
Decision of the Athletics Integrity Unit in the Case of Mr Brian Limo

Introduction

1. World Athletics has 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 (the "**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 Brian Limo ("the **Athlete**") is a 23-year-old distance runner from Kenya.¹
3. This decision is issued by the AIU pursuant to Rule 8.5.6 ADR, which provides as follows:

"8.5.6 In the event that the Athlete or other Person either (i) admits the violation and accepts the proposed Consequences or (ii) is deemed to have admitted the violation and accepted the Consequences as per Rule 8.5.2(f), the Integrity Unit will promptly:

- (a) issue a decision confirming the commission of the violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences (including, if applicable, a justification for why the maximum potential sanction was not imposed);*
- (b) Publicly Report that decision in accordance with Rule 14;*
- (c) send a copy of the decision to the Athlete or other Person and to any other party that has a right, further to Rule 13, to appeal the decision (and any such party may, within 15 days of receipt, request a copy of the full case file pertaining to the decision)."*

The Athlete's Commission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations

4. Rule 2 ADR sets out that the following shall constitute an Anti-Doping Rule Violation:

"2.1 Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample

[...]

¹ <https://worldathletics.org/athletes/kenya/brian-limo-14989904>

2.2 *Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method*

[...]

2.5 *Tampering or Attempted Tampering with any part of Doping Control by an Athlete or other Person*

5. On 5 April 2025, the Athlete provided a urine Sample In-Competition at the ‘*Drammen 10K-5K*’ held in Drammen, Norway, which was given code 1587509 (the “**Sample**”).
6. On 25 April 2025, the World Anti-Doping Agency (“**WADA**”) accredited laboratory in Oslo, Norway (the “**Laboratory**”) reported that the analysis of the Sample had revealed the presence of Salbutamol exceeding 1000ng/mL (“the **Adverse Analytical Finding**”)².
7. The AIU reviewed the Adverse Analytical Finding in accordance with Article 5 of the ISRM and determined that:
 - 7.1. the Athlete did not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption (“**TUE**”) that had been granted (or that would be granted) for the Salbutamol found in the Sample; and
 - 7.2. there was no apparent departure from the International Standard for Testing and Investigations (“**ISTI**”) or from the International Standard for Laboratories (“**ISL**”) that could reasonably have caused the Adverse Analytical Finding.
8. On 8 May 2025, in accordance with Article 5 of the International Standard for Results Management (“**ISRM**”) the AIU therefore issued the Athlete with a Notice of Allegation of Anti-Doping Rule Violations which notified the Athlete of the Adverse Analytical Finding and invited him to provide an explanation by no later than 15 May 2025.
9. On 10 May 2025, the Athlete provided the AIU with two medical documents from the Eldomart Medical Plaza (“the **Medical Facility**”) and a picture of Salbutamol tablets 4 mg. Both medical documents contained a prescription for Salbutamol (4mg tablets) to be taken once daily for five days and indicated that the Athlete attended the Medical Facility on 1 April 2025 complaining of headache, chest pain and difficulties in breathing. Furthermore, one document indicated that the Athlete was examined and underwent medical tests at the Medical Facility.
10. On the same day, the Athlete provided the AIU with the signed Admission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations and Acceptance of Consequences Form, accepting a period of ineligibility of two (2) years. However, as the AIU noted several discrepancies in the medical documents submitted by the Athlete, including different names for the doctor, inconsistencies in the

² According to the WADA 2025 Prohibited List, the presence in urine of Salbutamol in excess of 1000 ng/mL is not consistent with therapeutic use of the substance and will be considered as an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) unless the Athlete proves, through a controlled pharmacokinetic study, that the abnormal result was the consequence of a therapeutic dose (by inhalation) up to the maximum dose of 1600 micrograms over 24 hours in divided doses not to exceed 600 micrograms over 8 hours for any dose.

medications the Athlete had allegedly been prescribed, and one document submitted as an image appeared to be a screenshot of a Word document in the process of being edited, it decided to initiate an investigation.

