

WADA Athlete Council

17 March 2025

Meeting Outcomes

Lausanne, Switzerland

Athlete Council Members	
Ryan Pini, Chair	Gaby Ahrens, Vice-Chair
Mona Brorsson	Ivan Cosic
Adriana Escobar	Inaki Gomez
Jennifer Harss	Dora Hegyi
Elisabeth Maier	Patrick O-Leary
Ella Sabljak	Yujiao Tan
	Cyrille Tchatchet II
Virtual	
Toby Cunliffe-Steel	Yuhan Tan (virtual part of the day)
Apologies	
Humphrey Kayange	Olumide Oyedeji
Emma Terho	Hong Zhang
	Maja Wloszczowska
WADA (some only for specific items on the agenda)	
Witold Banka, President	Olivier Niggli, Director General
Karine Henrie, Director, Athlete Engagement	Stacy Spletzer-Jegen, Senior Manager, Athlete Engagement
Mariam Diaby, Head of Digital Marketing	Philippe Charpier, SWORD Group
Bertrand Moulin, SWORD Group	Chaya Ndiaye, Head of Digital Insights, WADA
Richard Young, Lead Code Drafter	Julien Sieveking, Director, Legal Affairs, WADA
Tim Ricketts, Director, Testing, WADA	Ben Sandford, Code drafting team member (former AC Chair)
Amanda Hudson, Director of Education, WADA	Tony Cunningham, Head of Research and Policy, Education, WADA
Susan Backhouse, Director of Research, Leeds Beckett University	Andy Heyes, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Leeds Beckett University
	Anna Thorstenson, Ombuds

Welcome to current and new AC members

- WADA AC Chair, Ryan Pini welcomed all members to their first in-person meeting of 2025. He also welcomed the five new members, Mona Brorsson, Toby Cunliffe-Steel, Cyrille Tchatchet II, Elisabeth Maier and Yujiao Tan to the Athlete Council and each took the time to introduce themselves.
- The agenda was sent out two weeks prior to the meeting and no additions or changes were provided by members.
- The Chair reminded members that the outcomes of the previous meeting, which took place on 3 December 2024, were circulated via email and were approved as complete and final. As such, they were published on WADA's [website](#).
- The Chair thanked everyone for their interest in the athlete seats on the Standing Committee and Working Groups and for voting for their representation. The Chair congratulated Yuhan for being elected to the Health, Medical and Research Committee (HMRC) and Toby to the Working Group on Contaminations. The Chair (Ryan) is grateful for the opportunity to join the Finance and Administration Committee meeting later this year.
- The Chair thanked all members who are staying for the WADA Annual Symposium and for those leading or taking part in several different sessions at this important event.
- Members serving on Standing Committees and Working Groups provided updates on their activities including Dora from the Education Committee, Patrick from the Prevalence Working Group and Yuhan who joined the HMRC meeting as an observer in early February.
- The Chair provided an update on several items regarding the virtual and upcoming Executive Committee meeting taking place the following week and its agenda, touching on a few topics such as:
 - Regarding WADA's budget, the Chair mentioned that, while some countries had not paid their contributions to WADA, WADA's Management Team was asked to present a revised budget for 2025. Activities around the Code, the Athlete Council and Athlete Engagement would not be impacted.
 - The final Cottier report was discussed, and the Chair updated the group on the Working Group's [final recommendations](#). As the Chair is part of the Working Group, an in-depth summary was provided to members.
 - The hosting of the Enhanced Games was discussed, which based on recent media reports could be held in the US later this year or early 2026. The Chair reminded the members that the topic was discussed at a previous AC meeting (March 2024) where AC members were strongly opposed to this event. AC members voiced that they remain opposed to this event which is dangerous and threatens athletes' physical and mental health. The Chair mentioned that he would share the AC's views on this topic during the ExCo meeting and that, if pertinent, the AC could issue a written statement on this topic.
- The Chair reminded the group of the upcoming Group 3 appointment process and invited Karine to provide a brief update on the next steps and timelines. Karine shared a few key points: 1) that a call for applications would be launched around mid-May 2025; 2) before that Group 1 and Group 2, each needed to select a member to sit on the Appointment Panel and that an email seeking interest would follow; 3) that Group 1 and Group 2 would be asked to complete a skills survey to identify the desired skills and

diversity needs of the Council that the upcoming Group 3 appointments will aim to fill. Karine confirmed that an email detailing the process and timelines would be circulated to all members shortly.

Athlete Centered Communication and Campaigns

- Mariam Diaby, Head of Digital Marketing in WADA's Communication Department provided an overview on WADA's campaign development to promote clean sport including the recent "Natural is Enough" campaign which included using influencers to help raise awareness.
- She also discussed the history and importance of Play True Day and the value the Athlete Council provides in bringing it to life.

Athlete Center (Whereabouts)

Philippe Charpier and Bertrand Moulin from Sword Group along with Chaya Ndiaye, Head of Digital Insights from WADA provided an overview of WADA's digital systems, data and artificial intelligence (AI) progress which are being done while keeping athletes at the center of our planning.

