



Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Policy

(Updated 9 December 2009)

Overview

In 2006, the Board of Rowing Australia approved the adoption of the AIS Sports Supplement Policy as the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Policy.

The AIS Sports Supplement Program was developed in 2000 to ensure that AIS athletes use supplements and sports foods safely and appropriately. A panel of sports scientists has reviewed current research on supplements and categorised products according to their safety and efficacy. Protocols for the use of various supplements have been prepared. The AIS Sports Supplement Program is regularly reviewed and updated.

The advantages of Rowing Australia adopting the AIS Sports Supplement Policy include adopting an up to date, cutting edge policy that it is under continual review based on current research. It is a policy that is being adopted by a number of State Academies / Institutes of Sport and other National Sporting Organisations. This ensures that Rowing Australia's policy is consistent with these organisations.

Additionally, under this revised Sports Supplements Policy, Rowing Australia aims to provide clear and structured direction on the appropriate use of particular supplements and ergogenic aids

Introduction

In 2000 the AIS launched a proactive sports supplement program to ensure its athletes make good use of dietary supplements. This program includes a yearly evaluation and fine tuning, to ensure that it continues to be at the 'cutting edge' and to meet the evolving needs at the AIS. This information presents the updated sports supplement program for 2007.

The AIS and Rowing Australia recognise that supplements can play a small but substantial role in allowing our athletes to achieve their peak performance. However, they also recognise that poor regulation of the supplement industry allows our athletes to be bombarded with marketing hype that completely exaggerates or invents unproven benefits arising from the use of supplements. Some of the emotive claims come as testimonials from other athletes.

Unfortunately, the AIS and Rowing Australia see that the driving force behind the supplement practices of many athletes is not sound science applied to specific needs of a sport. Instead we see that athletes are motivated simply by fear that their competitors might be taking supplements and they can't afford to miss out on any 'performance edge'.

Rowing Australia believes that our Under 23 and early Senior A athletes must focus on improving their rowing performance through better training, better nutrition and better recovery. We believe that this could yield a 3-5% improvement in performance just by doing the simple things better and with more intent. We want to ensure in the early years of our athletes' international careers they focus on improving their rowing performance using this as their main performance aid, rather than via external supplements or ergogenic aids.

Finally, Rowing Australia aim to ensure that where possible all athletes trialling for National Team selection are assessed as fairly as possible, thus the impact of supplements on this must be managed.

The results of the present frenzy of supplements in sport are:

- a small but real risk of a positive 'doping' outcome
- money being wasted on products that simply do not work
- time, money and belief being distracted away from the factors that can really enhance health, recovery and performance

Rowing Australia's aims are to:

- allow our athletes to focus on sound use of supplements and special sports foods as part of their special nutrition plans
- ensure that supplements and sports foods are used correctly and appropriately to deliver maximum benefits to the immune system, recovery and performance

- give our athletes the confidence that they receive 'cutting edge' advice and achieve 'state of the art' nutrition practices
- minimise the risk of supplement use leading to an inadvertent doping offence
- provide clear decision making guidelines to ensure the most appropriate use of supplements both in training and competition
- to ensure National Selection Events are conducted in a manner that is fair and even to all trialling athletes.

Click on the link below to go to the AIS Sports Supplement Policy web page. Please use the back button on your browser to return to the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Web page.

[AIS Sports Supplement Policy Overview](#)

Rowing Australia expectations of actual and aspiring National Team members

- All athletes must not intentionally use performance enhancing supplements or ergogenic aids in any national selection activity as outlined in the Rowing Australia Selection Policy and accompanying Event Supplements.
 - All athletes are required to fully understand and adhere to the expectations as outlined in the Rowing Australia Supplements Decision Tree (as Appendix 1).
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Rowing Australia Supplement Group Classification

In the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Program supplements are classified into four groups according to their effectiveness and safety. The grouping is the same as for the AIS Sports Supplement Policy and can be viewed at the link below. The table includes links to information sheets on individual products. These information sheets have been prepared by the AIS for use by its athletes. AIS Nutrition has given permission for Rowing Australia to access these sheets. Please use the back button on your browser to return to the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Web page.

