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November 28, 2011

Dr. Dan Cass  
Regional Supervising Coroner, Toronto West Region  
Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario

**Submission to a Review of Cycling Deaths in Ontario**

Delivered by e-mail to [occo.inquiries@ontario.ca](mailto:occo.inquiries@ontario.ca)

Dear Dr. Cass,

Tour du Canada's mission statement has a primary emphasis on education in defending and protecting the rights of cyclists. That emphasis is at the core of our proposals for consideration in developing recommendations from your review of cycling deaths across Ontario. (Please see the background statement for details on Tour du Canada and its objectives.)

Our view is that the broad goal of programs aimed at users of public roads should be to foster a culture of tolerance and courtesy. The essential element should be a greater emphasis on education for all road users, drivers of motor vehicles and cyclists.

Central to that view is an assumption that most public roads should be shared use. That assumption recognizes that there will be some mandated separation for practical safety considerations — freeways as high-traffic, high-speed corridors for motorized traffic and dedicated bicycle lanes in congested urban cores where bicycles will be an essential component of a commuter travel network. Those situations should be exceptional circumstances that do not detract from the principle of shared use. European models of bicycle road networks often are cited as goals for inclusion in North American travel networks and it is our view that those models are not easily transferrable. Population density in Europe is more than triple that of North America. The population density of Canada is much less than the North American average and within Ontario there is a very broad range. Policies to accommodate and encourage bicycle use in Toronto may not make sense in places like Kingston or Thunder Bay and would be even less useful to smaller communities across the province.

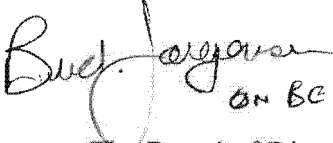
It is our view, though, that education programs and a tolerance of shared use will have much broader applications across Ontario, from densely populated city centres to sparsely populated rural regions. The driver education and testing infrastructure is already in place and needs only a comprehensive cycling component to the curriculum. A core component of that curriculum is already in place through CAN-BIKE, a national cycling education program conducted under the auspices of the Canadian Cycling Association. A part of that program is Kids Can-Bike aimed at the primary school age group and those courses would be a natural fit to start cycling education at an early age. We would favour any initiatives to co-ordinate and expand these programs.

It should be noted that a significant proportion of licenced motorists are at least very occasional cyclists and that almost all adult cyclists also are motorists. From this perspective, including cycling education and testing in the drivers licensing program makes sense since it targets the person engaged in both activities.

In that connection, an argument may arise that cyclists should be licenced. While that might seem to be a logical extension of an education program, we think it would be unenforceable. A more logical approach, it seems to us, would be to make a cycling education course an incentive for a reduced penalty where a cyclist is found to be in violation of the Highway Traffic Act or where a driver of a motor vehicle is in violation of the Act in a conflict with a cyclist.

As part of an expanded education program, we would also recommend a media campaign to promote awareness in the general public of who cyclists are. They are representative of the rich mosaic of the Ontario population — your neighbours, members of your family and leaders in your community.

Yours truly,

  
ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD  
The Board of Directors

**For further information, please contact Bud Jorgensen, Executive-Director, Tour du Canada**

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## **Background Information About Tour du Canada**

Tour du Canada is a non-profit organization with an active membership of approximately 300. The main activity of Tour du Canada is to conduct an annual cross-Canada bicycle tour. Participants in the tour must become members of Tour du Canada, the club. Directors are elected from the membership. All members of the current Board have completed Tour du Canada, the tour. A Tour du Canada ride is a shared experience that allows participants to see Canada at a human scale. Being part of a group makes possible a trip that many would not contemplate on their own. Riders are expected to have an active role in the trip and pool their skills, according to their abilities.

The tour was first staged 1988. Cyclists travel through all 10 provinces during 10 weeks of high summer. More than 800 participants have completed this trip in the 23 years since the first tour. The age range has been 14 to 73. Each year we have a broad age range of participants and about one-third have been women. Tour du Canada veterans come from across Canada and there is always a large contingent from Ontario. As well, we always have riders who come from outside Canada and most years from across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to reach the start point in Vancouver. The ride concludes at the top of Signal Hill in St. John's. Riders need to train for the tour and we recommend that they ride 2,000 kilometres in the months leading up to the start date late June. Typical Tour du Canada riders travel more than 10,000 kilometres by bike in the year of their ride.

Tour du Canada does not receive any government funding or commercial support for its operations, other than by Cycle Canada, which provides administrative support for the conduct of the tour.

### **Tour du Canada Mission Statement / Les Objectifs de Tour du Canada**

1. To encourage, conduct and promote inter-provincial bicycle tours in Canada;  
Encourager, organiser et promouvoir des randonnées interprovinciales à bicyclette au Canada;
2. To encourage, conduct and promote complementary education and information programmes that further a general interest in cycling;  
Encourager, organiser et promouvoir des programmes d'éducation complémentaire et de renseignement qui augmenteront l'intérêt général dans le cyclisme;
3. To help ascertain, defend and protect the rights of cyclists.  
Aider à s'assurer, défendre et protéger les droits des cyclistes.

*For more information about Tour du Canada, please contact Bud Jorgensen, Executive-Director.*

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