



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Former Judge to assist ASADA Investigations

The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) has engaged a former Federal Court Judge to assist with its anti-doping investigations.

The Federal Government is providing extra support to ASADA to assist in bringing investigations stemming from the Australian Crime Commission inquiry into drugs in sport to conclusion.

The Minister for Sport Peter Dutton said the Government is providing funding to ASADA to engage The Hon Garry Downes (AM QC FCI Arb) to provide assistance in relation to ASADA's ongoing anti-doping investigations into the National Rugby League (NRL) and Australian Football League (AFL).

"ASADA's investigative process has been ongoing for nearly a year and is of unprecedented complexity. In light of this, it is appropriate that a suitably qualified person be engaged to assist ASADA as the investigations approach conclusion," Mr Dutton said.

"The Government recognises the strong public and sports' interest in bringing to a conclusion ASADA'S investigations into the NRL and AFL and it is expected that Mr Downes will be able to complete a review and provide a report to ASADA as soon as possible, but no later than the end of April 2014.

"The review process will assist ASADA in finalising its investigations, but does not in itself guarantee finalisation on a fixed date."

Mr Dutton said this initiative has been taken in consultation with ASADA's CEO who welcomes the additional support that the Government will provide.

Mr Downes brings with him a wealth of experience from his time as a judge in the Federal Court of Australia as well as President of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

Mr Dutton said the Government is committed to ensuring that ASADA remains properly equipped to deal with the evolving challenges of combatting anti-doping activities in Australian sport.

"The Government recognises the importance of sport to all Australians and the key role that it plays in our community, from the professional codes through to grassroots sport.

"Ensuring Australian sport remains free from performance enhancing drugs and the influence of those who would seek to compromise the integrity of sporting competitions remains a high priority for this Government and we will continue to work in partnership to protect the integrity of Australian sport," Mr Dutton said.

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