

Official

Ref: FOI-231

Sent via email only: [REDACTED]

25 July 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

1. Thank you for your email of 14 May 2019 in which you requested information from UK Anti-Doping ('UKAD') under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'). Your request was for information relating to testing statistics and sanctions imposed in Premier League football. Specifically, your request was as follows:

*'Please provide me with the following information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.*

- a) *The number of anti-doping tests carried out by UKAD on Premier League footballers each season for the last four full seasons.*
  - b) *The number of anti-doping tests which triggered an adverse reaction in each of these seasons.*
  - c) *The substances which were discovered in tests which triggered adverse reactions, and how many times each was detected in each of the four seasons.*
  - d) *The number of sanctions taken against players in each of these seasons.*
  - e) *The frequency of each level of sanction which was enforced.'*
2. In a reply email the same day, UKAD requested further information from you using terms defined in the UK Anti-Doping Rules ('the Rules'), namely:
    - a. whether the term 'adverse reaction' related to an Adverse Analytical Finding ('AAF') only, or also Atypical Findings which did not result in an AAF; and

- b. whether the terms ‘sanction’ and ‘the frequency of each level of sanction’ related to periods of Ineligibility and the frequencies of periods of Ineligibility (that is, two- or four-year periods).
3. By reply email the same day, you confirmed that your request related to:
  - a. AAFs only; and
  - b. Any Consequence for an AAF and the number of times that each Consequence was enforced.
4. The above terms are mirrored substantively FA Anti-Doping Regulations (‘the FA Rules’), however please note that the FA Rules adopt the terms ‘penalties’ and ‘suspension’ in place of Consequences and Ineligibility.

### **Summary of Response**

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5. UKAD is disclosing all of the information in parts b) to e) of your request.
6. UKAD is not disclosing some of the information in part a) of your request. The detail of the basis of this response is set out below.

### **Part a) of your request**

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7. UKAD confirms that it holds the information requested and is disclosing the number of tests for the 2018-19 season. However, we are withholding the remainder of the information under the exemption provided in section 21 of the Act.
8. For the purposes of its testing program, UKAD defines a Premier League season as the period from 1 June to 31 May the following year. The number of tests carried out for the 2018-19 season, being the period of 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019, was 1770.
9. Please note that the meaning of a “test” is any successful attempt to test a single player. If multiple samples (blood and/or urine) are collected from a player in a single Sample Collection Session, this is counted as two successful tests. The figure provided (1770 tests) include tests conducted by UKAD and any sub-contracted sample collection agency on its own behalf (which includes contracted testing for the FA). However, tests on Premier League players conducted during their participation in the national squad system have not been included.

10. With respect to the preceding three full seasons, this information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to Section 21 of the Act, being reasonably accessible to you by other means.
11. Section 21(1) of the Act states:  
  
*(1) Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information.*
12. The number of tests conducted by UKAD on Premier League players for the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons is available, free of charge, on our website (refer FOI-188 and FOI-199, available [here](#)).

### **Part b) of your request**

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13. UKAD confirms that it holds the information you have requested. UKAD is disclosing the number of Adverse Analytical Findings ('AAFs') for the past four full Premier League seasons in the table below.
14. Pursuant to the FA Rules, an AAF includes the presence of a Prohibited Substance, or evidence of the use of Prohibited Method, contained in the WADA Prohibited List ('the Prohibited List')<sup>1</sup>.
15. As outlined in section 6 of the Prohibited List, certain substances are only prohibited 'In-Competition', which is defined in the FA Rules as being the period from midnight the day of a match until the end of sample collection. However, the FA also prohibits use of some of these substances Out-of-Competition under its Social Drugs Policy Regulations, and publishes the number of breaches of this policy on its website, available [here](#).
16. For the purposes of the table below, please be advised that these 'social drug findings' have not been included as they are not considered an AAF according to the Prohibited List. Please also be aware that one player may be the subject of more than one AAF in a season, where he is taking a prohibited substance (permitted by a TUE) over a period during which he is tested on more than one occasion; this is reflected in the figures below.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/wada\\_2019\\_english\\_prohibited\\_list.pdf](https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/wada_2019_english_prohibited_list.pdf)

### Premier League players – Number of AAFs

Season	Number of AAFs	Number of players subject to an AAF
2015 – 16	0	0
2016 – 17	2	2
2017 – 18	6	4
2018 - 19	8	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	16	11

17. For the purpose of the above figures, please note that not all samples collected during the 2018-19 have been analysed. As such, this figure is subject to change in the future.
18. Please also note that the detection of an AAF in a sample does not automatically lead to an Anti-Doping Rule Violation ('ADRV') under the FA Rules for a number of reasons. For example, an athlete who returns an AAF may have a Therapeutic Use Exemption ('TUE') which permits athletes to use a prohibited substance or prohibited method on Prohibited List when such use or administration is necessary to address a legitimate medical requirement<sup>2</sup>. Alternatively, an athlete may be able to show that a prohibited substance was ingested through a permitted route (as outlined in the Prohibited List) or derived from the ingestion of a substance that is itself permitted (for example, morphine derived from the ingestion of codeine).

### Part c) of your request

19. UKAD confirms that it holds the information you have requested. We are disclosing the information in the table below. As outlined at paragraph 15 above, the figures for the 2018-19 season are subject to change once all samples have been analysed.

Substance	2015 – 16	2016 – 17	2017 – 18	2018 - 19	Grand Total
Amphetamine		1			1
Indapamide				2	2
Methylphenidate			3	4	7
Morphine			1	1	2
Ritalinic Acid			1		1
Triamcinolone		1	1	1	3

<sup>2</sup> Further information about the TUE system is available on the UKAD website [here](#).

### Parts d) and e) of your request

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20. UKAD confirms that it holds the information you have requested. There were no ADRVs committed by Premier League players during each of the 2015/16, 2016/7, 2017/18 or 2018/19 seasons. As such, no Consequences were imposed during each period.

### Conclusion

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21. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Philip Bunt, Chief Operating Officer, UK Anti-Doping, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AE. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any further communications.
22. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "UK Anti-Doping".

**UK Anti-Doping**