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Doping cheats more likely to be caught under expanded anti-doping programs

The detection of 19 anti-doping rule violations by athletes and support personnel for the half-year period July to December 2009 continues to demonstrate the strength of the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority's (ASADA) expanded anti-doping programs.

The half-yearly result compares with a total of 29 anti-doping rule violations detected by ASADA in the 2008/09 reporting year.

Outgoing ASADA Chairman, Richard Ings said the result highlights the success of Australia's anti-doping framework, which includes the use of investigations and intelligence capability.

"The combination of our investigations into anti-doping rule violations, which includes close ties to the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and other law enforcement agencies, together with targeted testing is now an indispensable part of ASADA's world-class anti-doping measures.

"Australian athletes and support personnel involved in doping today are warned that the increased number of detections means that their likelihood of getting caught and sanctioned is greater than ever before.

"Even athletes doping with methods undetectable today can have no comfort as targeted samples are now retained for eight years for retesting with advances in technology," said Mr Ings.

Also during the half-year reporting period, ASADA achieved the following outcomes in the areas of deterrence, detection and enforcement, including:

- successfully carrying out its comprehensive testing program with 2,252 urine tests, 697 blood tests and 67 erythropoietin (EPO) analyses completed, with 2,261 athletes providing a sample from 44 sports
- receiving and analysing 1,043 referrals of Performance and Image Enhancing Drug seizures and information on investigations and prosecutions from the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
- conducting 88 education sessions across Australia, which were attended by 4,651 athletes and support personnel
- successfully transitioning to a new governance arrangement to ensure it remains Australia's driving force for pure performance in sport
- launching a new website at www.asada.gov.au and accompanying online tool that allows athletes and support personnel to search for a medication or substance, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and find out whether it is prohibited or permitted in sport.

"ASADA will continue to take a leadership role in the global fight against doping in sport and I would like to thank our dedicated staff, along with Australia's national sporting organisations and our other stakeholders, for their ongoing support to achieve a level playing field for Australian athletes," Mr Ings said.

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ASADA media contact: 0418 450 113