

## SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT REPORT: GEORGIA RUGBY UNION

1. Following a suspicious steroid profile being returned by a member of the Georgian national rugby union team in late 2023, World Rugby initiated an investigation into possible Anti-Doping Rule Violations committed by players in the Georgia men's national team and related staff. That investigation was carried out in parallel with a WADA investigation into the Georgian National Anti-Doping Organisation.
2. World Rugby instructed an independent review of the evidence gathered in its investigation to determine whether the Georgian Rugby Union ("**the Union**") has a case to answer in respect of breaches of World Rugby Bye-Laws and Regulations ("**the Regulations**").
3. In summary, the investigation revealed that six players ("**the Players**") engaged in swapping of urine samples to avoid the risk of testing positive for substances that they believed were prohibited, the former men's first team doctor ("**the Doctor**") provided advance notice of testing and other members of staff arguably were or ought to have been aware that such advance notice was provided. The investigation resulted in the Players and the Doctor being individually sanctioned.
4. In light of the factual findings, the potential breaches by the Union focused on two strands: (i) the Union's responsibility for the acts of its players and staff and the disrepute caused to the Game; and (ii) the Union's own conduct in relation to its education of players and staff.
5. Regarding the Union's responsibility for the conduct of its players and staff:
  - 5.1. Regulation 18.3 provides that "Misconduct" includes any conduct that "*brings or has the potential to bring the Game and/or any of its constituent bodies, World Rugby... into disrepute*" and Regulation 18.5 provides that "*Unions are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their Players and all Persons within their jurisdiction. Unions, Players and Persons must conduct themselves in a disciplined and sporting manner and ensure that they do not commit any act(s) of Misconduct*". The Union has a case to answer under Regulation 18.5 given the factual findings and in circumstances where there it can be said (not

least from the media coverage) that the conduct has brought or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.

5.2. Consideration was also given to whether the Union has a case to answer under other provisions of Regulation 21. However, the position here is less straightforward and it was concluded that this would add little to a charge under Regulation 18.5.

6. In relation to the Union's approach to education: evidence was provided that some anti-doping training had been provided to the Players and the Doctor. Given that this does not appear to be inadequate comparatively, it is not considered that there is a case to answer. However, the fact that a number of players and staff failed to comply with their anti-doping obligations suggests that more needs to be done. It is recommended that World Rugby work with the Union to improve the anti-doping education programme.