

DECISION OF THE ATHLETICS INTEGRITY UNIT IN THE CASE OF MR HASSAN LAQOUAHI

Introduction

1. In April 2017, World Athletics (formerly the IAAF) established the Athletics Integrity Unit ("**AIU**") whose role is to protect the integrity of the sport of Athletics, including fulfilling World Athletics' obligations as a Signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code. World Athletics has delegated implementation of the World Athletics Anti-Doping Rules ("**ADR**") to the AIU, including but not limited to the following activities in relation to International-Level Athletes: Testing, Investigations, Results Management, Hearings, Sanctions and Appeals.
2. Mr Hassan LAQOUAHI is a 28-year old Moroccan long-distance runner who is an International-Level Athlete for the purposes of the ADR (the "**Athlete**").
3. This decision is issued by the AIU pursuant to Articles 8.4.5 and 8.4.7 ADR.
4. Article 8.4.5 ADR provides that:

8.4.5 *"[i]n the event that the Athlete or Athlete Support Person does not respond to the Notice of Charge by the specified deadline, the Athlete or Athlete Support Person will be deemed to have [...] admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) charged and to have acceded to the Consequences specified in the Notice of Charge and, in such event, the Integrity Unit shall promptly issue a decision in accordance with Article 8.4.7."*

5. Article 8.4.7 ADR provides that:

8.4.7 *"[i]n the event that [...] the Athlete or Athlete Support Person admits the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) charged and accedes to the Consequences specified by the Integrity Unit (or is deemed to have done so), a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal shall not be required. In such a case, the Integrity Unit [...] shall promptly issue a decision confirming [...] the commission of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) and the imposition of the Specified Consequences [...]."*

The Athlete's commission of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation

6. On 13 October 2019, the Athlete underwent an in-competition doping control at the 'Wizz Air Sofia Marathon' held in Sofia (Bulgaria). The Athlete provided a urine sample numbered 4398919 ("**the Sample**").
7. On 12 November 2019, the World Anti-Doping Agency ("**WADA**") accredited laboratory in Seibersdorf (Austria) reported an Adverse Analytical Finding for the presence of recombinant EPO ("**EPO**") in the Sample ("**the AAF**").

8. EPO is a Prohibited Substance under the WADA 2019 Prohibited List (S2: Peptide Hormones, Growth Factors, Related Substances and Mimetics). It is a non-Specified Substance and is prohibited at all times. The Athlete did not have a TUE permitting the use of EPO.
9. On 18 November 2019, the AIU notified the Athlete of the AAF. The Athlete was requested to provide an explanation for the presence of EPO in the Sample and was afforded the opportunity to request analysis of the B Sample by no later than 25 November 2019.
10. On 25 November 2019, during a conference call with an AIU representative, the Athlete indicated that he was unable to explain the AAF and would not request his B sample analysis.
11. On 29 November 2019, the AIU charged the Athlete with committing an Anti-Doping Rule Violation pursuant to Article 2.1 ADR (Presence of a Prohibited Substance) and Article 2.2 ADR (Use of a Prohibited Substance) ("**the Charge**"). The Athlete was offered the opportunity to either admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violation and accept a four (4) year sanction, or to request a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal, by no later than 9 December 2019.
12. The Athlete did not reply to the Charge within the given deadline.
13. On 11 December 2019, the Athlete was given a final opportunity to respond to the Charge and advised that, if he did not do so by 15 December 2019, he would be deemed to have waived his right to a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal, to have admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and to have accepted the Consequences for those Anti-Doping Rule Violations specified in the Charge.
14. The Athlete failed to respond by the specified deadline of 15 December 2019 or at all.
15. On 18 December 2019, the AIU wrote to the Athlete to confirm that he was considered to have admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and to have accepted the specified Consequences.

Consequences

16. This constitutes the Athlete's first Anti-Doping Rule Violation under the ADR.
17. On the basis that the Athlete is deemed to have admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1 ADR and Article 2.2 ADR, the AIU confirms by this decision the following consequences for a first Anti-Doping Rule Violation:
 - 17.1. a period of Ineligibility of four (4) years pursuant to Article 10.2.1(a) commencing on 18 November 2019; and
 - 17.2. disqualification of the Athlete's results since 13 October 2019 with all resulting consequences including the forfeiture of any titles, awards, medals, points and prize and appearance money pursuant to Articles 9 and 10.8 ADR.

Publication

18. In accordance with Article 8.4.7(b) ADR, the AIU shall publicly report this decision on the AIU's website.

Rights of Appeal

19. This decision constitutes the final decision of the AIU pursuant to Article 8.4.7 ADR.

20. Further to Article 13.2.4 ADR, WADA, the Moroccan Olympic Committee ("**MOC**") and the Athlete have a right of appeal against this decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at Article 13.7.2 ADR.
21. If an appeal is filed against this decision by WADA or the MOC, the Athlete will be entitled to exercise his right of cross-appeal in accordance with Article 13.9.3 ADR.

Monaco, 19 December 2019