



Guy Parker
Chief Executive
Advertising Standards Authority Limited
Mid City Place
71 High Holborn
London, WC1V 6QT

28 January 2014

Dear Mr Parker,

We were surprised to read your adjudication on an advert by Cycling Scotland. It seems to us that it is a poor and inconsistent decision, and liable to put people at risk, and we urge you to reconsider it.

Heavy weight is placed on the fact that no cycle helmet was being worn. This is not a requirement of UK law, and the Government has made it clear that they have no intention of making it so. There are substantial safety arguments against compulsory helmet wearing, and countries that have opted for that approach have seen substantial declines in cycling and concomitant reductions in health.

If the ASA position is that advisory comments in the Highway Code are to be taken as binding, does the ASA intend to ban, for example, adverts depicting pedestrians at night not wearing reflective items, as per rule 17?

Reference is also made to the fact that the cyclist is more than 0.5m from the "parking lane". We would be grateful if you could confirm what a parking lane is in this context, as it is not a recognised term in the Highway Code.

We would be grateful if you could let us know where the limit of 0.5m from the kerb, referred to later in the adjudication, comes from. There appears to be no guidance in the Highway Code to that effect, and so the basis for any enforcement of this by the ASA seems obscure. Indeed, forcing cyclists to ride within 50 cm of parked cars is actively dangerous, given the risk of injury and death from doors being opened.

Rule 163 says that drivers should give cyclists as much room as they would another car. Your objection in the adjudication appears to be that the car overtaking is required to move into the right hand lane. Would you therefore intend to ban any advert showing a car overtaking another car and going into the right hand lane?

We look forward to a detailed response from you, and an urgent reconsideration of your adjudication, which is unreasonable, inconsistent and dangerous.

Yours,

Julian Huppert
Member of Parliament for Cambridge

Ian Austin
Member of Parliament for Dudley North

Co-Chairs, All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group

cc: Lord Smith of Finsbury, Chairman, Advertising Standards Authority