

**REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE 137TH IOC SESSION BY WITOLD BAŃKA
PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY**

SESSION HELD VIRTUALLY: 10 TO 12 MARCH 2021

Since my report to the 136th IOC Session held in July 2020, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) – along with the rest of the world – has continued to undergo significant upheaval due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the sporting world.

In September and November 2020, WADA held its Executive Committee (ExCo) and Foundation Board (Board) meetings by video conference, which resulted in decisions outlined in the following media releases:

- [15 September 2020 ExCo meeting](#)
- [12 November 2020 Board meeting](#)
- [Circulatory votes further to 12 November 2020 Board meeting](#)

What is outlined hereafter is a brief update for IOC Members regarding the global impact of COVID-19 on the anti-doping system to date and the work that WADA has undertaken to provide assistance and guidance to the anti-doping community; including: Athletes, International Federations, National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs) and Major Event Organizations. It is expected that a more comprehensive report will be submitted to the next Session before the Tokyo Games.

1. WADA COVID-19 Guidance and Documentation

In February 2020, a dedicated [COVID-19 Updates](#) section was created on WADA's website to centralize relevant WADA communications. A summary, complete with links, is provided under item 7 below.

2. WADA Survey of Anti-Doping Organizations to Assess Impact of COVID-19

In [September 2020](#), WADA issued an online survey to Anti-Doping Organizations (ADOs) to assess the impact of COVID-19 and to seek feedback on how the pandemic was affecting anti-doping programs globally. It was also an opportunity for WADA to receive comments on how its guidance documents could be further improved and how the anti-doping community could be better prepared for such crises in the future. The outcomes of the survey that were published in November can be found [here](#).

3. Testing

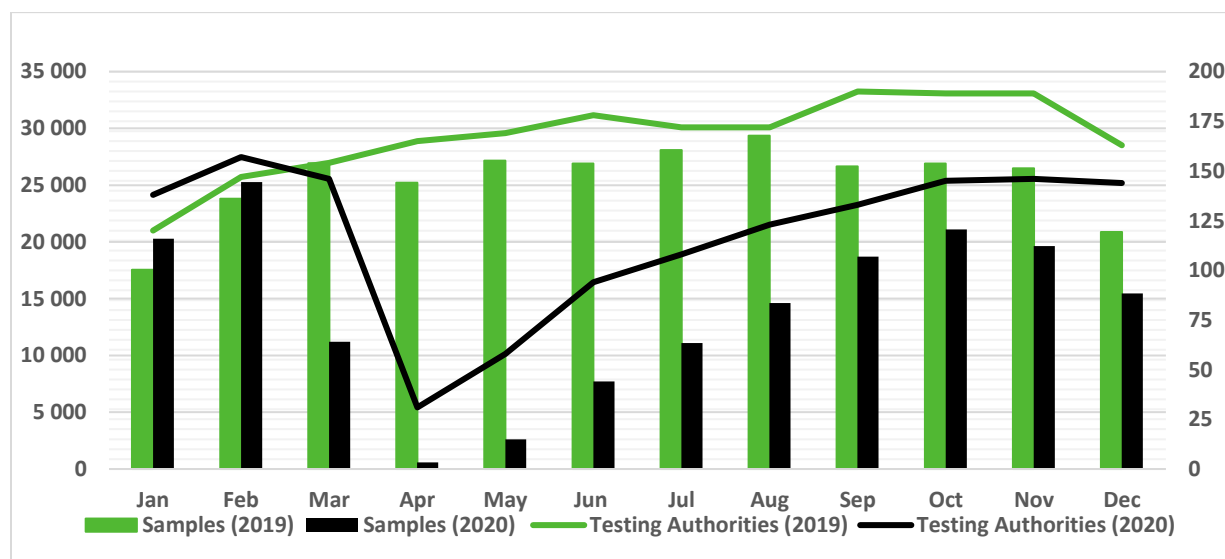
The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on testing activities however with vaccination programs being rolled out this should see a continual return to normal levels of

sample collection in 2021. In respect to 2020 the graph and tables below provide further information on the status of sample collection programs globally.

While sample numbers were considerably down in the months of March – June, the level of Out of Competition testing reached 50% up to 91% from June through to December when compared to 2019 figures for the same period. The limited number of sporting competitions that took place in 2020, which normally make up around 45-50% of total sample numbers, also had a considerable impact on the number of samples collected. A total of 168,256 samples (55%) were collected in 2020 compared to 305,881 in 2019.

