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THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2006

## FIS FACT SHEET

### Supporting Information on FIS Medical and Anti-Doping Activities, especially concerning Naturally Elevated Haemoglobin Levels

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This fact sheet is intended to provide clarifying information on several topics of interest related to the FIS Medical and Anti-Doping Activities, specifically the FIS Blood Testing Programme and Dispensation for Naturally Elevated Haemoglobin Levels.

#### 1. Organisation of FIS Medical and Anti-Doping Activities

Since 2001, the FIS Medical and Anti-Doping Activities have been divided into two separate programmes. While the FIS Medical Committee is responsible for the FIS Injury Surveillance System (FIS ISS), compilation of guidelines for medical services at FIS events and support of the FIS Disciplines in medical questions and several other topic areas, the FIS Anti-Doping Programme is an independent programme under which the FIS Anti-Doping activities, including in-and out-of-competition testing, take place. Since 2002, Professor Bengt Saltin (SWE) acted as FIS Anti-Doping Expert, while also serving as Chairman of the FIS Medical Committee, thereby unifying both of these positions in a single persona for the past four years.

Following Professor Saltin's decision to step down from both positions in May 2006, the FIS Council nominated Dr. Hubert Hörterer (GER) as new Chairman of the FIS Medical Committee. In this role, Dr. Hörterer will coordinate and oversee the different projects undertaken by the FIS Medical Committee.

Within the FIS Anti-Doping Programme, Dr. Rasmus Damsgaard (DEN) has been appointed as the new FIS Anti-Doping Expert. Dr. Damsgaard assisted Professor Saltin in his work for many years and has been closely involved in the FIS Anti-Doping Programme since its beginning.

#### 2. Announcement of Naturally Elevated Haemoglobin Levels

The following is an excerpt from FIS Anti-Doping Procedural Guidelines.

**FIS.B.4.8** *Athletes whose normal (natural) haemoglobin values are equal to or exceed the limits of 16.0 g/dl for ladies and 17.0 g/dl for men are required to provide certification for review by a specialist appointed by the FIS before the start of each season, latest by 1<sup>st</sup> September. These will be reviewed by the FIS anti-doping expert within 4-6 weeks (send to the FIS Office). Requests for dispensation when the competition season has already started will be treated where possible within 6 weeks and only if the necessary documentation is provided.*

*This certification must come from an officially recognised Haematological Department and contain the Athlete's full history and haematological profile from an early age in life. The application must include a proof of high red cell mass, haemoglobin concentration and related blood variables from childhood and/or in the immediate family. Evaluation is to be undertaken by a specialist in haematology for the disease polycythaemia vera.*

*The above documentation should be complemented with repeated blood testing over the period of one year with proof of not being at altitude at the time of the haemoglobin test.*

*The Athlete may be subject to a further examination by a haematological institution designated by WADA or FIS, and, during the period of the Olympic Winter Games the IOC.*

*Approval is valid for one season only and updated documentation is required for every season an application is submitted.*

*In cases arising from decisions made by FIS based on non-granting of an exemption, the decision may be appealed exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport ("CAS") in accordance with the provisions applicable before such court.*

### **3. Dispensation Criteria**

An application to consider a dispensation for naturally elevated haemoglobin is made following evaluation of documentation provided, together with the FIS blood screening data and as from this season, additional information obtained through the ongoing WADA study (see below).

The decision whether or not to grant a dispensation is based on personal mean haemoglobin values, as well as on personal variations in haemoglobin and reticulocyte values.

A dispensation is granted for one season only. However, in clear cases, the annual application is more of a formal procedure although every fourth year, an in-depth re-evaluation is performed.

### **4. Limited Dispensation at Altitude**

FIS and scientific literature do acknowledge that some athletes seem to be 'responders' to high altitude. As a result, for competitions held at moderate to high altitude (>1000 metres above sea level (m.a.s.l.)), each result exceeding the upper haemoglobin value of 16.0 g/dl for ladies or 17.0 g/dl for men that is measured in an athlete who has been granted a specific dispensation, will be evaluated in detail.

### **5. Level of Blood Value for Dispensation Defined**

An athlete who is granted a dispensation nevertheless has a personal upper haemoglobin limit. This limit is equal to the mean of the athlete's lowest measured haemoglobin values plus 15% and will apply at all times during competition. If a measurement is taken equalling or exceeding this limit, a start prohibition will be applied. Please note that such a start prohibition is not an anti-doping sanction.

### **6. WADA supported Haemoglobin study in cooperation with the German, the Swedish and the French Ski Association**

During the summer and autumn 2006, a study has been conducted to obtain more detailed information about the effects of dehydration, altitude and training on blood values

in elite athletes. This study has been carried out by Bengt Saltin in cooperation with some top athletes from the German, Swedish and French teams and supported by the World Anti-Doping Agency, WADA. In the case of the German part of the study, representatives of the German Ski Association as well as the German National Anti-Doping Agency were present during testing.

The WADA supported study is still on-going and should be completed by the end of the year. The results are being analysed and a first report will be presented to the Cross-Country and Nordic Combined teams as well as the media at FIS Nordic Opening in Kuusamo (FIN). The general media session has preliminarily been scheduled for the morning of Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2006.

### **Further Reading**

FIS Media Info on the CAS decision during the Olympic Winter Games in Turin

<http://www.fis-ski.com/data/document/cas.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions to Bengt Saltin

<http://www.fis-ski.com/data/document/faq.pdf>

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