[AIS Sports Supplement Group Classification](#)

Group A Supplements - Supported for use by Rowing Australia athletes

This group includes supplements or sports foods which:

- provide a useful and timely source of energy and nutrients in the athlete's diet, or
- have been shown in scientific trials to provide a performance benefit, when used according to a specific protocol in a specific situation in sport

Rowing Australia Position on Group A Supplements

1. Rowing Australia acknowledges that athletes and coaches are interested in using supplements to achieve optimal performance. Rowing Australia aims to focus this interest on products and protocols which have documented benefits, by:
 - Making some of these supplements available and accessible to National Team athletes who will benefit from their appropriate use.
 - Providing education to athletes and coaches about the benefits of using these supplements/sports foods and ensuring appropriate use of these supplements, with the emphasis on state of the art sports nutrition
2. Rowing Australia is also aware that it is in our best interest to have a program that looks to minimise the risk of supplement use leading to an inadvertent doping offence.

Group B Supplements - Considered for provision to Rowing Australia athletes only under a research protocol

Group B supplements are products for which there is no substantial proof of health or performance benefits at the current time, but:

- remain of interest to Rowing Australia because of the background interest of our athletes and coaches
- are too new to have received adequate scientific attention, or have preliminary data which hints at possible benefits

Rowing Australia Position on Group B Supplements

1. These supplements may be provided to Rowing Australia athletes or teams under the following conditions:
 - Clinical management plan overseen by a SIS / SAS provider, including the provision of the supplement to the athlete and adequate monitoring
 - Supervised study or trial involving placebo/control groups and adequate monitoring of performance or health benefits so that better decisions can be made. Approval has been sought from an appropriate Ethics Committee.
 - Full consideration of inadvertent doping risks
2. Rowing Australia encourages the collection of further scientific data to allow Category B supplements to be moved into categories A or C.

Group C Supplements - Supplements which have no proof of beneficial effects and therefore are not supported for use by Rowing Australia athletes

This category includes the majority of supplements and sports products promoted to athletes. These supplements, despite enjoying a cyclical pattern of popularity and widespread use, have not been proven to enhance sports performance or health. In some cases, these supplements have been shown to impair sports performance or health, with a clear mechanism to explain these results. We have named many of the products that belong in this category, but others that have not been named in our supplement system more than likely belong here.

Rowing Australia Position on Group C Supplements

- In the absence of proof of benefits, these supplements should not be provided to Rowing Australia athletes from SIS / SAS programs
- If an individual athlete or coach wishes to use a supplement from this category, they may do so providing:
 - they are responsible for payment of this supplement
 - they are aware that many of these products have been produced using unknown quality control methods
 - they have fully considered the inadvertent doping risks

Group D Supplements - These supplements should not be used by Rowing Australia athletes

These supplements are directly banned under the 2006 WADA Prohibited List or provide a high risk of producing a positive doping outcome

Resources for the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Program

[Fact Sheets for the AIS Sports Supplement Program](#)

These fact sheets provide useful information on supplements commonly used by elite athletes. The fact sheets have been prepared by the AIS for its athletes. The AIS has given permission for Rowing Australia to access these sheets.

[Supplement Research Summaries](#)

Tables summarising research on supplements in the AIS Sports Supplement Program The AIS has given permission for Rowing Australia to access this information.

[Supplements and Sports Foods](#)

This information is a comprehensive review of current knowledge on sports supplements. It is a complete chapter from *Clinical Sports Nutrition*, 3rd Edition, edited by L. Burke and V. Deakin. It includes summary tables of research investigating the effectiveness of supplements in athletes.

