued with UNESCO individual ratifications.
- The RADO program engaged 90 countries around the world in establishing anti-doping programs.
- More stakeholders adopted ADAMS and laboratories began reporting analysis using the system.
- The Agency's commitment to scientific research grew to \$27M since Agency first started in 2001.
- WADA launched the Code Review & Consultation with stakeholders

What are WADA's primary activities in leading the global fight against doping in Sport?



WADA's priorities focus in seven areas emanating from the responsibilities given to the Agency by the Code and reflect the importance of a comprehensive approach to the fight against doping in sport.

- **Code acceptance, implementation & compliance monitoring**
- **Science & medicine**
- **Anti-doping coordination**
- **Anti-doping development**
- **Education**
- **Athlete outreach**
- **Out-of-competition testing**

How is WADA governed?

WADA is composed of a **Foundation Board**, an **Executive Committee**, and several Working Committees.

The 36-member Foundation Board is WADA's chief decision-making body. It is composed equally of representatives from the Olympic Movement and governments of the world, as is its 12-person Executive Committee. Working Committees act as advisory committees and provide guidance for WADA's programs. These Committees are:

- **Athlete Committee**
- **Ethics & Education Committee (and Ethical Issues Review Panel)**
- **Finance & Administration Committee**
- **Health, Medical & Research Committee (and sub-committees)**

How is WADA funded?

WADA's **funding** is sourced equally from the sports movement and the governments of the world. Within each region, governments agree internally to each of their individual share.

WADA's 2007 operating budget is US\$23 million.

Where is WADA located?

The Agency's headquarters are located in Montreal (Canada).

Four regional offices facilitate work with stakeholders around the globe:

- **European Regional Office** in Lausanne (Switzerland)
- **Asia/Oceania Regional Office** in Tokyo (Japan)
- **Africa Regional Office** in Cape Town (South Africa)
- **Latin American Regional Office** in Montevideo (Uruguay)