

TOPIC 10 – Sports Integrity and Safe Sport

Date: 6 December 2024 (Day Three)

Speakers: Ms Debbie Low

Ms Lorraine Lafreniere

Mrs Sonia Boland

Prof Yannis Pitsiladis

Ms Justine Crawford



Ms Debbie Low

- Chief Executive Officer (Canadian Sport Institute Ontario), Executive Vice President (Association of Sport Performance Centres)

As President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Sport Institute Ontario since November 2005. As a strategic thinker with a passion for sport, **Ms Low** led the creation of Ontario's first facility-based sport institute as a legacy of the Toronto 2015 Pan/Para Pan American Games. Debbie has successfully grown the organization from five full-time staff to over 50 full-time staff across three locations, delivering best-in-class programs and services to Ontario's next generation of athletes and Canada's Olympic and Paralympic athletes and coaches.

Debbie's leadership in the development and delivery of sport programs in Ontario includes her previous roles as Executive Director of Parasport Ontario and Director of Sport for Toronto's 2008 Olympic Bid. In addition, Debbie worked for the Ontario Government in the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation working within the Multi-Sport Games unit. The desire to empower Canadians who live with a disability led Debbie to roles as Team Canada's Chef de Mission for the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games and Assistant Chef de Mission for the Athens 2004

Paralympic Games. She strongly believes in the importance of volunteerism and has served on numerous boards and committees in leadership positions including: the Canadian Paralympic Committee; the Association of Sport Performance Centres; Ontario Sport Network; the International Paralympic Committee’s Games Committee; and as a Selection Committee member of the Toronto Sport Hall of Honour and the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame.

Presentation Abstract: “Coaching Safe Sport Considerations in High Performance Training Environments and Facilities”

As a member of the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network, the Canadian Sport Institute Ontario (CSIO), in partnership with the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) will explore challenges, risks and solutions in offering services to national and international teams within HP Training Centres. CSIO and CAC will explore the areas of collaboration with an emphasis on coaching to mitigate risks and maximize safe sport environments within Canada.



Ms Lorraine Lafreniere

- Chief Executive Officer (Coaching Association of Canada)

As CEO of the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC), **Ms Lafreniere** leads Canada’s Coaching Education Partnership with the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) which is complemented by initiatives in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Safe Sport along with the profession of coaching.

Her career spans more than 30 years within the national sport system which includes roles as CEO of Canoe Kayak Canada, Cycling Canada as well as leadership roles with the Canadian Olympic Committee and Canadian Paralympic Committee.

Lorraine's belief in the Canadian Sport System has led her to engage in the Federal, Provincial-Territorial Governments (FPT) by sitting on various FPT Sport Committees and working groups focused on Good Governance, Safety and Coaching. In addition, she was part of the Minister's Gender Equity in Sport advisory in 2018. She is currently an external advisory member for the Tannenbaum Institute for Science in Sport (University of Toronto).

Internationally, Ms Lafreniere is a Board Member of the International Council for Coaching Excellence where she Chairs the Ethics Committee, and she also sits on the Education Commission for Panam Sports. She is also a member of the Singapore's Coach SG Safe Sport Advisory Panel.

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Mrs Sonia Boland

- National Wellbeing Manager (Australian Institute of Sport)

Mrs Boland considers herself a public health policy enthusiast at heart. With over 13 years' experience in global health policy with the Australian Government, which included engaging with the World Health Organization, a move to New Zealand in 2018 provided Sonia with the opportunity to explore a new career path in sport.

While in New Zealand, Sonia established High Performance Sport New Zealand's Women in High Performance Sport program and helped shape the development of HPSNZ's current wellbeing strategy, transferring her knowledge and experience from health into the sport sector.

Mrs Boland is now the National Wellbeing Manager at the Australian Institute of Sport, where she leads a team who design and deliver programs and services that support the wellbeing of athletes, coaches, and staff across Australia's HP sport system.

Mrs Boland has always had an interest in the external factors that impact on an individual's health and wellbeing, recognising that the environments and systems in which people live, and work are inextricably linked to their ability to thrive and perform in all areas of life. This remains a key focus for Sonia as she continues to collaborate with colleagues and system partners to bring Australia's vision of 'win well' to life.

Presentation Abstract: "A journey to Win Well – Australia's high-performance sport ambition"

In December 2022, Australia launched their new, co-designed and whole-of-system, High Performance 2032+ Sport System Strategy. This strategy has become more commonly known as

the *Win Well Strategy* and recognises that while we continue to set ambitious performance goals, these need to be aligned with High Performance cultures and behaviours that are safe, fair and supportive.

Central to the *Win Well Strategy* is the approach to holistic athlete development and the wellbeing of all people (athletes, coaches, and staff). This recognises the wellbeing of individuals and teams, as an enabler of repeated performance and sustained success. This ambition is further amplified through the Win Well Pledge, a genuine commitment from leaders in the system to bring the vision of win well to life and to hold us accountable for the performance cultures we create.