Regarding work on improvements to the whereabouts App, a progress update was provided to members. A user-centric approach is being implemented to understand athlete realities including using athlete interviews (some which included members of the AC) as well as feedback from the ADAMS help desk and other satisfaction surveys. Using all of this feedback, the Sword Group is developing a 'revamped' whereabouts App to better serve the athlete community. Additional testing of the App's workflow, usability, accessibility, etc. will continue. The plan is for a soft launch of the new App in early 2026. Several AC members (i.e., Ivan, Adriana, Toby, Cyrille and Elisabeth) expressed their interest in supporting this work. Karine confirmed that she would put them in contact with Philippe, Bertrand and Chaya after the meeting.

Current Affairs and Updates from WADA Leadership

The Chair welcomed and thanked the WADA President, Vice-President and Director General for joining the Athlete Council meeting.

- The President thanked the AC for inviting them to their meeting once again and praised their work on different WADA Committees and programs. He also welcomed the new members and offered his congratulations to those that were elected to Group 2.
- The President then gave perspective on the past year including the challenges that made us stronger. He also spoke about Investigations and Intelligence (I&I) and the work taking place around the world in this important area for clean sport.
- He spoke about the Enhanced Games and the importance of upholding clean sport values amongst how such events meant to be a disruptor for clean sport initiatives and the health of all athletes worldwide.
- The Athlete Council was then provided the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and to discuss different items with WADA's leadership.

Code and International Standard Update Process

WADA Athlete Council Member, Inaki Gomez and Director of Athlete Engagement Karine Henrie discussed the Code and International Standard Update Process and the efforts being made to have more athletes and athlete voices involved in this process.

- Karine provided an update on the 'Athlete-Centered Consultation' mentioning that the aim is to build an athlete centered and focused process for feedback. This process would focus on identifying key topics/areas that are more relevant for athletes and seek feedback using a more athlete-friendly mechanism (rather than the typical WADACConnect). The goal is for this process to be launched by early-mid-April.
- Inaki provided an update regarding the AC's feedback on the Code and the International Standard noting that, building on the work of the AC and AC member Clare Egan from last year, the same approach could be implemented (i.e., sub-groups to review the Code and each relevant Standards) if members agree. It was also mentioned that the Athletes' Anti-Doping Rights Act would also need to be reviewed and updated as needed. More regarding the process and approach would be shared with members in due course.

World Anti-Doping Code

The Athlete Council was provided a platform to hear directly from leaders of the Code Drafting Team including WADA's Director of Legal, Julien Sieveking, Lead Code Drafter Rich Young, and Code drafting team member and former AC Chair, Ben Sandford to discuss and identify key areas of interest to athletes.

The AC asked the team for specific areas that the drafting team could benefit from athlete or AC feedback and some of the areas discussed were around: "No Fault or Negligence" public disclosure, periods of ineligibility for substances of abuse, activities during ineligibility periods. The AC will be focusing on those areas and others as it reflects on its feedback.

International Standard for Testing

Code Drafting Team members Ben Sandford and Director of Testing Tim Ricketts gave a presentation related to the International Standard for Testing which included addressing the AC's feedback during the last consultation phase and areas where athlete and AC feedback would be helpful to receive during this final consultation phase. Some of the themes or areas discussed were changes to whereabouts requirements, the use of phone calls to contact athletes, sport gender among others. The AC will be focusing on those areas and others as it reflects on its feedback.

International Standard for Education and Unintentional Doping

Amanda Hudson, Director of Education and Tony Cunningham, Head of Research led the discussion on the International Standard of Education, as well as the fundamental rationale of the Spirit of Sport.

Sue Backhouse, Director of Research at Leeds Beckett University, discussed her research on Unintentional Doping and the taskforce that she Chairs which is trying to better understand this issue of unintentional doping.

Some of the questions the research is looking into are: How do we protect athletes around unintentional doping? How do we remove or reduce the 'fear' and weight of responsibility of not making a mistake. These points were discussed.

The AC was informed that on 24 March a survey is being launched to gain feedback on this issue. AC members were encouraged to complete the survey and to share with their networks.

Athletes' Anti-Doping Ombuds

Anna Thorstenson, Ombuds, introduced herself to the new members and provided an overview of the Ombuds program including key highlights from her 2024 Annual Report

The AC was then able to ask Anna questions regarding the Ombuds services.

Concluding Remarks

The 2025 calendar including upcoming events and the AC's next in person meeting were discussed. The Chair mentioned that the two options for in-person meetings could be either in September around the ExCo meeting or in December around the World Conference. Members were informed that more information would be shared soon.

Also, the Chair provided the schedule for the upcoming Continental, IOC and IPC Athlete Forums while letting the group know of different opportunities to get involved. The IOC's International Athlete Forum will take place 11-12 June in Lausanne, Switzerland with a joint meeting being held the day before with the IOC Athlete Commission on 10 June.