11. Therefore, on 14 May 2025, the AIU requested assistance from ADAK in determining the authenticity of the medical documents submitted by the Athlete and whether he had attended the Medical Facility on 1 April 2025.
12. On 22 May 2025, the AIU received an independent expert scientific opinion from Prof. Martial Saugy (on request), which confirmed his opinion was that *“the concentration of salbutamol found in the athlete's sample seems to be higher than what would be expected after the intake (even daily during 5 days) of 4 mg of salbutamol”*.
13. On 5 June 2025, ADAK provided the AIU with a copy of a letter from the Medical Facility which confirmed that the Athlete did not attend on 1 April 2025.
14. Based on the above, the AIU considered the medical documents that the Athlete had submitted to the AIU on 10 May 2025, indicating that he had visited the Medical Facility, undergone tests and been prescribed Salbutamol on 1 April 2025, were fabricated/falsified documents.
15. Therefore, on 26 June 2025, the AIU wrote to the Athlete and requested his attendance at an interview with AIU representatives on either 2 July 2025 or 3 July 2025.
16. The Athlete attended an interview with AIU representatives on 2 July 2025 and admitted that:
 - 16.1. he did not visit the Medical Facility on 1 April 2025 and he was never examined or had any medical tests at the Medical Facility in April 2025. He first visited the Medical Facility on 10 May 2025, i.e., two days after he received the Notice of Allegation of Anti-Doping Rule Violations issued by the AIU;
 - 16.2. the Medical Facility did not prescribe him Salbutamol;
 - 16.3. upon receipt of the Notice of Allegation, he had been referred to the Medical Facility and asked them to prepare a document to record that he had presented with symptoms on 1 April 2025, had undergone medical tests and been prescribed Salbutamol to treat his symptoms; and
 - 16.4. he knew that the contents of the medical documents were false when he submitted them to the AIU on 10 May 2025.
17. Based on the Athlete's interview, the AIU concluded that the Athlete had committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Rule 2.5 ADR (Tampering or Attempted Tampering with any part of Doping Control by an Athlete). The AIU also remained satisfied that the Athlete had committed Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Rule 2.1 ADR, Rule 2.2 ADR based on the Adverse Analytical Finding.

18. Therefore, on 19 December 2025³, the AIU issued the Athlete with a Notice of Charge in accordance with Rule 8.5.1 ADR and Article 7.1 ISRM confirming that he was being charged with Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Rule 2.1 ADR, Rule 2.2 ADR and Rule 2.5 ADR (“the **Charge**”) and that those Anti-Doping Rule Violations warranted a total period of Ineligibility of six (6) years pursuant to Rules 10.2.1(b) ADR and 10.9.3(c) ADR (i.e., two (2) years for the Presence/Use of a Specified Substance and four (4) years for Tampering or Attempted Tampering to be served consecutively. In addition, the Athlete was also informed that he was subject to a Provisional Suspension pending the determination of the matter.
19. The Athlete was informed *inter alia* of his right to request a hearing and given the opportunity to admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violations to potentially benefit from a one-year reduction in the period of Ineligibility pursuant to Rule 10.8.1 ADR. The AIU invited the Athlete to respond to the Charge confirming how he wished to proceed by no later than 2 January 2026.
20. On 31 December 2025, the AIU received an Admission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations and Acceptance of Consequences Form signed by the Athlete.

Consequences

21. Collectively, the Anti-Doping Rule Violations pursuant to Rule 2.1 ADR, Rule 2.2 ADR and Rule 2.5 ADR constitute the Athlete’s first Anti-Doping Rule Violation pursuant to Rule 10.9.3 ADR.
22. Rule 10.2 ADR specifies that the period of Ineligibility for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Rule 2.1 ADR or Rule 2.2 ADR shall be as follows:

“10.2.1 Save where Rule 10.2.4 applies, the period of Ineligibility will be four years where:

- (a) The anti-doping rule violation does not involve a Specified Substance or a Specified Method, unless the Athlete or other Person can establish that the anti-doping rule violation was not intentional.*
- (b) The anti-doping rule violation involves a Specified Substance or a Specified Method and the Integrity Unit can establish that the anti-doping rule violation was intentional.*

10.2.2 If Rule 10.2.1 does not apply, then (subject to Rule 10.2.4(a)) the period of Ineligibility will be two years.”

23. Salbutamol is a Prohibited Substance under the WADA 2025 Prohibited List under the category S3, Beta 2 Agonists. It is a Specified Substance prohibited at all times

³ The AIU issued a Notice of Charge on 25 November 2025 (including the imposition of a Provisional Suspension) which was sent inadvertently to only one of two e-mail addresses for the Athlete. The AIU therefore forwarded the Notice of Charge issued to the Athlete’s second e-mail address on 19 December 2025 and confirmed that he had until 2 January 2026 to respond to the matters set out in the Charge, including to benefit from a one-year reduction of the period of Ineligibility pursuant to Rule 10.8.1 ADR.

