
Compliance Strategy

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1. Introduction

As the international, independent agency tasked with coordinating, monitoring and promoting the fight against doping in sport, one of the core activities of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is to monitor the compliance of Signatories with the World Anti-Doping Code (Code) [1] and supporting International Standards [2].

Signatories are defined in the Code as ‘those entities signing the Code and agreeing to comply with the Code as provided in Article 23’. They include International Federations (IFs), National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs), Major Event Organizations (MEOs) among others.

2. The Compliance Mission and Vision

The Mission: the mission of the Code compliance program is to ensure that strong, Code-compliant anti-doping rules and programs are applied and enforced consistently and effectively across all sports and all countries.

The Vision: consistent with WADA’s overall mission to lead a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport, the vision of the Code-compliance program is to achieve compliance maturity for all Signatories across the world. By ensuring that strong, Code-compliant anti-doping rules and programs are applied and enforced consistently and effectively across all sports and all countries, the Code compliance program allows clean athletes to have confidence that there is fair competition on a level playing field and maintains public confidence in the integrity of sport.

3. Evolution of Code Compliance within WADA

From 2007 until 2014, WADA’s Code compliance monitoring activities were mainly focused on the review of Signatories’ anti-doping rules.

In 2015, an enhanced compliance monitoring program was established to identify, monitor and assess the compliance of Signatories with the 2015 Code and International Standards in a more thorough and robust manner, taking into account not only Signatories’ anti-doping rules but also their implementation of anti-doping programs. This continued with the introduction of the 2021 Code and International Standards (which included two new standards for education and results management) and will continue to evolve with future editions of the Code.

During the development of the enhanced compliance monitoring program, WADA created two bodies to manage and provide oversight on all compliance matters:

- Within WADA, the **Compliance Taskforce** (Taskforce) was created to monitor formal and operational compliance. The Taskforce consists of key staff from all relevant departments and offices of WADA. The secretariat of the Taskforce is the Compliance Unit, which is part of the Compliance, Rules and Standards impact area.
- Governance and oversight of compliance in general is provided by a second group that is external to WADA’s operations, the **Compliance Review Committee** (CRC), an independent, non-political WADA Permanent Special Committee, which convened for the first time in early 2015. The CRC is governed by specific WADA Terms of Reference and adheres to a strict conflict-of-interest policy and independence criteria for certain members. The CRC is responsible for reviewing compliance-related information and making recommendations to the WADA Executive Committee to bring formal non-compliance cases against Signatories. The CRC is comprised of a representative from the sports

movement, a government representative, an athlete representative, two independent, compliance/legal experts from non-sports related fields, and an independent chair.

The way in which the Taskforce and CRC support Signatories in achieving compliance is described in Section 6.0. The respective roles of, and interactions between, the Taskforce, CRC and WADA's governing bodies are covered in more detail in the International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories (ISCCS) [2].

The ISCCS was approved by the WADA Executive Committee in November 2017 and came into effect as from 1 April 2018. Subsequent versions have been introduced in January 2021 and April 2024 and it will continue to evolve alongside WADA's legal framework. Its detailed provisions ensure that the actions taken by the Taskforce and CRC are clearly understood and the consequences of non-compliance by Signatories are transparent, graded and predictable.

3.1. Managing Compliance to an Internationally Recognized Standard

In order to ensure that the management of compliance by WADA is conducted efficiently, effectively and transparently, the compliance monitoring program is ISO9001:2015 certified since May 2016 and external auditors re-assess the compliance monitoring program's certification annually [3].

The scope of WADA's ISO9001:2015 certification is: **Compliance monitoring of anti-doping legislation/rules/regulations and implementation of policies and programs by Signatories to the World Anti-Doping Code**

ISO certification ensures that the compliance monitoring program processes and procedures are credible, consistently applied and provide Signatories with confidence that WADA is acting in a robust and fair manner.

4. Challenges to Compliance Implementation

There are several important challenges to be faced as Signatories progress towards a state of compliance maturity:

- Compliance activities within Signatories have not yet become routine or automatic, and there is a reliance on WADA to monitor, review and identify improvements. Signatories are being supported to take more responsibility proactively, with WADA providing the tools to enable them to become self-sufficient.
- Different Signatories have evolved at varying paces resulting in significant differences in compliance capabilities amongst Signatories. WADA aims to support Signatories to increase compliance maturity across the world, whilst acknowledging the differences in resources.
- A general tendency worldwide towards increasing skepticism of institutions highlights the importance of transparency and outreach activities to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of WADA's compliance support program.
- The communications environment has changed markedly in recent years with the widespread availability of new communications media. This calls for a corresponding evolution in WADA's communications approach with regard to compliance matters to emphasize transparency and proactivity.
- While the focus of the Code compliance program has been on Code Signatories, the most important stakeholders in the program - the clean athletes – may not be aware of how they benefit. It is therefore essential to engage with athletes through transparent communication and outreach.

