

*The IAAF Medical & Anti-Doping Department*

**To:**

Hannah Wentworth  
Senior Committee Assistant  
Culture Media and Sport Committee  
E-mail: [wentworthh@parliament.uk](mailto:wentworthh@parliament.uk)

Monaco 7 September 2015

**Ref: Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee: 'Blood Doping in Athletics'**

Dear Madam,

It has been brought to the IAAF's attention that a Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee has been convened for tomorrow, 8 September 2015, to hear evidence in public on the subject of 'Blood Doping in Athletics'.

The IAAF notes that the background to the hearing is stated to be as follows:

*"In August the Sunday Times published a series of articles commenting on a database of test results from athletes taken between 2001 and 2012, which its experts argued showed abnormal results for a number of endurance runners. The Committee will explore the allegations (which have been strenuously rebutted by the International Association of Athletics Federations) that the IAAF failed to follow up test results from some prominent athletes which raised suspicions that blood doping had occurred".*

The IAAF would respectfully draw the Select Committee's attention to the fact that the same allegations are currently the subject of another investigation that is being conducted by an Independent Commission established by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA): <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/media/news/2015-08/wada-alarmed-by-widespread-doping-allegations-against-international-athletics>. The IAAF understands that the Independent Commission is due to report on its findings shortly.

Notwithstanding, the IAAF is highly respectful of the Select Committee's work and welcomes any informed investigation into the threat of blood doping in Athletics, indeed doping in any sport.

As the Select Committee embarks upon its work, it is extremely important to understand that the database in question contains over 12,000 blood samples and related medical and biological data from a very significant number of athletes. The database was confiscated from the IAAF without consent and there is currently a police investigation into the circumstances in which it subsequently came into the possession of a number of journalists.

It is not clear whether the members of the Select Committee are themselves in possession of the database but the IAAF is aware that one of the witnesses who has been called to give evidence to the Select Committee, Dr Michael Ashenden, has received a copy of the database, or a substantial part of it, from a German journalist and that he has since been retained by the *Sunday Times* to comment on the data in it.

Dr Ashenden is aware that the information contained in the database is by its nature private and highly confidential and that a duty of confidence is owed both to the IAAF and to the athletes whose information is contained in it. Dr Ashenden has himself gone on record to say that he sought undertakings from the *Sunday Times* that his opinions on individual athletes would never be disclosed.

WADA has itself issued an official statement in relation to the leaked database as follows: "*WADA is committed to protecting the confidentiality of athletes....WADA deplores the manner in which the data was obtained, leaked to the media and analysed... To suggest or imply doping with respect to any athlete whose data is contained within the database is, at the very least, irresponsible and potentially libellous*": <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/media/news/2015-08/wadas-independent-commission-to-urgently-launch-investigation-into-doping-0>.

The IAAF does not in any way seek to restrict or limit the Select Committee's work but respectfully points out that it is of critical importance that no names or individual blood data or results are discussed in the context of a public hearing or otherwise in the course of proceedings before the Committee. To do so could otherwise cause irreparable damage to the careers and reputations of thousands of innocent athletes, which the IAAF is certain is not the Select Committee's intention.

We would be grateful if the contents of this letter could be drawn to the attention of the members of the Select Committee either in advance, or at the outset, of tomorrow's hearing, as well as brought to the attention of each of the witnesses who are due to give evidence before it, in particular, Dr Ashenden.

The IAAF wishes to thank the Select Committee in advance for its work and remains available to assist it in its deliberations in any way that it considers to be appropriate.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Capdevielle', written over a horizontal line.

Thomas Capdevielle  
Anti-Doping Senior Manager /Acting Operations Director