24. The period of Ineligibility to be imposed is therefore a period of Ineligibility of two (2) years, unless the AIU demonstrates that the Anti-Doping Rule Violations were intentional.
25. The AIU has no evidence that the Anti-Doping Rule Violations were intentional and the mandatory period of Ineligibility to be imposed is therefore a period of two (2) years.
26. In addition, Rule 10.3.1 ADR specifies the period of Ineligibility to be imposed for a breach of Rule 2.5 (Tampering or Attempted Tampering) as follows:

“10.3.1 For violations of Rule 2.3 or Rule 2.5, the period of Ineligibility will be four (4) years except: (i) in the case of failing to submit to Sample collection, if the Athlete can establish that the commission of the anti-doping rule violation was not intentional, the period of Ineligibility will be two (2) years; (ii) in all other cases, if the Athlete or other Person can establish exceptional circumstances that justify a reduction of the period of Ineligibility, the period of Ineligibility will be in a range from two (2) years to four (4) years depending on the Athlete's or other Person's degree of Fault; or (iii) in a case involving a Protected Person or Recreational Athlete, the period of Ineligibility will be in a range between a maximum of two (2) years and, at a minimum, a reprimand and no period of Ineligibility, depending on the Protected Person or Recreational Athlete's degree of Fault.”

27. The Athlete has not established any exceptional circumstances that exist to justify any reduction in the period of Ineligibility of four (4) years to be imposed for the Anti-Doping Rule Violation committed pursuant to Rule 2.5 ADR.
28. Rule 10.9.3(c) states as follows:

“10.9.3 Additional rules for certain potential multiple violations

[...]

- (c) If the Integrity Unit establishes that an Athlete or other Person committed a violation of Rule 2.5 in connection with the Doping Control process for an underlying asserted anti-doping rule violation, the violation of Rule 2.5 will be treated as a stand-alone first violation and the period of Ineligibility for such violation must be served consecutively (rather than concurrently) with the period of Ineligibility, if any, imposed for the underlying anti-doping rule violation. Where this Rule 10.9.3(c) is applied, the violations taken together will constitute a single violation for purposes of Rule 10.9.1.*

29. The Athlete committed the violation of Rule 2.5 ADR in connection with the Doping Control Process (specifically during Results Management of the Adverse Analytical Finding) and therefore falls squarely within this provision. The violation of Rule 2.5 ADR shall therefore be treated as a stand-alone first violation and the four (4)-year period of Ineligibility must be served consecutively to the two (2)-year period of Ineligibility imposed for the violations of Rule 2.1 ADR and Rule 2.2 ADR (i.e., a total period of Ineligibility of six (6) years).

30. However, Rule 10.8.1 ADR provides that an athlete potentially subject to an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) years or more may benefit from a one (1)-year reduction in the period of Ineligibility based on an early admission and acceptance of sanction:

“10.8.1 One year reduction for certain anti-doping rule violations based on early admission and acceptance of sanction.

Where the Integrity Unit notifies an Athlete or other Person of an anti-doping rule violation charge that carries an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) or more years (including any period of Ineligibility asserted under Rule 10.4), if the Athlete or other Person admits the violation and accepts the asserted period of Ineligibility no later than 20 days after receiving the Notice of Charge, the Athlete or other Person may receive a one (1) year reduction in the period of Ineligibility asserted by the Integrity Unit. Where the Athlete or other Person receives the one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility under this Rule 10.8.1, no further reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility will be allowed under any other Rule.”

31. A Notice of Charge was issued to the Athlete on 19 December 2025. On 31 December 2025, the Athlete confirmed that he admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and accepted the asserted period of Ineligibility of six (6) years.
32. The Athlete shall therefore receive a one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility pursuant to Rule 10.8.1 ADR based on an early admission and acceptance of sanction.
33. On the basis that the Athlete has admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Rule 2.1 ADR, Rule 2.2 ADR and Rule 2.5 ADR, in accordance with Rule 10.2.2 ADR and Rule 10.9.3(c) ADR and the application of Rule 10.8.1 ADR, the AIU confirms by this decision the following Consequences for a first Anti-Doping Rule Violation:
- 33.1. a period of Ineligibility of five (5) years commencing on 25 November 2025 (the date of Provisional Suspension); and
 - 33.2. disqualification of the Athlete's results on and since 5 April 2025, with all resulting Consequences, including the forfeiture of any medals, titles, awards, points, prizes, prize money and appearance money.

Publication

34. In accordance with Rule 8.5.6(b) ADR, the AIU shall publicly report this decision on the AIU's website.

Rights of Appeal

35. This decision constitutes the final decision of the AIU pursuant to Rule 8.5.6 ADR.

36. Further to Rule 13.2.3 ADR, WADA and the Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (“**ADAK**”) 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 Rule 13.6.1 ADR.
37. If an appeal is filed against this decision by WADA or ADAK, the Athlete will be entitled to exercise his right of cross-appeal in accordance with Rule 13.2.4 ADR.

Monaco, 23 January 2026