The approach adopted by WADA to address these challenges is described in greater detail in Section 5.0

and Section 6.0.

5. Achievement of Compliance by Signatories

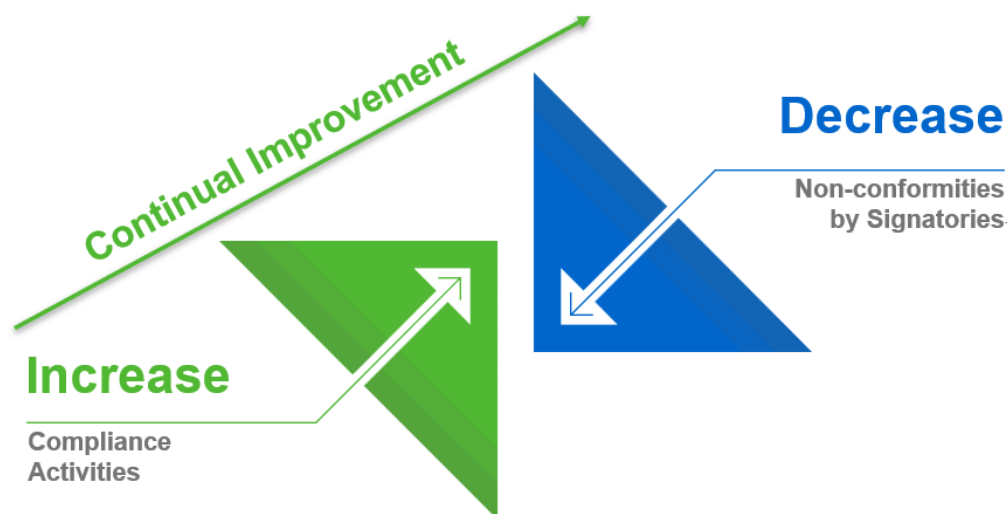
Signatories maintain their anti-doping programs in compliance with the current Code and International Standards by means of an integrated and sustainable program of self-assessment, monitoring, audits, management of risk and opportunities, and continual improvement. This is an evolutionary process, as shown in Figure 1, which is supported by WADA at all stages with the objective that compliance becomes ‘business as usual’ for Signatories.

Figure 1. Evolution towards a State of Compliance Maturity



As Signatories' compliance efforts mature, through experience gained and education/awareness, the number of non-conformities will reduce, resulting in greater efficiencies as described in Figure 2. In addition, reporting and monitoring tools developed by WADA will assist the Signatories to achieve and maintain compliance.

Figure 2. Increased Compliance Activities Lead to Reduced Non-conformities



WADA's priority is to support Signatories in strengthening their anti-doping programs, thereby increasing the protection that they can provide clean athletes. Although the ultimate accountability for achieving and maintaining compliant anti-doping programs lies with the Signatories, WADA supports Signatories to achieve compliance in a number of ways (Section 7 of the ISCCS [2]). These include:

Key compliance monitoring metrics	Automated metrics allowing WADA to focus on improving quality through audits, the Code Compliance Questionnaire, program area monitoring, Signatory partnerships and peer review programs.
Code Compliance Questionnaire	Online self-help tool which permits self-assessment by Signatories with a view towards enhancing their anti-doping programs.
Program area monitoring	Ongoing monitoring of critical anti-doping activities leads to early detection of potential compliance problems and allows WADA to take timely action to support Signatories to undertake corrective actions.
Audits	A retrospective, systematic assessment of a Signatory's anti-doping program, conducted by WADA auditors either at the Signatory's headquarters, by virtual means or by an exchange of information through a desk audit.
World Anti-Doping Code and International Standards	Updated periodically with input and consultation involving all stakeholders, including Signatories.
Other resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Technical documents, model rules, guidelines, templates and online education tools to assist Signatories to understand their responsibilities and implement effective anti-doping programs. – Code Implementation Support Program (CISP) designed to assist Signatories understand and implement changes to the Code and International Standards. – Workshops, symposiums and webinars scheduled around key times to

	<p>provide Signatories with tailored information and face-to-face access to compliance experts so that support is readily available and accessible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Specific training programs to increase knowledge and understanding of anti-doping practitioners on their roles and responsibilities, such as the Global Learning and Development Framework (GLDF).– Consultation, advice and support to Signatories is provided all year round through the WADA Regional Offices and departments of WADA
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Every effort is made by WADA to support the achievement of compliance. A case will be referred to the CRC and then potentially to the Executive Committee with a recommendation that formal action be taken only if a Signatory has failed to achieve compliance after the exhaustion of all options, assistance and support. By definition, an allegation of non-compliance means that the situation has been robustly and thoroughly reviewed and that the recommendation from the CRC to the Executive Committee is based on facts, evidence and consideration of precedents. Non-compliance is a last resort.

