



24 October 2018

CEO Statement to Senate Estimates Committee

The statement below was submitted by the CEO of the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA), David Sharpe, to the Senate Estimates Committee on Wednesday 24 October 2018.

Chair and Committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit an opening statement supporting my attendance before the Committee as the CEO of ASADA.

Sport is an integral part of Australia's cultural landscape. As individuals, it provides structure, discipline and enjoyment. As fans, it excites us, and as a nation, it unites us. However for all its benefits and the passion that it inspires, we must acknowledge there are ongoing and emerging threats to the integrity of Australian sport. It is in this dark corner that doping exists.

Clean athletes, sports administrators and fans have more reason than ever to be concerned about the influence of global anti-doping programs and the impact of the Russian doping scandal. It's only fair for there to be a loss of confidence in the processes and systems that are meant to preserve the level playing field for all.

ASADA continues to lead the way in setting global benchmarks for National Anti-Doping Organisations due in part to our extensive workforce planning process that started in 2014. The initiatives we have put in place ensure investment in staff capability is oriented towards areas of priority in preparation for the future.

While ASADA continues to evolve, it is crucial that we also support anti-doping agencies around the world in order to close the capability gap so we can collectively protect the rights of Australian athletes, and all clean athletes on the global stage. ASADA's intent to continue as an international leader is key to this and our regional engagement strategy drives this initiative. In June 2018, ASADA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sri Lanka and we are in the process of extending our MoU with India. Regionally, our relationship with Drug Free Sport New Zealand continues to thrive. We are negotiating with the Oceania Region Anti-Doping Organisation to provide support and capability development as required.

ASADA is irrevocably linked to our role in Operation Cobia, which was an unprecedented investigation in terms of scale, complexity and level of external scrutiny within Australian

sport. Both ASADA and sports have learned significant lessons and the national anti-doping program as a whole is enhanced as a result.

Building on the past, ASADA is focused on educating all Australians that the organisation is more than a testing agency. As doping practices become more sophisticated and complex, ASADA has taken proactive steps to keep pace and in acknowledging this, the Australian Government increased our funding enabling ASADA to build our capabilities that are required to meet this challenge.

In July 2018, ASADA implemented our new operating model, 'The Future'. 'The Future' delivers an innovative and holistic anti-doping program that builds on and improves the existing capability of ASADA to anticipate, understand and respond to doping threats that potentially undermine the integrity of sport in Australia.

'The Future' is based on three pillars which are mutually supportive;

- Enhanced engagement and partnerships,
- Enhanced intelligence, and
- Enhanced education and awareness.

Collectively all three pillars will achieve ASADA's core business of clean, fair sport and protecting the health of Australian athletes. In August 2018, the Honourable Bridget McKenzie released Sport 2030 – National Sport Plan and the report of The Review of Australia's Sports Integrity Arrangements (The Report). Sport 2030 aims to get more Australian's moving by increasing participation in sport at all the levels. The Report recommends measures to safeguard sport in Australia from integrity threats. ASADA welcomes all recommendations made in the report, in particular the proposals to strengthen our legislation, enhance our engagement with sports, and build our education and intelligence capabilities. The Report has validated ASADA's new operating model as being agile and adaptable in meeting future challenges.

In order to implement 'The Future' successfully, ASADA undertook several key reviews in 2018, which in conjunction with findings of previous reviews inform 'The Future' operating model. Reviews completed this year include;

- analysis of ASADA's current ICT processes, systems and what ASADA needs going forward in line with the three fundamental pillars,
- ASADA workforce planning and how the organisation builds on the strength of our existing culture whilst maintaining the right mix of employees needed for the new model,
- enhancing compliance with National Sporting Organisations through greater engagement and targeted education, and
- realigning and remodelling ASADA business processes to be more intelligence-led which provides the necessary strength, structure and functions of an intelligence capability to meet current and future challenges in the anti-doping environment.

In the short-term our focus remains on enhancing our intelligence, science, investigations, testing and legal capabilities. ASADA has actively encouraged secondments and resource sharing arrangements with relevant law enforcement and other regulatory agencies to maintain our expertise at the forefront of global anti-doping efforts.

In line with the three pillars, ASADA is establishing an Athlete's Advisory Group (AAG) to inform ASADA's strategic direction and to help shape education strategies through the provision of insights into the pressures and influences in sport that may increase the risk and temptation to dope. To truly understand the doping landscape we need to work closely in partnership with those involved in sports. As such we are looking at innovative ways to engage with athletes who understand their environment and the pressures of sport better than anyone. ASADA believes establishing a group of current and former athletes, sports support staff and sports physicians to advise ASADA is an effective way to inform organisational strategy armed with a better understanding of the sporting environment and the perspectives of athletes.

The AAG will not just comprise 'clean' athletes who have succeeded without the need to dope but also athletes who have inadvertently or deliberately doped in pursuit of their goals in sport. The AAG provides opportunities for sanctioned athletes to contribute meaningfully to the fight against doping which is likely to enhance their rehabilitation and recovery from the highly impactful, life changing moment of being sanctioned. It's these athletes who will give us invaluable information about how they responded to their environment and how we can help athletes in similar circumstances to avoid the risk and/or temptation to dope.

Earlier this year, ASADA produced its inaugural *Annual Assessment of Doping in Australian Sport*. The assessment contains sensitive information and in the near future versions of this report will be shared with our partners as necessary. The assessment incorporates an environmental scan, drawing on information sources available to ASADA. The assessment establishes a comprehensive intelligence picture of the current state of doping issues in the sporting environment within Australia, highlighting trends and emerging challenges. It highlights key intelligence gaps and intelligence collection priorities that will be a focus for ASADA going forward.

Over the next 12 months we will invest our resources to ensure we have the right capabilities to deliver against our purpose and areas of priority. Ultimately, the skill of our workforce is crucial to our ability to respond effectively to the challenges posed by an increasingly sophisticated doping environment.

Since joining ASADA in September 2017, my goal has been and will continue to be to raise awareness of the dangers of doping; not just individual cases of elite athletes and teams, but to educate all Australians; parents, coaches, athletes, kids and supporters of the greater health risks that are associated with performance and image enhancing drugs. It is this message that 'The Future' operating model of ASADA will be delivering by

working with sports, building trust with athletes and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to compete on a level playing field.

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