



Australian Government

Australian Sports  
Anti-Doping Authority

# Media Statement

19 May 2008

## ASADA Statement on Medicare Pilot Program

The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) announced today that it had received further legal advice from the Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) on the status of its pilot program with Medicare.

Before commencing the pilot, ASADA had obtained legal advice from the AGS which confirmed that there were no legal impediments to the pilot taking place. However AGS has now in response to ASADA's request, reconsidered its advice and has now concluded that the pilot program did not have appropriate legal authority.

AGS has apologised for any embarrassment and for the difficult position in which this has placed ASADA.

The pilot program involved the provision by ASADA to Medicare Australia of athlete name and contact information for the purposes of Medicare Australia identifying any athlete that had purchased anabolic steroids or human growth hormone for the purpose of doping.

At no time did ASADA receive or have access to any medical or other information from Medicare Australia.

The Minister for Sport, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, had asked the Office of Privacy Commissioner (OPC) to review the pilot program in March 2008. In responding to the review by the OPC,

ASADA revisited its legal authority to conduct the pilot.

ASADA thus finds itself in unintentional and technical breach of the Information Privacy Principles and has communicated this to the OPC.

ASADA can confirm that it acted throughout in good faith and on independent legal advice. The pilot program has ceased.

**-ENDS-**

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