To better understand the wellbeing of athletes, coaches and staff, and the optimum environmental conditions that enable individuals and teams to thrive, the Australian Sport's Commission, through the Australian Institute of Sport, is developing a Wellbeing Framework specific to the Australian context. This Framework takes a short, medium, and long-term approach to tracking the improvements in wellbeing in daily performance environments.



Prof Yannis Pitsiladis

- Professor (Department of Sport, Physical Education and Health, Hong Kong Baptist University)

Prof Pitsiladis has an established history of research into the importance of lifestyle and genetics for human health and performance. His current research interest is in exploring human enhancement technologies applicable to health and disease with particular focus on responsible paradigms. His most recent research is funded by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and involves the application of “omics” (i.e. genomics, transcriptomics, metabolomics and proteomics) and artificial intelligence to the detection of drugs in sport with particular reference to blood

doping and testosterone. Yannis is a member of the IOC Medical and Scientific Commission, a member of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Scientific Commission of the International Sports Medicine Federation (FIMS), a member of the Scientific and Education Commission of the European Federation of Sports Medicine Associations (EFSMA), a member of WADA's Health Medical Research Committee (HMRC), and is a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). He has published over 250 scientific papers, written and edited a number of books and has featured in numerous documentaries (e.g. "Kipchoge: The Last Milestone" is a 2021 documentary film directed by Jake Scott and executive produced by Ridley Scott; "Enhanced" – Documentary Film, 2018. Produced by award winning director Alex Gibney) and popular books (e.g. The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance; Bounce: The Myth of Talent and the Power of Practice).

Presentation Abstract: "Drugs, sex, and enhancement: Threats to sports integrity at the Olympics"

The Olympic Games face at least three major threats to their integrity: doping, gender issues, and performance enhancement. Doping, despite decades of anti-doping efforts led by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), remains prevalent due to sophisticated methods like blood doping and micro-doses of erythropoietin (rHuEpo), which evade detection. The Athlete Biological Passport (ABP), while a significant tool, has limitations, prompting calls for advanced "omics" technologies to revolutionize anti-doping science by identifying molecular markers of doping.

Gender inclusion presents challenges as sports traditionally follow binary male and female classifications. The participation of transgender and athletes with differences of sex development (DSD) raises fairness concerns, particularly regarding the

impact of testosterone levels on performance. While some sports federations have banned trans women and athletes with DSD from competing, more longitudinal and sport-specific studies are required to establish fair and inclusive policies, supported by cutting-edge biomarkers and molecular tools.

The Enhanced Games, an upcoming competition allowing unrestricted use of performance-enhancing substances, further complicates matters. Critics warn of health risks and exploitation but acknowledge the potential for advancing anti-doping science by studying doping methods and their effects.

Restoring fairness and integrity to the Olympics requires clear, sport-specific definitions of fairness, inclusion, and safety. Stakeholders must agree on enforceable rules supported by innovative research and technology. The Paris 2024 Olympics highlight the urgent need for a unified approach to address these existential threats and protect the essence of “true” sport.



Ms Justine Crawford

- Director Major Sporting Events & Australian Government Partnership (Sport Integrity Australia)

Ms Crawford has experience across a range of sport integrity areas, having worked in regulatory and law enforcement agencies in both Australia and the UK. In 2010, Justine joined the newly formed UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) to develop the agencies intelligence capability prior to the London 2012 Olympics. On returning to Australia, Justine joined the Australian Federal Police (AFP) where her roles included providing strategic intelligence support to the Fraud and Anti-Corruption portfolio, and managing a multi-agency intelligence team supporting organised crime investigations. Throughout her time at the AFP, Justine was the point of contact for domestic and international partners on sport integrity issues. Following the establishment of Sport Integrity Australia in 2020, Justine has been working in roles relating to integrity capability and

strategy development, and is currently Director Major Sporting Events & Australian Government Partnerships. Justine was the inaugural Commonwealth Games Australia Integrity Liaison Officer at Birmingham 2022.

Presentation Abstract: “A journey to Win Well – Australia’s high performance sport ambition”

In December 2022, Australia launched their new, co-designed and whole-of-system, High Performance 2032+ Sport System Strategy. This strategy has become more commonly known as the *Win Well Strategy* and recognises the importance of pursuing ambitious performance goals, while ensuring they are supported by a High Performance culture that prioritises safety, fairness and the well-being of all involved.

A key component of the *Win Well Strategy* is aligning and embedding safe sport practices and integrity principles across the High Performance system. Sport Integrity Australia works closely with high performance sport sector stakeholders, to help build integrity capabilities, responses and actions that promote positive behaviours in sport and foster environments that are safe, fair and inclusive for all. The agency delivers a range of policies, programs and education designed to prevent sport integrity issues, and nationally coordinate the response if matters do arise. This session will provide practical examples of how integrity frameworks are embedded into the planning and delivery of pinnacle events, in collaboration with Games Delivery partners.