

Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority investigation into activities at Essendon Football Club

ASADA met with you on 18 February 2013 to give you an overview of the ASADA's investigation process and of the possible outcomes of the investigation.

Today (20 February 2013), we have come back to take you through our agreement with the Australian Football League about how the investigation is going to proceed from this point.

"The AFL understands that the investigation is likely to be protracted, complex and lengthy.

To provide an immediate level of comfort for the Essendon players it is proposed that the following assistance be given to the players.

- First, representatives of ASADA and AFL will address the players to explain the investigative process and players rights and entitlements should they wish to come forward.
- ASADA will explain to the players that these are exceptional circumstances and the defence of no fault or negligence may be available.
- It will be explained to players that under a *no fault or negligence* defence a player can receive a complete elimination of sanction. (Ultimately whether a player receives the *no fault or negligence defence* or *substantial assistance* will depend on the individual's circumstances).
- Where a player does come forward and provides a sworn statement regarding his involvement and the involvement of any other person, ASADA and the AFL will fully explore all avenues in an attempt to provide a *no fault or negligence defence* or *substantial assistance*.
- ASADA agrees that a significant contributing factor in the consideration of a *no fault or negligence defence*, will be the extent to which players knew or suspected they had used prohibited substances at the instigation of sports science staff and took utmost caution in relation to the treatments they were receiving.
- Where ASADA forms the view that the defence of *no fault or negligence* is available in relation to a particular player, ASADA and the AFL agree that they will support the application of that defence to that player in proceedings before relevant sport tribunals.
- The AFL and ASADA will assist in providing an expedient process for those players who wish to come forward and give their version of events to assist the investigation.
- The investigation will take its normal course and will not be undermined or compromised.
- Any player that is found to have lied in the sworn statement or deliberately withheld information will be taken to have aggravating circumstances and may face a 4 year ban from sport in addition to having committed perjury."