

# Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee

Questions on Notice – Wednesday, 12 June 2013  
Canberra, ACT

## Inquiry into the practice of sports science in Australia

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**SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**Inquiry into the practice of sports science in Australia**

**Public Hearing Wednesday, 12 June 2013**

**Questions Taken on Notice – DRALGAS**

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**1. HANSARD, PG 9**

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**Senator DI NATALE:** I would like to bring things back to the terms of reference of the inquiry and talk about the practice of sports science and the challenges of regulating it. It is obvious that there are a range of dimensions to the problem, and I imagine we could spend a lot of time talking about all those dimensions. One of them is clearly the issue of sports science and the way it is governed, administered and practised here in Australia. One of the difficulties, just to provide some context, is the problem of definition. It is clearly a recurrent theme through the submissions. In fact, I think the department expressed some concern about the current body that accredits sports science, ESSA. It said that it was worried that the definition was too broad to differentiate the level of skills and therefore the appropriate level of accreditation. So that is a challenge. I am interested in where you are heading in the way you would like to see the practice of sports science defined—from the broad practice through to the different levels of specialisation within the practice. Perhaps you could just give me an indication of where you are heading with that.

**Mr Eccles:** One thing we would be very happy to provide you is some early work we have done looking at the various professions and professional bodies that oversee those professions and the extent to which they are accredited and registered. It paints the interesting picture that sports science is a broad church with a range of people from various colleges and various affiliations with various regulatory standards. We believe that there is a need for some form of consistency across all the professional bodies.

It is potentially inevitable that there is going to be required to some kind of catch-all for those who are not covered by a current professional organisation. We know that the physios are covered by the Australian Physiotherapy Association; sports physicians are covered by the Australasian College of Sports Physicians. We would expect those to have suitable standards, suitable

accreditation processes, ethical guidelines and ethical standards that their members are expected to adhere to.

I think it is also inevitable that there will be people who are going to be working with athletes who may not be covered by a college. We believe that a mechanism needs to be put in place that ensures that they are operating at a suitable standard and are held accountable, whether or not that is through a new body or that onus is put on sports to ensure that they define what those ethical standards are. For example, if Dr Hughes was to be working for sports clubs he would be covered by the Australasian College of Sports Physicians. If it was someone else, they might not be covered by a college and then the sporting code might require them to meet particular standards. These are the range of options—

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## 2. HANSARD, PG 13

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**Dr Hughes:** If I could reassure you, the supplements that the Australian Institute of Sport would permit athletes to take have no untoward health effects.

**CHAIR:** No, I am talking about ones that they do not permit them to take. For the people like the young bloke who is 17, who turns up to the footy club and they say, 'You take this, boy.' When he is 45, what is going to happen to him? That is what I want to know. You might take that on notice.

**Senator STERLE:** You could become a senator for New South Wales.

**Mr Eccles:** Part of it is that tests have not been done to determine that.

**CHAIR:** They bloody well should be. Take the money off them, as Senator Edwards said.

**Mr Eccles:** Who are they going to subject to the tests?

**CHAIR:** Take the money off them and you spend that money telling people what the outcome is down the track.

**Mr Eccles:** Some of the substances cannot be proven to have negative effects, because you are not going to test them on humans.

**CHAIR:** I cannot believe that you have not done it.

**Mr Eccles:** You cannot test it. We will take it on notice.

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**Response**

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The Department of Regional Australia Local Government Arts and Sport (DRALGAS) tabled at the hearing a list of possible professions that may fall under the broader job description of 'sports scientist,' a copy is at Attachment A. This list is by no means comprehensive, but serves as an indication of the broad number of professions who may be involved in a sports science department. The list also includes any relevant bodies for registration or accreditation that may apply to the different professions identified.