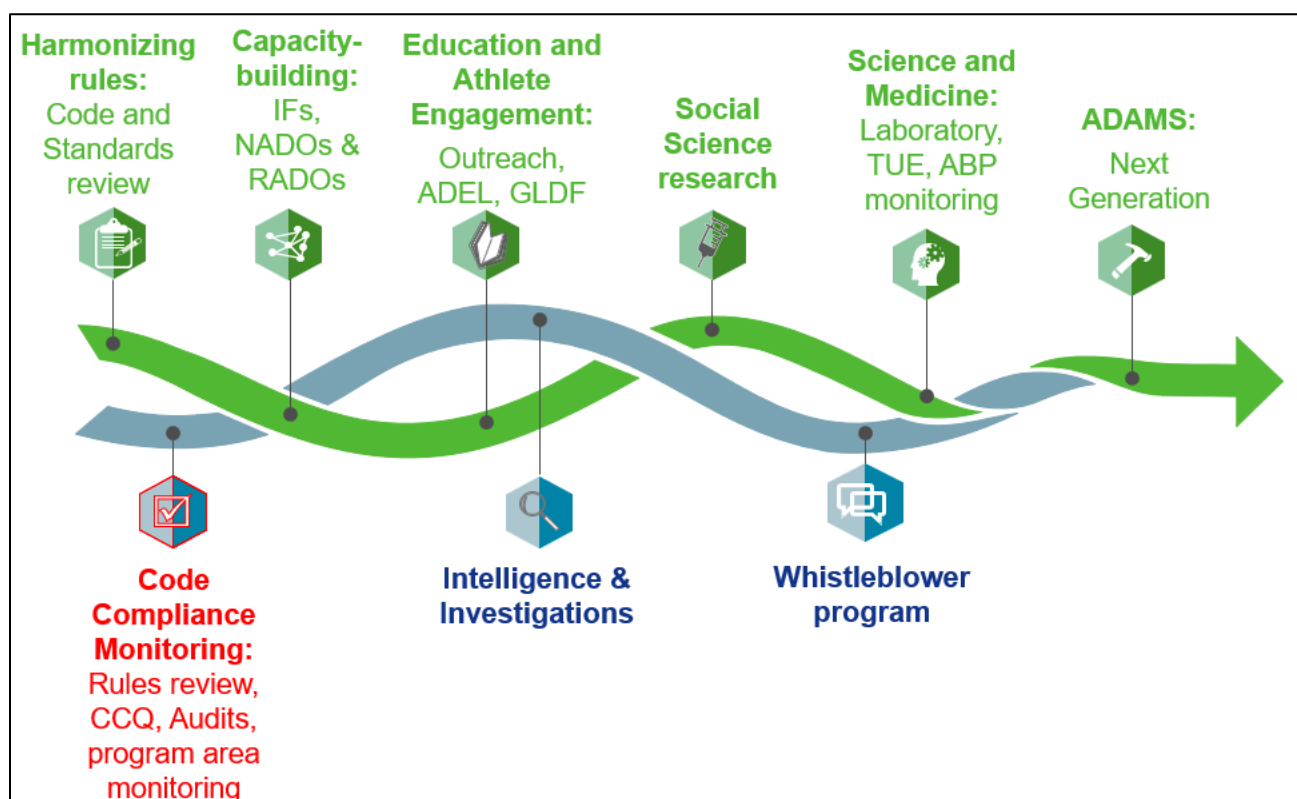
Furthermore, should a Signatory be declared non-compliant, WADA prioritizes resources and support to ensure that the Signatory can be reinstated as soon as possible.

6. WADA Implementation of Compliance Strategy

6.1. Integration with WADA Core Activities

The WADA Compliance Strategy is an integral part of WADA's core activities, as shown in Figure 3. It complements, and is complemented by, other strategically important activities such as capacity-building, education and intelligence-gathering.

Figure 3. WADA's Core Activities



6.2. Compliance Taskforce

The WADA Compliance Taskforce performs a number of activities to ensure that WADA's efforts to support compliance by Signatories are effective:

Taskforce Activity	Description
Compliance operations	Planning and conduct of compliance operations (including objectives, Anti-Doping rules, regulations (and where relevant, national legislation) review, Code Compliance Questionnaire, audits, program area monitoring and initiation of compliance procedures).
Assessment of compliance status	Preparation of documentation and reporting of compliance status of Signatories to the CRC. Liaison between WADA and the CRC.

