

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Powerlifter suspended for Methylhexaneamine Anti-Doping Violation**

The Sports Tribunal suspended powerlifter, Damon Tafatu, for 2 years for an anti-doping violation. He tested positive for the prohibited substance 1, 3 dimethylpentylamine, also known as methylhexaneamine, while competing in the New Zealand Powerlifting Championships.

The mandatory penalty for this violation is two years' suspension. However the suspension period can be less than two years if the athlete can establish:

- how the prohibited substance got in his or her system and
- that the taking of the prohibited substance was not intended to enhance his or her sports performance.

Mr Tafatu admitted the violation. He said he took two supplements on the day of the competition to provide him with an energy boost. He also said he took another supplement the night before the competition to help stay awake when driving several hours to the city where the competition was held. He didn't carry out any research or make inquiries about the three supplements prior to consuming them. He said he believed they were "legal supplements" that he was allowed to consume in competition.

After the positive test result, he did some research on the Internet on these supplements and claimed that the source of the positive test must have been due to taking the particular supplement that he consumed the night before the competition, which lists the prohibited substance in its ingredients.

At the competition, he declared on the doping form that he had taken the other two supplements but didn't declare the particular supplement taken the day before. He said he thought it was only necessary to list supplements consumed on the day of the competition. However, the form states "List any prescription or non-prescription, medications and supplements taken over the past three days". In an earlier communication to the Tribunal he stated that this supplement was taken "four days before competition" and made no mention that he had taken this substance the night before competition.

The Tribunal concluded that there were too many inconsistencies in Mr Tafatu's evidence, to enable it to accept on the balance of probabilities that this supplement was the source of the positive test. These inconsistencies meant his evidence couldn't be relied upon to satisfy how the prohibited substance entered his body and therefore he wasn't eligible for a lesser penalty than the mandatory two years.

The Tribunal suspended Mr Tafatu for two years, commencing from the date of his provisional suspension on 5 December 2012. His competition results were also disqualified.

The decision in this case is available for download from the website of the Sports Tribunal ([www.sporttribunal.org.nz](http://www.sporttribunal.org.nz)). See *Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Damon Tafatu* (ST 07/12). Copies can also be obtained directly from Brent Ellis, Registrar, Sports Tribunal of New Zealand (telephone: 0800 55 66 80; e-mail: [info@sporttribunal.org.nz](mailto:info@sporttribunal.org.nz)).