## Attachment A

Professionals who may be involved in a 'sports science' department

Profession	Professional body	Accreditation of University or Tertiary Courses/ Overseas Practitioner assessment.	Registration
Sports physician (doctor)	Australian College of Sports Physicians	Yes, by Australian Medical Council. Undergrad/post grad medical course. Specialist training.	YES. APHRA. Both at graduate medical practitioner level and at specialist level – training conducted by College. Protection of title: "Specialist Sports Physician".
Physiotherapist	Australian Physiotherapy Association	Australian Physiotherapy Council	YES. APHRA. At graduate level.
Psychologist – Sport and Exercise	Australian Psychology Society (assesses overseas practitioners) Also runs 'colleges' including sport and exercise	Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (Universities only)	YES. APHRA. At graduate practitioner level. Area of endorsement 'sports and exercise' – requires masters or PhD.
Sports Dietician	Sports Dietitians Australia	Dietetics Association of Australia. Undergrad/post grad courses. No recognition of specialties.	NO. Must be a member of DAA to join Sports Dietitians Australia plus extra course completion required (run by SDA).
Chiropractor		Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia	YES. APHRA. Graduate level.
Sports Scientist	Exercise and Sports Science Australia. Full membership as 'sports scientist' requires undergrad degree in exercise/sport science plus 500 hours supervised practice.	NO. Although ESSA says will commence from 2014	NO.
Performance	None in Australia.	NO. Although ESSA may cover relevant	NO.

Analyst/Biomechanics	International Society for Performance Analysis in Sport (UK based).	undergrad degrees from 2014	
Strength and Conditioning Coach	Australian Strength and Conditioning Association (No membership qualifications apparent).	NO.	NO.
Coach (Senior Coach, assistant coach, senior assistant coach, development coach, development welfare coach etc.)	No specific professional body apparent in Australia aside from ASCA.	NO. ASC provides an online education system (called 'accreditation') providing three tiers of education. Service Skills Australia (Training and Skills Council) provides a VET training package in Sport, Fitness and Recreation.	NO.

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## Response

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There are a large number of substances that an athlete may choose to take which are sometimes contained in supplements and may be banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency. These substances may be obtained both within Australia and from overseas.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has responsibility for monitoring the quality, safety and efficacy of therapeutic goods in Australia. Therapeutic goods, including medicines and medical devices, must be entered on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) before they can be lawfully supplied in Australia, unless they are specifically exempt or excluded.



The majority of supplements utilised by athletes would be determined to be medicines which are 'therapeutic goods'.

Medicines are divided into two categories, of either 'listed' or 'registered'. Listed medicines include items such as vitamins and registered medicines are either prescription or over-the-counter medicines.

The manufacturer or supplier of listed and registered medicines is required to prove that the substance is safe for use. In most instances prescription medicines have to go through extensive and lengthy periods of clinical trials before they can be determined to be safe for use. Further information can be found on the TGA website, a fact sheet is at [Attachment B](#).

However, goods which are obtained from overseas are unlikely to have been assessed and tested for safety, quality and efficacy by the TGA. In addition, the TGA evaluates substances for inclusion on the ARTG based on therapeutic use. If an athlete chooses to use a substance, such as steroids, outside of therapeutic purpose this usage may not have been determined to be safe by the TGA.

Some research has been conducted internationally and domestically on the effects of using various substances for performance and image enhancing purposes. That research would indicate that there may be some significant long term health effects for some substances depending on dosage and duration of use. For example, there are many suspected heart failure deaths as a result of usage of EPO by professional athletes. This kind of usage would be outside of therapeutic purpose and clinical trials of the type described above for registered substances could be considered unethical.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Ageing**  
**Therapeutic Goods Administration**

## **Medicines and TGA classifications**

**22 October 2012**

Australia has a two-tiered system for the regulation of medicines, including complementary medicines:

- Higher risk medicines must be registered on the ARTG, which involves individually evaluating the quality, safety and effectiveness of the product.
- Lower risk medicines containing pre-approved, low-risk ingredients and that make limited claims can be listed on the ARTG.

Within the regulatory framework, medicines are classified as either registered or listed:

- **Registered medicines**
  - Registered medicines are assessed by the TGA for quality, safety and efficacy.
  - All prescription medicines are registered.
  - Most over-the-counter medicines are registered.
  - Some complementary medicines are registered.
- **Listed medicines**
  - Listed medicines are assessed by the TGA for quality and safety but not efficacy.
  - Some over-the-counter medicines are listed.
  - Most complementary medicines are listed.

### **Assistance in preparing applications**

Professional agents are available to assist in the preparation of applications for listing or registering medicines in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. These can be found through ARCS Australia or the relevant industry association. See: Regulatory affairs consultants.