Taskforce Activity	Description
Continual improvement	Structures, processes, systems, training, education, internal audits and monitoring are continually improved based on evolving experience
Compliance monitoring metrics	Definition and monitoring of Key Performance Indicators to ensure consistent application for all Signatories and allow assessment of progress
Risk Management Plan	Development of a risk management framework , an annual plan for identification and management of uncertainties, risks and opportunities to support timely intervention and thereby mitigate or avoid risks to Code compliance.
Annual status report	Annual reporting on compliance-related activities to the CRC and via WADA's annual report.

6.3. Compliance Review Committee (CRC)

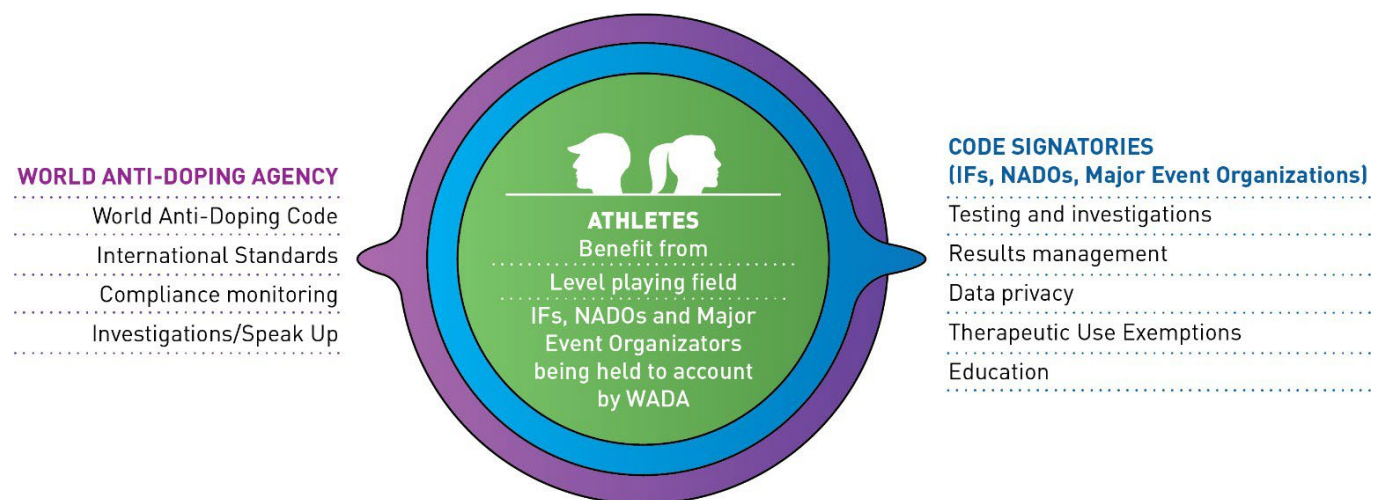
The CRC undertakes the following activities:

CRC Activity	Description
Review Taskforce operations	Review and critique plans for compliance operations, continual improvement, and compliance monitoring metrics, including proposals for prioritization of efforts
Identify Compliance issues	Identify compliance-related issues of its own accord to be addressed by WADA.
Guidance & recommendations on Compliance	Provide guidance on WADA's compliance-related matters and make recommendations to the WADA Executive Committee as to the compliance status of Signatories. This includes recommendations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – when to make a formal allegation of non-compliance – what consequences should be proposed for Signatories alleged to be non-compliant – conditions for re-instatement – re-instatement of non-compliant Signatories
Ensure consistency of CRC decisions	Follow standardized procedures and document the details and rationale of all decisions to ensure a fair, transparent and consistent approach for all Signatories.
Annual review	Annual review of the effectiveness of WADA's compliance program, WADA's adherence to the Compliance Strategy and key performance indicators, on the basis of the Annual Report prepared by the Taskforce.

7. Compliance Benefits for Athletes

Athletes are central to the WADA compliance strategy.

Figure 4. Athlete Benefits from Compliance



An effective global compliance system for Signatories is of critical importance to athletes, giving them Confidence in a level playing field

- Reassurance that countries, Major Event Organizers and International Federations have robust anti-doping programs, and that WADA will take action to enforce the rules
- The freedom to focus on sporting performance, without distractions
- Assurance that all Signatories are held to the same high standard as athletes

8. References

1. [World Anti-Doping Code](#)
2. [International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories \(ISCCS\)](#)
3. ISO 9001:2015 WADA Compliance Quality Manual