

COMPETITION MANIPULATION IS A THREAT TO SPORT INTEGRITY: AIU IDENTIFIES MULTIPLE ILLEGITIMATE QUALIFYING PERFORMANCES FOR THE TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES

21 JULY 2021, MONACO: In the lead up to the Tokyo Olympic Games, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) has received 17 referrals for investigation of suspicious qualifying performances. The referrals were from 16 countries and included 31 athletes and five relay teams. As a result of the AIU's investigations, eight qualifying performances for the Olympic Games were not recognised by World Athletics and the relevant athletes denied a place at the Games. A number of cases have been identified by the AIU for further investigation to determine if fraudulent conduct was involved.

The AIU's work in managing instances of competition manipulation is part of its wider mission to cover all areas of integrity. As well as anti-doping, the AIU focuses on manipulation of competition results, age manipulation, illegal betting, bribery and corruption, harassment and abuse, and transfers of allegiance.

David Howman, Chair of the AIU said: "The work of the AIU goes far beyond anti-doping. In preparation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, our team has been busy identifying, analysing and investigating potential instances of competition manipulation. Thanks to our investigations, World Athletics has refused to recognise several questionable qualifying performances. The AIU will continue to investigate these matters to determine if any fraudulent conduct was involved."

The AIU received multiple reports of suspected manipulation of competition results in order to seek qualification for the Tokyo Olympic Games and has worked closely with World Athletics in investigating any wrongdoing. The reported concerns covered unreliable photo-finish pictures, the short measuring of courses, illegal use of pacers, use of unauthorised field instruments and incorrect timings, among other things.

"I'd like to thank everyone who has come forward and reported suspicious activity. This work has been important in protecting the integrity of the qualification process and the fair allocation of competition places for athletes," Howman added.

Anyone can anonymously report any form of misconduct in the sport of athletics, including attempts to manipulate competition results, by submitting an online reporting form available on the AIU website. athleticsintegrity.org/make-a-report

In addition to the work in the lead up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, the Athletics Integrity Unit has established a working protocol with the IOC's Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Unit PMC) during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games to help identify, analyse and investigate any potential instance of competition manipulation associated with betting occurring at the Games.

About the Athletics Integrity Unit

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues - both doping and non-doping - for the sport of athletics. The remit of the AIU includes anti-doping, the pursuit of individuals engaged in age or competition results manipulation, investigating fraudulent behaviour with regards to transfers of allegiance, and detecting other misconduct including bribery and breaches of betting rules. It is the AIU's role to drive cheats out of our sport, and to do everything within its power to support honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through dedication and hard work.

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