

**THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS**

**RoSPA**

**RESPONSE TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT**

**CONSULTATION PAPER**

**CONSUMER PROTECTION – THE PEDAL CYCLES (SAFETY)**

**REGULATIONS 2002**

**23 September 2002**

## **CONSUMER PROTECTION THE PEDAL CYCLES (SAFETY) REGULATIONS 2002**

This document is the response of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to the Department for Transport's consultation on The Pedal Cycles (Safety) Regulations 2002. This response has been prepared following consultation with RoSPA's National Road Safety Committee.

### **General Comments**

#### **Bicycle Bells**

RoSPA receives a steady flow of correspondence and enquiries about the fitment and use of bicycle bells, almost all of which is in favour of mandatory fitment. Many pedestrians, especially elderly or partially sighted and blind people, are deeply concerned about cyclists riding on pavements. Accident data does not indicate a high level of collisions between cyclists and pedestrians (although there is likely to be significant under-reporting of such accidents), but the feeling of insecurity among many walkers caused by cyclists riding on pavements should be taken seriously.

The fitment and use of bells on bicycles should be encouraged.

#### **BS 6102 part 1:1992**

The British Standard for bicycles, BS 6102, was last revised in 1992. It seems incredible that it has taken 10 years to update the Regulations to refer to the revised version.

#### **Brakes**

It is clearly essential that brakes are correctly fitted and adjusted, and RoSPA strongly supports introducing such a requirement for the supply of new bicycles.

#### **Bicycles in Kit Form**

Many bicycles are supplied by mail order and are received by the consumer with several unassembled parts. If the consumer is unable to correctly assemble the bicycle, there is a clear accident potential. Therefore, RoSPA supports the requirements for these bicycles to be supplied with any special tools required to complete the assembly and clear instructions.

The quality of instruction booklets can vary enormously. Badly written, unclear and poorly illustrated instructions can be next to useless. In 1999, RoSPA conducted a small survey of child restraints instruction booklets in which we found significant variations in style, language, format, layout, use of illustrations, level of detail and number of languages.

Consideration should be given to producing requirements or guidance for instruction booklets for safety products (the DTI have some useful Guidelines for consumer products) and a 1998 DTI survey of consumers views about instruction leaflets made a number of useful recommendations. It may not be possible to include such guidance in Regulations, but they would nevertheless be useful.

## **Regulatory Impact Assessment**

### **Options**

Five options have been identified.

- Option 1 Do nothing. This option would not resolve the disparity between the Regulations and the British Standard, there would be no improvement in safety standards and cyclists would continue to use verbal warnings.
- Option 2 Update the reference to the British Standard BS6102.
- Option 3 Update the reference to the British Standard, introduce a requirement for the brakes to be adjusted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and introduce requirements relating to bicycles sold in kit form.
- Option 4 Introduce the requirements of Option 3 and also require a bell to be fitted to new bicycles and included in any kit cycle.
- Option 5 Introduce the requirements of Option 4 and also make an amendment under The Road Vehicles Construction and Use Regulations 1986 (as amended) to require a bell to be fitted on all bicycles in use.

### **RoSPA Response**

Of the five options listed, RoSPA supports Option 5 which would:

- update the reference to the BS 6102
- require brakes to be correctly adjusted
- introduce new requirements for bicycles sold in kit form
- require new bicycles to be fitted with a bell when sold
- require all bicycles to have a bell fitted when being used.

However, the Department for Transport has decided not to proceed with this option, and to recommend Option 4 which contains all the above elements except that bicycles would not be required to have a bell when in use (only at the point of sale).

RoSPA would, of course, support option 4. However, we believe that the opportunity to require cyclists to keep bells on their bicycles should not be missed. The requirement to have a bell fitted to a bicycle should apply to all bicycles (new or old) when being ridden on or off the road. Since, the major benefit of having bells will be to help pedestrians, the regulation should also apply when cyclists are riding off road, which is where they will be more likely to encounter pedestrians.

## **The Pedal Bicycles (Safety) Regulations 2002**

### **Regulation 3: Interpretation**

RoSPA supports updating the reference to the latest version of the British Standard BS 6102 part 1:1992.

**Regulation 4: Supply of New Bicycles**

RoSPA supports regulation 4 to require all new bicycles to be fitted with a bell that is intended for use on bicycles and which conforms to clause 6.3 of ISO 7636. As there are a wide variety of audible warning devices available, many of which emit a range of sound effects (gun fire, sirens, hooters, etc.), we agree that the Regulations should restrict the requirement to clearly defined bicycle bells.

However, as previously stated, RoSPA believes that the requirement to have a bell fitted to a bicycle should apply to all bicycles (new or old) when being ridden on or off the road.

RoSPA also supports the requirements for new bicycles to be supplied with their brakes correctly adjusted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

**Regulation 5: Supply of Unassembled Parts in Kit Form**

RoSPA supports the Regulation that bicycles supplied in kit form with unassembled parts, is supplied with:

- a bell (which is intended for use on bicycles and which conforms to clause 6.3 of ISO 7636)
- a list of readily available standard tools; and
- any special or non-standard tools required to assemble the parts correctly
- instructions on the correct assembly of any parts that are supplied unassembled.

The Society thanks the Department for Transport for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Regulations. We have no objections to the contents of RoSPA's response being reproduced or attributed.

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