

# Umpires Suspend Cooperation

For Immediate Release

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## Umpires Suspend Cooperation with MLB Over Background Investigations Demand That Commissioner's Office Confers in Good Faith

Washington, D.C., August 6, 2007 — Today, Lamell McMorris, spokesman for the World Umpires Association (WUA), issued the following statement in response to Major League Baseball's recent call to investigate the league's umpires. WUA representatives met with Commissioner Bud Selig's office on Thursday to discuss the proposed investigation and immediately decided to suspend cooperation until league officials take measures to ensure the safety of umpires and preserve the level of officiating during post-season play.

"The umpires believe that the integrity of the game is paramount and understand the need for thorough security and personal background investigations in light of recent allegations of wrongdoing affecting the National Basketball Association. However, the umpires have decided not to sanction the league's decision to launch background investigations until they come back to the negotiating table to answer critical questions regarding the process and use of the information."

"We are committed to fulfilling our obligation to maintain the integrity of the game, but Major League Baseball also has a responsibility to do what's in the best interest of the sport and its fans — and that is to not engage in knee-jerk, misguided witch hunts against the umpires without fair negotiations. The league hasn't investigated the umpires in the past thirty years for good reason — our guys are of the highest ethical standing."

Last week, Commissioner Selig's office indicated that the league will initiate background checks of each major league and minor league umpire for the first time since they were hired, in some cases more than 30 years ago. This announcement came on the heels of unconfirmed news reports that an NBA referee may have gambled on the outcome of professional basketball games and provided information to others regarding such games. Major League Baseball is facing the same public scrutiny of its own practices and is feeling pressure to investigate umpires.

As a result of MLB's unwillingness to negotiate, the Governing Board of the WUA has determined that, until further notice, its members will no longer cooperate with the league on any matter that is not contractually required.

### About the World Umpires Association

The World Umpires Association represents Major League Baseball's 70 full-time umpires. You can learn more about these trustworthy individuals at [www.worldumpires.com](http://www.worldumpires.com).