Links for the Rowing Australia Sports Supplement Program

[Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority](#)

Link to the ASADA website

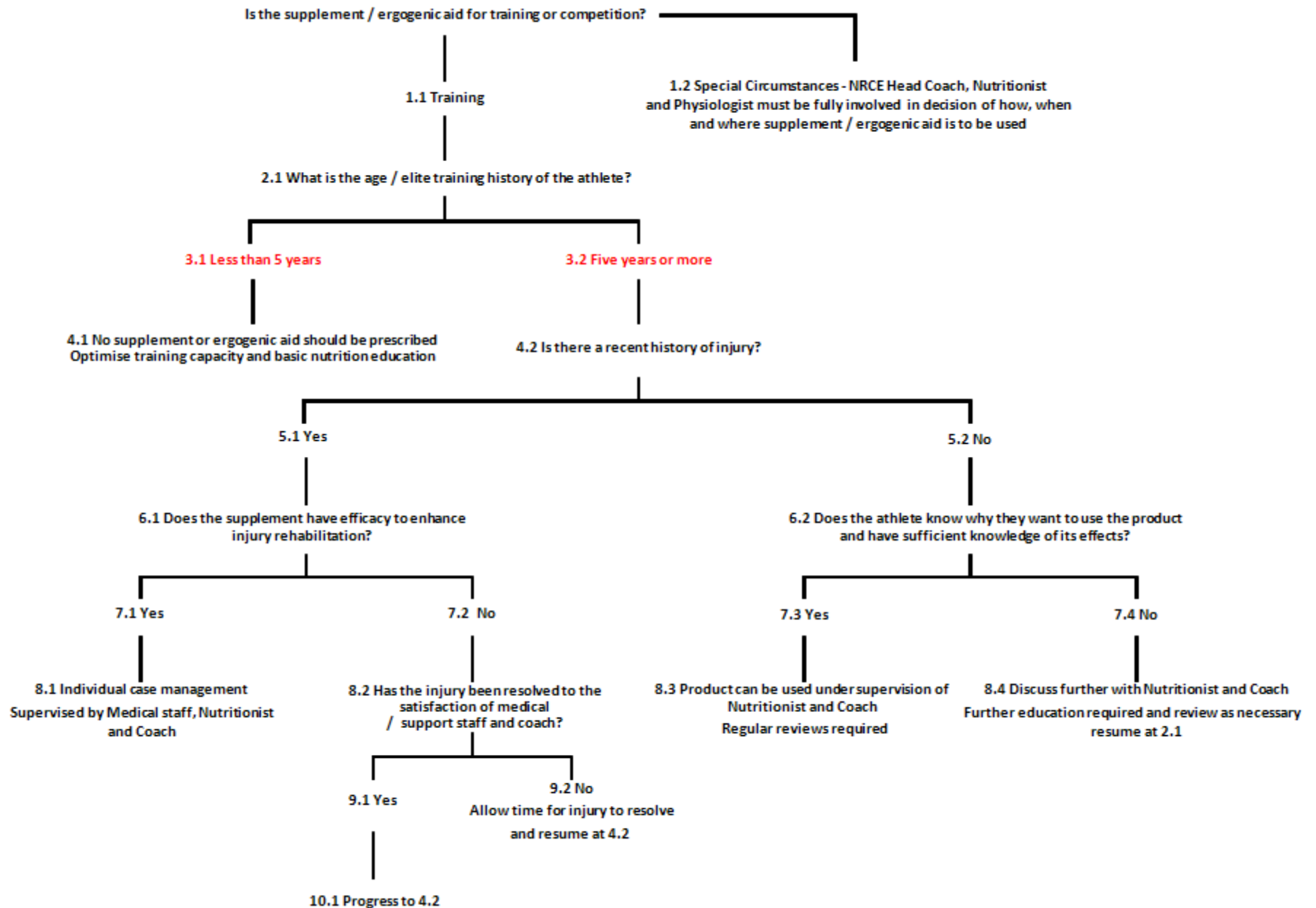
[World Anti-Doping Agency](#)

