



Bicycle Network Mandatory Helmet Review

Opinion of Mikael Colville-Andersen, CEO, Copenhagenize Design Co.

1. *Do you believe it should be mandatory to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle? (If you believe it should be mandatory at some times but not others please describe when.)*

It should not be mandatory for any citizen to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.

2. *What's your reasons for your answer to question one?*

After studying the topic since 2008 I have been unable to find any conclusive scientific evidence that mandatory helmet laws have a positive effect. If you were to stack up all the studies and research that support helmet laws in one pile and, next to it, stack up all the studies and research that don't, you would have two pretty even piles. In order for laws to be passed, there needs to be conclusive evidence. If bicycle helmets were a new medicine, they would never be approved by any health authority anywhere, due to the lack of such evidence.

We are in possession of one of the most powerful tools ever invented for improving both the health of our citizens and city life. Helmet laws and promotion of helmets stand in the way of our ongoing work in achieving those important goals.

Each time helmet laws are discussed, which is more and more rare, all fingers point at Australia and the evidence that is invariably presented highlighting the failure of helmet laws in that country, tips the scale each time in favour of defeating a proposed law.

I stand with virtually every national cycling organisation in Europe, who fight against helmet laws at every turn, in stating unequivocally that helmet laws have failed in their purpose and should be repealed at the earliest convenience.

A previous expert statement from my hand, read aloud in the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, contributed to the State of Israel repealing their all

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Level 4, 246 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

234 Crown Street
Darlinghurst NSW 2010

210 Collins Street
Hobart TAS 7000

Suite 5, 18-20 Cavenagh
Street Darwin NT 0800

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age, mandatory helmet law. Israel joined a growing group of jurisdictions that have taken this step, including the Northern Territory.

Considering the fact that, during the hearings leading to the helmet law in Victoria in the early 1990s, a vice-president of Bell Helmets flew in to sit beside the proponents of the law, I am pleased to offer this statement of support for the movement to remove said law. As a voice for progress, the common good, the health of citizens and for the bicycle's timeless role as a transport solution in cities and towns.

I sincerely hope that we will, in the near future, no longer need to point to Australia's failure in the area of cycling as transport, but to instead highlight how the country boldly embraced science and rationality and chose instead to fix their mistake.

3. Do you provide consent for your opinion to be made public?

YES No

4. If no, are you happy if we say you provided an opinion but didn't want it made publicly available?

yes No

Signed:

Date: 13.10.2017

Please send completed form to craig@bicyclenetwork.com.au before 5pm, Friday 13 October, 2017.

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