Testing was more focused on those higher risk sports; and, overall, the anti-doping community did all that it could to protect clean sport during these difficult times.

4. Samples¹ collected – January to December 2020 vs 2019 and Testing Authorities



4.1 Samples collected 2020 v 2019

Month	2020	2019
January	20,288	17,539
February	25,259	23,819
March	11,207	26,933
April	578	25,219
May	2,625	27,146
June	7,706	26,904
July	11,081	28,084
August	14,619	29,360
September	18,699	26,638
October	21,094	26,897
November	19,636	26,469
December	15,464	20,873
Total	168,256	305,881

4.2 Testing Authorities 2020 v 2019

Month	2020	2019
January	138	120
February	157	147
March	146	154
April	31	165
May	58	169
June	94	178
July	108	172
August	123	172
September	133	190
October	145	189
November	146	189
December	144	163
Average/month	119	167

¹ Includes blood, urine and blood athlete biological passport samples

4.3 Out-of-Competition Samples

Month	2020	2019	2020 vs 2019 %
January	12,546	9,988	126
February	13,622	12,379	110
March	6,868	13,139	52
April	569	12,713	4
May	2,512	13,691	18
June	6,734	13,377	50
July	8,916	14,933	60
August	9,871	15,443	64
September	11,920	15,015	79
October	13,079	15,112	87
November	13,963	15,265	91
December	10,880	12,012	91
Total	111,480	163,067	68

4.4 In-Competition Samples

Month	2020	2019	2020 vs 2019 %
January	7,742	7,551	103
February	11,637	11,440	102
March	4,339	13,794	31
April	9	12,506	0
May	113	13,455	1
June	972	13,527	7
July	2,165	13,151	16
August	4,748	13,917	34
September	6,779	11,623	58
October	8,015	11,785	68
November	5,673	11,204	51
December	4,583	8,861	52
Total	56,776	142,814	40

5. WADA's Strategic Testing Expert Group

In [September 2020](#), WADA announced the establishment of a new Strategic Testing Expert Group, which reviewed and developed the Agency's [Guidance for Testing during COVID-19](#) document that also had input from the World Health Organization. The document enables sample collection to take place (where restrictions permit) in a way that protects the health and safety of athletes, sample collection personnel and others involved in the doping control process.

In addition, the Expert Group is also undertaking a feasibility study on alternative and innovative sample collection programs that were developed and piloted by five NADOs during the initial stages of the pandemic. The Group is considering whether sample collection procedures can be further enhanced to deal with such crises in the future while maintaining the integrity of the process and the samples.

6. WADA's Guidance re. COVID-19 Vaccinations

On [11 December 2020](#), WADA clarified its positioning regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. The Agency's guidance to athletes is health focused -- considering athletes, those around them and the population at large. The Agency is highly recommending vaccines against COVID-19. They are not known to contain any Substance or Method on the Prohibited List; or, to interfere with anti-doping analysis. WADA continues to closely monitor the situation and has committed to broadly communicate should this opinion change.

7. WADA Stakeholder Communications issued since February 2020

- 23 February 2021: [WADA Updates Question and Answer Document for Athletes Related to Anti-Doping and COVID-19](#)
- 11 December 2020: [WADA Clarifies Position on COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- 25 November 2020: [WADA Updates its COVID-19 Testing Guidance for Anti-Doping Organizations](#)
- 16 November 2020: [WADA Publishes ADO Survey Outcomes Concerning Impact of COVID-19 on Anti-Doping](#)
- 9 September 2020: [New WADA Strategic Testing Expert Group Reviews the Lessons](#)

Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic to be ready for future similar crises

- 5 June 2020: [WADA publishes ADO Guidance for Remote Education Programs in light of COVID-19](#)
- 25 May 2020: [WADA Publishes Updated Question and Answer Document for Athletes Related to COVID-19](#)
- 6 May 2020: [WADA Updates its COVID-19 Guidance for Anti-Doping Organizations](#)
- 23 March 2020: [WADA Responds to Athlete Queries concerning Anti-Doping in light of COVID-19](#)
- 20 March 2020: [WADA updates its COVID-19 Guidance for Anti-Doping Organizations](#)
- 6 March 2020: [WADA Monitors Integrity of Anti-Doping Testing Worldwide in light of the COVID-19 Virus](#)
- 21 February 2020: [WADA Update Regarding Testing of Chinese Athletes in light of Coronavirus](#)