

## Letter to National Federations and Athletes from Leslie Buchanan, ITU Anti-doping Director

As another calendar year of triathlon competitions comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all triathletes and their respective national federations of the importance of maintaining a zero-tolerance attitude towards doping in triathlon and to reiterate that you are all an intrinsic part of the continued success of ITU's anti-doping program.

I first take this opportunity to look back on 2018 and provide you with an overview of our ITU Anti-Doping Program in the form of a year-end Report.

### 2018 Testing Program Year End Report

The 2018 testing program was carried out according to the objectives and parameters of ITU's Test Distribution Plan and within ITU's established anti-doping budget:

ITU Testing Pools had approximately

- 40 athletes in its Registered Testing Pool (RTP);
- 59 athletes in its ITU Testing Pool (TP).

Athlete Biological Passport

- 141 blood samples were collected for the purpose of the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP)

In-Competition Testing

- 909 in-competition urine samples were collected and analysed
- 45 in-competition blood samples were collected and analysed

Out-of-Competition Testing

- 282 blood, urine, or passport samples were collected from a total of 112 tests;
- 21% of these attempts took place during the athlete's 60-minute slot;
- Athletes from 27 different countries were tested;
- 82% of tests were conducted on athletes while they were living or training outside their home country;
- There were 12 unsuccessful testing attempts during 2018.

Anti-Doping Rule Violations

Four anti-doping rule violations involving the presence of Prohibited Substances or Methods were asserted at the international-level in 2018. Each athlete was sanctioned in accordance with the ITU Anti-Doping Rules.

Not all national-level anti-doping rule violations have been reported but as of December 31, 2018, 8 national-level anti-doping rule violation were reported in 2018.

With the help of focused and intelligent testing, education, deterrence and vigilance, ITU is confident these numbers should continue to diminish in the coming years.

ITU can proudly and confidently assert that all the testing and education initiatives it has undertaken in the past years have played an instrumental role in keeping the number of anti-doping rule violations and doping cases low.

### Code Compliance

In 2017, ITU successfully completed WADA's Code Compliance exercise which aimed to verify that all aspects of the ITU's anti-doping program complied with the World Anti-Doping Code. Further to this legal exercise, ITU modified certain parts of its doping program in 2018, including increasing blood testing and out-of-competition testing.

ITU is dedicated to consistently fulfill all its Code requirements and shall continue to strive for excellence in this regard in 2019. Notably, we are happy to note that the ITU Executive has approved an increase in our testing budget.

Meeting all our Code compliance obligations is an ongoing responsibility. ITU is proud of the team of professionals who are involved in the day to day operation of the ITU's anti-doping program and who work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that all compliance requirements are met and that ITU's anti-doping program effectively meets a gold standard. You can be sure that we will continue to do so in 2019!

### **Looking ahead to 2019**

ITU is committed to maintaining and implementing its anti-doping program and promoting drug-free sport. We shall continue to tackle all anti-doping issues with the same determination and conviction in 2019:

#### Doping controls

The ITU Test Distribution Plan which has been carefully and mindfully established with the help of our partners in anti-doping shall, as per usual, be carefully monitored throughout the year. It shall also be evaluated, modified and updated periodically, as required by the ITU Anti-Doping Director and the Canadian Center for Ethics in Sport, who manages ITU's out-of-competition testing program.

The monitoring shall focus on efficiency, efficacy and targeted testing all the while considering the ongoing importance of deterrence and detection. The monitoring shall apply to both in-competition and out-of-competition testing.

The monitoring shall also be based on ITU's intelligence gathering and shall include the acknowledgment of various red-flags such as significant performance improvements, suspicious behaviour, follow-up testing on atypical findings, filing failures and missed tests, etc.

### Athlete Biological Passport (ABP)

The ITU believes that although the typical doping control approach based on the detection of prohibited substances or their metabolites in an athlete's sample remains an effective approach to combat doping in triathlon, it has limitations when an athlete may be using substances on an intermittent and low-dose basis.

Furthermore, it is hard to argue that notwithstanding all the advances that have been made in this field, new substances or modifications of prohibited substances (designer drugs) or methods continue to be difficult to detect by conventional analytical means. In fact, doping regimes have become much more complex and strategic by taking full advantage of the weaknesses of traditional protocols.

ITU therefore continues to implement both the steroidal (urine) and hematological (blood) modules of the ABP and remains steadfast in its belief that the implementation of the ABP has kept our anti-doping rule violations low by not only deterring potential cheaters but by making all our athletes more accountable.

The fact that the implementation of the ABP continues to be well received by our athletes speaks volumes as to the value that you have all bestowed upon ITU's anti-doping initiatives and your desire to keep our sport clean and the playing field level.

### The 2019 Prohibited List

The 2019 Prohibited List can be downloaded from the WADA website at [https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/wada\\_2019\\_english\\_prohibited\\_list.pdf](https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/wada_2019_english_prohibited_list.pdf)

### Education

The ITU firmly believes that education is critical to successfully deter our athletes at all levels of competition from using performance-enhancing substances, to inform them of the risks of using supplements and their many responsibilities under the ITU Anti-Doping Rules and to underline the importance of verifying everything they ingest.

ITU shall continue to offer valuable information on anti-doping on its website and to distribute various educational materials to triathletes of all levels. We will also continue to work closely with our national federations and NADOs to facilitate the dissemination of these materials. We trust that you will contact ITU directly should you require assistance in this regard.

Finally, looking ahead to this New Year that is upon us, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued commitment to drug-free sport.

If ITU is proud of the work it continues to accomplish in carrying out its anti-doping program, it is equally proud to acknowledge all of your contributions to our doping program and your pledges to respect your obligations with regards to anti-doping.

- To our national federations who have respected their testing, reporting and results management obligations;

- To the CCES and SAIDS who are ITU's active partners and allies in the operation of its anti-doping program;
- To all medical staff for being mindful of the Prohibited List, offering Code-compliant consultations and properly filing out timely TUE applications;
- To all athlete support personnel who continue to deter athletes to resort to the use of performance enhance substances by emphasizing the importance of proper training and nutrition and the adoption of ethical sporting values;
- To our RTP athletes who continue to submit timely and accurate whereabouts information notwithstanding the burden this may impose;  
and,
- To each athlete who has made a personal decision to not use prohibited substances or methods to enhance his or her performance and discouraged others to do so as well:

**Thank you!**

Leslie Buchanan

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