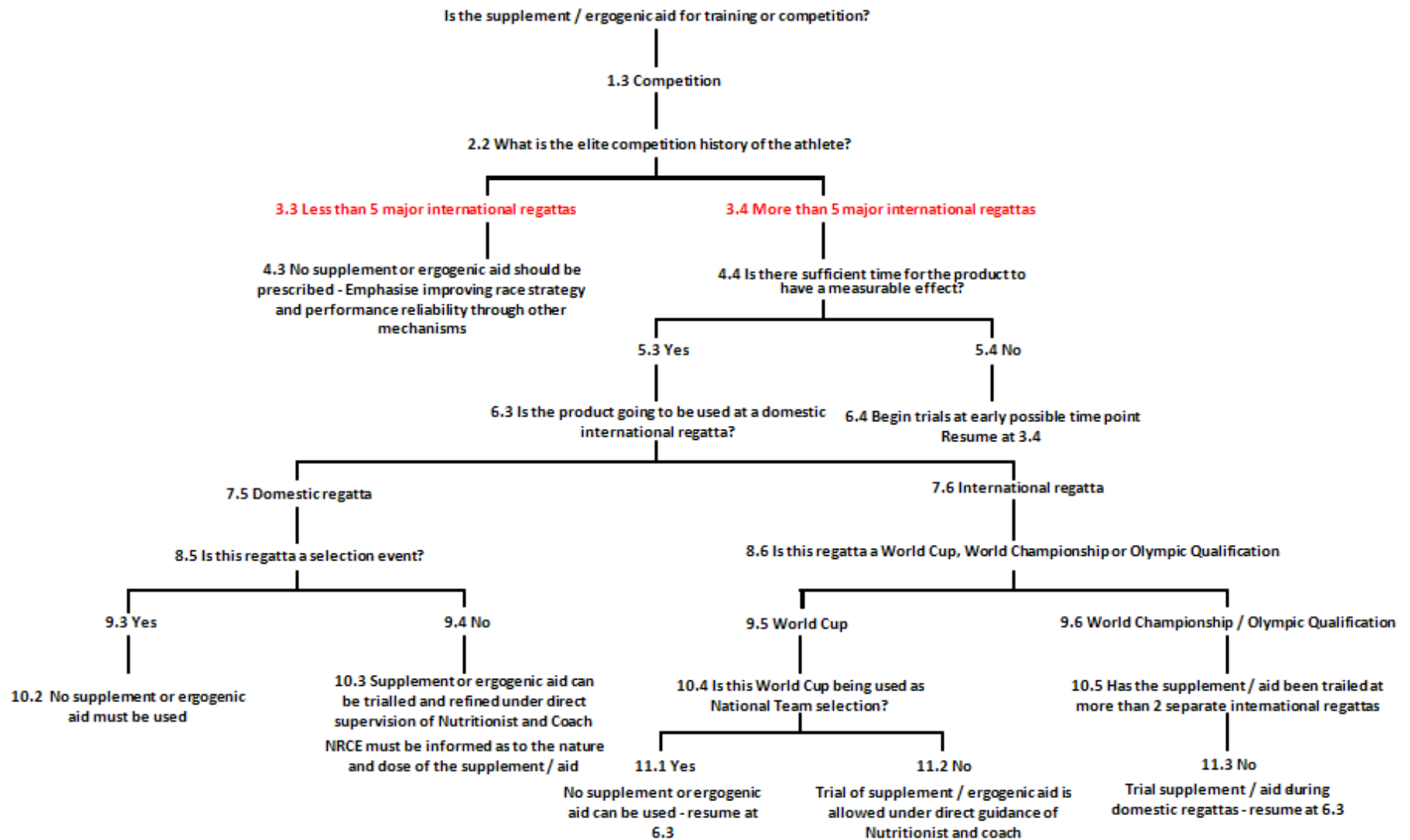
Link to the WADA website

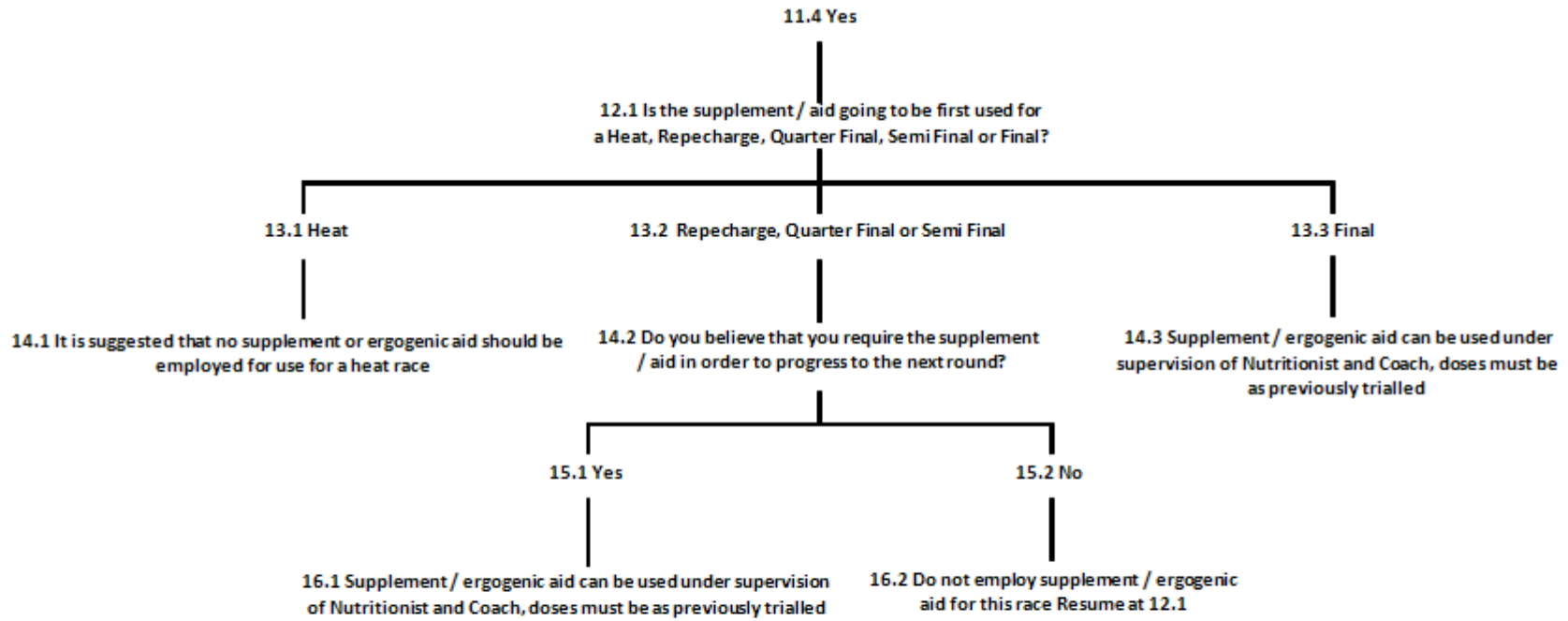
Appendix 1

Introduction

The Supplement / Ergogenic Aid flow chart is designed to guide athletes, coaches and sports scientists in the appropriate use of specific supplements or ergogenic aids whilst training and competing. The decision flow chart should only be used under the strict guidelines of the Rowing Australia supplements policy and is designed specifically for use with category A ergogenic aids more so than dietary supplements (such as sports drinks, gels and liquid meals). In particular this flow chart should be referred to when deciding on the appropriate use of creatine, sodium bicarbonate, sodium citrate and / or caffeine. The use of Category B supplements must be according to the Rowing Australia supplements policy – and unless part of an approved research project, the premise of this decision chart must be followed.







Note: The NRCE understand the importance of consistency of approach to using ergogenic aids / supplements during major competition for those individuals and crews which meet all the relevant criteria. The above decision chart (from 11.4 onwards) is a suggested pathway and not the only pathway to use these aids during competition. It is a requirement that the frequency of use of supplements and ergogenic aids by individuals and crews that meet the relevant criteria must be pre-planned, discussed and agreed to by the crew, crew coach, nutritionist / sports scientist and the relevant National Head Coach.