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24/01/2019

Helleland formally launches bid for WADA Presidency with four point plan for reform

- By [James Diamond](#)



Norwegian politician Linda Helleland has formally launched her campaign to replace Sir Craig Reedie as the next President of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

It comes two days after the body announced it would not place further sanctions on Russia despite the country missing the deadline to hand over data from the Moscow Laboratory.

Using the tag line "WADA: Fit for purpose, fit for future", 41-year-old Helleland unveiled a four-point plan in her manifesto to reform the body, which has come under significant and sustained criticism for its handling of the Russian doping scandal.

"Since the founding of WADA 20 years ago anti-doping has made great strides, however WADA needs to evolve and modernise if it is to prove itself to be fit for the future," Helleland, a WADA vice president, said.

"The Russian doping crisis presented the world, and above all WADA, with the gravest sporting scandal this century.

"This is an issue our clean sport movement will be defined by for decades to come, and that is why I am determined to take my vision to re-inspire athletes and sports fans and restore their confidence in clean and fair sport.

"I am convinced that my four-point plan to become the Agency's next President will deliver the type of WADA the world wants to see: a strong and independent WADA."

Since evidence of state sponsored doping in Russia first emerged four years ago Helleland - who was replaced as Norway's Minister for Children and Equality this week - has built a reputation for herself as an outspoken anti-establishment figure in the anti-doping movement.



In taking a strong

stance on Russia Linda Helleland has gained the backing of many athletes and anti-doping groups ©Getty Images

Last September she was one of only two members of WADA's Executive Board to vote against the reinstatement of the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) and this week she opposed the decision not to punish RUSADA once again, after the body missed the key laboratory deadline of December 31.

Her stance has already gained her the support of various athlete and anti-doping bodies including FairSport, Athletes for Clean Sport and Olympic gold medal winning biathlete Sebastian Samuelsson - who has become a strong critic of the current WADA leadership - among others.

In a statement published earlier this month FairSport - an independent foundation aiming to eradicate doping in sport - said Helleland is the "one and only candidate" who is "in tune with athlete and public opinion on anti-doping".

Samuelsson added he is "pleased" to declare his support for Helleland.

"In her role as vice-president she has proven to be the lone wolf speaking the athletes' mind," he said.

The first point of her plan for the Presidency states that athletes "must become the beating heart of anti-doping".

"I would be proud to champion amplification of the athlete voice, improve athlete representation on WADA's Boards and Committees and enhance the power of the WADA Athlete Committee," she said.

"I want to see athletes front and centre of a reformed WADA as we enter a new age of anti-doping, for the benefit of all."

In her second point, on good governance, Helleland states that "to secure confidence from all stakeholders" WADA needs to modernise and become more open.



After Beckie Scott claimed she was bullied for suggesting Russia should not be reinstated in September, Linda Helleland has said athletes should feel "empowered" to speak up @Getty Images

She argues results of hearings should be made public and that WADA should be more "interactive" with the media and public, using tools including social media.

The other two points in the manifesto cover the WADA Code and the strengthening of National Anti Doping Organisations.

"Together we need to create a WADA that is accountable to athletes," Helleland said in her concluding remarks.

"We must never compromise on our integrity, and we must ensure that all our stakeholders at all time have full confidence in everything we do.

"As the World Anti-Doping Agency, the world expects us to be beyond reproach."

Helleland is one of four confirmed candidates for the WADA Presidency so far.

Polish Sports Minister Witold Bańka and Flemish counterpart Philippe Muyters are also challenging for the European nomination, with a decision likely to be made on the Council of Europe's preferred candidate later this month.

Dominican Republic's Marcos Diaz, a former marathon swimmer, is also in the running, while a fifth contender is likely to come from Asia.

It is now the turn of the public authorities to have the next President as the replacement for Sir Craig, coming to the end of his term limit, should come from the Governmental side under the current rotational model.

The public authorities have agreed to nominate one single candidate for the position and hope to make a final selection at a meeting prior to May's Foundation Board gathering in Montreal.

It is hoped this will be reached by consensus, but a secret ballot will be held where each region has a vote if this does not prove possible.

Contenders who do not secure the official nomination have been urged to cease campaigning.

The new President will be officially chosen at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Katowice in November.

Helleland was replaced as Norway's Minister for Children and Equality due to a reshuffle after a new party was added to the ruling coalition, but it is insisted that this will not impact her WADA Presidency bid.

You can read Helleland's full manifesto [here](#).

