

WADA president Sir Craig Reedie's 'comfort' email to Russia's most senior drug-buster reveals toothless clampdown on doping

- [WADA president Sir Craig Reedie has 'no intention' of taking any action against Russia and assured them they won't be singled out](#)
- Sir Craig sent an email on April 30 to Natalya Zhelanova, appointed personally by Mutko earlier this year to handle Russia's doping issues.
- Britain's most senior international sports politician doesn't want to disrupt his friendship with Russian sports minister Vitaly Mutko
- Senior Russian insiders say they 'take comfort' from approach by WADA

By [Nick Harris for The Mail on Sunday](#)

Published: 04:38 EDT, 23 August 2015 | Updated: 06:49 EDT, 23 August 2015

Details of a 'reassuring' email sent by the British head of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to Russia's most senior anti-doping official highlight why some senior figures in Russian sport feel 'comfort' that WADA is not intent on a particular clampdown on Russian doping.

As the Mail on Sunday revealed last week, Sir Craig Reedie, the president of WADA, sent a message to Russia's sports minister Vitaly Mutko to say WADA had no intention of doing anything to disrupt the men's friendship.

The message was sent in April against a backdrop of an ongoing Independent Commission (IC) investigation into allegations by German TV station ARD into systematic doping in Russia. The IC was established by WADA and is headed by highly respected former WADA president Dick Pound.



Russia could be let off the hook by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) president Sir Craig Reedie

As the world athletics championships got underway in Beijing on Saturday, Russia's status as the world's major 'rogue' nations in doping terms endures. Russia has more currently banned athletes than any country, with further cases pending.

The Mail on Sunday can reveal Sir Craig sent an email on April 30 to Natalya Zhelanova, appointed personally by Mutko earlier this year to handle Russia's doping issues.

'I wish to make it clear to you and to the Minister that there is no action being taken by WADA that is critical of the efforts which I know have been made, and are being made, to improve anti-doping efforts in Russia,' Reedie wrote.

After admitting in the email he was 'not involved in the daily work' of Pound's commission, Sir Craig none the less offered his opinion to Zhelanova, from his official WADA email account: 'It is my view that the content of the [ARD] television programmes was based on a period of time that pre-dates the changes in legislation and the investment in [Russian anti-doping] that have been made.'

Sources in Russia say Sir Craig's approach provided 'comfort' that the ARD allegations were 'old news' - whether it was Sir Craig's intention to convey that message or not.

Sir Craig has told the MoS: 'The Commission is entirely independent of WADA and its management, including myself. Any views offered would have no influence, nor would interfere in any way whatsoever, with the work of the Independent Commission.'



Britain's most senior international sports politician doesn't want to disrupt his friendship with Vitaly Mutko



Controversy continues to reign over alleged use of banned performance-enhancing techniques at Daegu 2011

His email to Zhelanova was, sources say, just one of several messages sent via different email addresses and / or messaging devices. Asked to confirm this, WADA said: ‘WADA maintains diplomatic relations and dialogue with all countries and sports on an ongoing basis and through a number of different means of communication.’

In his email on April 30, Sir Craig wrote: ‘On a personal level I value the relationship I have with Minister Mutko and I shall be grateful if you will inform him that there is no intention in WADA to do anything to affect that relationship.’

The MoS asked Ms Zhelanova to confirm what assurances Russia had received from Sir Craig. Two separate assistants replied to say Ms Zhelanova was away on holiday but would respond on her return.



WADA president has ‘no intention’ of taking action because of his relationship with the Russian sports minister

Earlier this month Sir Craig told the BBC that he did not support bans from sport for nations guilty of persistent doping. Following the MoS report last week about Russia taking ‘comfort’ from Sir Craig’s stance, CNN reported that WADA would ‘consider banning countries for doping’ and carried an interview where Sir Craig was quoted saying: ‘The fact that this is being discussed as a potential sanction is not entirely unhelpful ... It’s a very, very serious sanction because it tends to be a pretty blunt instrument. Maybe that’s required. I’m not sure.’

The MoS asked WADA to clarify Sir Craig’s stance and WADA replied they had ‘no jurisdiction over potential “Nation Bans”.’

WADA added: ‘Regarding the WADA President’s comments in the recent CNN interview, these were taken out of context. This was an hour-long interview edited down to 2.5 minutes.’

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/article-3207651/WADA-president-Sir-Craig-Reedie-s-comfort-email-Russia-s-senior-drug-buster-reveals-toothless-clampdown-doping.html#ixzz4eXA7xt1u>

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