Please note that the TGA makes no representations as to the suitability or performance of consultants listed by ARCS or the relevant industry association.

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**Content last updated:** Monday, 22 October 2012

**Content last reviewed:** Monday, 22 October 2012

**Web page last updated:** Monday, 22 October 2012

**URL:** <http://www.tga.gov.au/industry/regulation-basics-medicines-classifications.htm>

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**Questions Taken on Notice - COMPPS**

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**1. HANSARD, PG 18**

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**Senator DI NATALE:** Just to follow on from the issue of salary caps—this is a slightly different direction—it seems that one of the problems we have is the question of, particularly, wealthy clubs who, by virtue of the salary cap, have huge amounts of money to spend on their football departments. So some of the people who have been employed—for example, some of the sports scientists at top-level clubs—are on \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year, because we now have this huge amount of money sloshing around in football departments that was not available before; you used to go and see if you could buy the best player. Is there any thought given to putting a salary cap on the football departments so we do not get this arms race outside the actual player list?

**Mr Speed:** The simple answer is that I do not know. I think it would vary from code to code. I do not think there is money sloshing around in football departments. There is a lot more money in football departments—

**Senator DI NATALE:** Our club could do with a bit more, I am sure!

**Mr Speed:** I would have to take that as a question on notice.

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**Reply to Question on Notice**

I am advised that professional football codes undertake a range of club benchmarking activities. The suggestion of placing a salary cap on football departments has been raised in the past. The football codes do not believe that it would achieve the outcomes outlined in the Senator's question.

Malcolm Speed

Executive Director COMPPS.

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**Questions Taken on Notice – NIN**

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**1. HANSARD, PG 22**

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**Senator EDWARDS:** Between Queensland and the Northern Territory, have you had any examples in recent history of noncompliance with your drug code?

**Dr Ford:** Not at the Northern Territory Institute of Sport.

**Mr Greenwood:** One of our athletics athletes I believe is still under question as to what exactly happened.

**Senator EDWARDS:** There is an inquiry going on in Queensland?

**Mr Greenwood:** I think it is being run by Athletics Australia.

**Senator EDWARDS:** Is that a scholarship-holder through the Queensland Academy of Sport?

**Mr Greenwood:** He was a scholarship-holder a couple of years ago. I am not sure if the breach was while he was under that scholarship.

**Senator EDWARDS:** He would have received taxpayer funds to pursue his sporting career, which presumably would have provided him with financial reward?

**Mr Greenwood:** Yes, I believe so.

**Senator EDWARDS:** Certainly when he developed all of his skills, the taxpayer would have paid for it?

**Mr Greenwood:** Yes.

**Senator EDWARDS:** On notice, can you give me an update on that matter?

**Mr Greenwood:** I can certainly look into it.

**Senator EDWARDS:** It maybe that you provide it confidentially if it is an ongoing investigation. Thank you.

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Our Ref: CTS 14328/13

Office of the  
Director-General

Department of  
**National Parks, Recreation,  
Sport and Racing**

Senator the Honourable Bill Heffernan  
Chair  
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs  
and Transport References Committee  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: [rrat.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:rrat.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Senator Heffernan

### **SENATE INQUIRY INTO THE PRACTICE OF SPORTS SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA**

I refer to the above Inquiry and I am writing to you in relation to the appearance of Mr Daniel Greenwood on 12 June 2013 and the Question on Notice that was directed to him in relation to a previous Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) scholarship holder.

I am aware that Mr Greenwood appeared at the Committee hearing on 12 June 2013, on behalf of the QAS, Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (the department) in relation to the National Institute Network submission that was made to the Committee. I am also aware that Mr Greenwood has made other submissions to the Inquiry in his own personal capacity.

I was made aware of the Question on Notice and I am advised that neither the QAS nor Mr Greenwood have any information in relation to the subject of the question. I am further advised that the matter referred to is one being considered and managed by Athletics Australia.

The QAS is keen to cooperate and assist the Committee in any way it can, and will respond promptly to any requirement issued by the Committee to the department.

I hope this information is of assistance. Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Mr Bennett King, Executive Director, QAS on telephone \_\_\_\_\_ or via email \_\_\_\_\_

Yours sincerely

John Glaister  
**Director-General**

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