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1074602/helleland-formally-launches-bid-for-wada-presidency-with-four-point-plan-for-reform>

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24/01/2019

Russian Sports Minister claims constructive relationship with WADA and calls talk of scandal "fake"

- By [Dan Palmer](#)



Russia's Sports Minister Pavel Kolobkov has described their relationship with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) as "constructive" after the country avoided a further ban for missing a crucial deadline.

WADA's Executive Board ruled that the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA) would not be declared non-compliant again on Tuesday (January 22), despite the failure to hand over key data from the Moscow Laboratory by December 31.

Russian authorities blocked an initial attempt by WADA to retrieve the data - thought to be vital evidence in the country's doping scandal - by claiming the equipment they wanted to use had not been properly certified.

The data was eventually collected two weeks late but even with the tardiness RUSADA has escaped further punishment.

This is despite the deadline being a compulsory condition when RUSADA were initially reinstated by WADA in September, following a ban stretching back to 2015.

Analysis of the data will now be carried out with WADA hoping they will be able to catch more cheats while clearing others.

Fears remain that the data may now have been manipulated or tampered with, however.

"I estimate our cooperation as very constructive," Kolobkov said to Russian state news agency *TASS*.

"An alleged scandal on this issue in media was rather of a fake nature.

"This is because a normal and consistent work was underway."

RUSADA must now meet another deadline with sample reanalysis needing to be complete by June 30.

WADA has promised to ban RUSADA again if any evidence of data manipulation is revealed, while insisting that there was no precedent to punish them again after the missed deadline.

This is not seen as good enough by some athletes and officials, however, who have voiced criticism at the lack of further sanctions.

A joint statement released today by National Anti-Doping Agencies (NADOs) in 13 countries described the situation as a "tragic saga".

"It is agreed that the acquisition of the data from the Moscow Laboratory has been a critical step," the statement said.

"The requirement to provide access to data and samples are obligations which arose 18 months ago.

"While WADA is to be commended for obtaining the data, and RUSADA congratulated for its willing cooperation, it is not cause for celebration.

"It is not yet appropriate to turn the page on the issues, nor should the principals at WADA be doing a victory lap, rather it is the opening of another chapter in the tragic saga of a state-sponsored doping scheme.

"Months of detailed examination is now required before even verifying the integrity of the data.

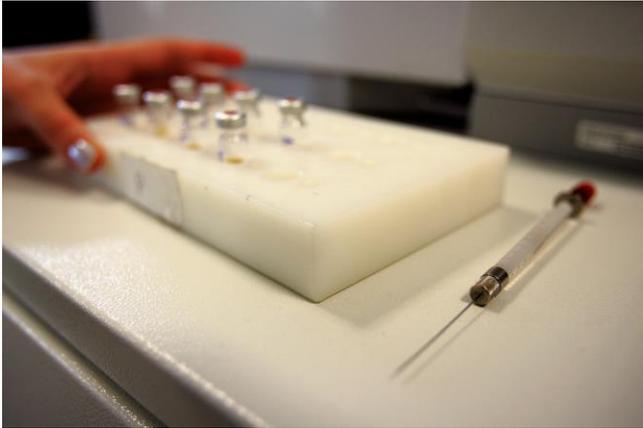
"Thereafter, additional sample analysis may be required before any individual doping cases could be considered - all of which to occur by a declared deadline of June 30, 2019.

"Meanwhile, Russia continues to bid to host international events such as the 2024 Youth Olympic Games, which would not be possible should they have been deemed to be non-compliant.

"We owe it to clean athletes, including those within Russia, to identify and establish any current or former athletes who should be subject to potential Anti-Doping Rule Violation proceedings.

"Moreover, rather than merely seeking to prosecute the athletes who may be implicated, NADO Leaders believe all avenues must be pursued to also hold the conspirators accountable."

The statement was supported by Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.



Doping continues to cast a cloud over

global sport ©Getty Images

RUSADA's three-year suspension began in November 2015 following allegations of state-sponsored doping in Russian athletics.

Revelations of more widespread cheating at events including the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi then emerged and the International Olympic Committee forced Russia to compete under a neutral flag at Pyeongchang 2018 in February.

This ban was swiftly lifted just days after the Winter Games in South Korea, although Russia remain banned by the International Association of Athletics Federations and the International Paralympic Committee.

WADA's Executive Committee voted 9-2 in favour of lifting RUSADA's ban in the Seychelles in September.

The reinstatement came despite Russia not meeting two key re-compliance criteria - admission of the McLaren Report which outlined much of the doping evidence against them - and access to the Moscow Laboratory.

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1074612/russian-sports-minister-claims-constructive-relationship-with-wada-and-calls-talk-of-scandal-fake>