

Statement by Pat McQuaid, UCI President

Cookson must explain half-baked manifesto

Brian Cookson's election manifesto is half baked, fundamentally flawed and financially impractical.

Just telling people what they want to hear is easy. He needs to explain how he is going to make it happen.

He must also make a clear statement on whether he believes that cycling has changed, as many of today's riders have said loudly and clearly. He must also clarify whether he believes cycling is leading the fight against doping, in order to reassure the cycling family that he is prepared to stand up for the sport against those who attack it.

Independent Testing:

Brian Cookson's manifesto is proposing nothing new on independent anti-doping, because the WADA Code simply does not permit the UCI, or indeed any other international federation, to create an independent anti-doping body.

As a signatory of the WADA Code, the UCI is responsible for all anti-doping in cycling. While it may delegate responsibility to a third party, any third party must comply with the UCI rules and the WADA Code – and so its operations must remain part of the UCI's anti-doping programme.

What Brian is proposing, when you examine the detail, is simply to relocate the existing Cycling Anti Doping Foundation (CADF) unit, which is as fully independent as the WADA Code permits, outside of the UCI building in Aigle.

As Brian should know, much of the testing in cycling is already independent as the UCI shares responsibility for anti-doping with organisations such as WADA, USADA, AFLD, CONI, amongst others. And as Brian should also know, no anti-doping test result is ever seen solely by the CADF. The results of every single test are seen by multiple anti-doping organisations.

Brian's proposal that the "UCI must remove itself from the management of anti-doping" is a nice soundbite, but it demonstrates how little he understands about the WADA Code and the UCI's responsibility as a signatory to the Code.

My own position, and that of the UCI, as we have said many times, is that we are in favour of independent anti-doping if WADA changes its Code to facilitate that for all international federations.

Brian must immediately explain:

- Why he is proposing to establish a new anti-doping unit when the CADF already exists, whose independence he has vouched for, voted on and approved in numerous management committee meetings?
- If he is now abandoning his decision at the very recent UCI Management Committee to support a recommendation from the UCI Stakeholders Forum to increase further the independence of the CADF?

- How his proposal to establish an independent anti-doping board is any different from the recent decision of the UCI Management Committee to approve the appointment of a fully independent board for the CADF, a process which is already underway?
- What is the fundamental difference between the independent CADF that exists and the new unit that he is now proposing?
- How his proposed new “unit” will be staffed and funded and by whom?
- How far geographically must the UCI relocate the CADF away from its President’s office to guarantee its independence?

Truth and Reconciliation

Brian must explain why he has two versions of where he stands on the subject of establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

His manifesto states that he supports Truth and Reconciliation if “a number of practical legal issues that require consideration” can be overcome. Yet Brian was absolutely clear in telling RTE Sport, as recently as 12 days ago, that cycling does not require a Truth and Reconciliation Commission if the people who have been involved in doping simply came forward and told the truth.

He also used his RTE interview (transcript attached) to present a detailed personal opinion of all the “practical and legal issues” that would need to be resolved to establish such a Commission, but said he was not confident these issues could be overcome.

Brian Cookson must explain:

- What of the two versions of his position on Truth and Reconciliation should people believe?
- What in his view are the “practical legal issues that require consideration”?
- Whether he believes these legal issues can be overcome.

Costs

Brian Cookson’s proposals to create new international departments, to increase the World Cycling Centre budget, to roll out new World Cycling Satellite Centres, to create a new UCI Commission and new internal UCI positions while also instigating independent investigations and a possible Truth and Reconciliation process bear no relation to the existing budgetary constraints and the financial resources available to the UCI.

He has prepared his manifesto as if money were no object. This money has to be found and he has given no indication from where it will come or how he proposes to generate new revenue streams to finance the multi-million cost of his aspirations.

Brian Cookson must explain:

- Whether he has costed all of the proposals he has made?
- How he proposes that the UCI will fully meet the cost of his proposals?

Other issues

Brian Cookson should also explain:

- How he can justify his assertion that cycling has lost its influence in the Olympic Movement when the sport has just been selected by the IOC Executive Board as one of the core sports at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games?
- How he can claim that he can affect policy within the Olympic Movement when he is neither an elected member of the IOC, nor well known by the membership?
- Why he is only now showing any interest in 'growing cycling in the rest of the world' and in women's cycling when he has shown so little interest before? How do his plans in these two areas differ significantly from what I have been doing successfully for the past eight years? And what is his credibility and track record in the globalisation of cycling and in promoting women's cycling?

Finally, the irony of Brian's choice of historic venue to launch his manifesto suggests he doesn't actually know the UCI's history. The UCI was indeed launched in Paris by cycling federations from France, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland and the USA. It was launched specifically to replace the then International Cycling Association which these countries felt was too dominated by Great Britain, hence the choice of Paris. Britain was even specifically excluded from joining the newly launched UCI for a number of years.

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