

ROYAL MAIL SERVICE DELIVERY / COMMUNICATION WORKERS
UNION NATIONAL AGREEMENT / CODE OF PRACTICE FOR IMPROVING
CYCLE SAFETY BY THE INTRODUCTION OF CYCLE HELMETS AND
HIGH VISIBILITY GARMENTS

1. Introduction

Royal Mail Service Delivery and the CWU recognise the need to improve cycle safety and agree that the introduction of cycle helmets and high visibility garments are key to meeting those aims by ensuring that those delivering and collecting mail on cycles are firstly more visible to other road users and secondly better protected in the event of an accident.

2. Background

Research undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) commissioned by Royal Mail concluded that the routine wearing of cycle helmets by postal staff would reduce injuries in low impact collisions in most cases of head impact and would provide significant protection to the wearer. Further research analysing the causes of road traffic accidents involving cyclists has established that in many cases the motorist did not see the cyclist. Therefore the wearing of high visibility garments introduces measures to reduce the risk of collision.

3. Individual Cycle Helmet Pack

Individuals (including reserves, casuals and managers) who are required to perform cycle duties, will receive a pack which consists of a top quality adjustable helmet with an integral set of pads, a spare set of pads, a hat for use with the helmet in cold weather and a waterproof cap to be worn over the top of the helmet in wet weather. While the helmet itself will be mandatory wear (subject to paragraph 5 below), the cold and wet weather additions will be worn when the wearer judges it to be appropriate. Staff may if they wish wear the cycle helmets to and from work.

4. Roll Out

- (a) High visibility clothing became mandatory from 1st October, following an introductory 3 month period
- (b) Cycle helmets are being provided on a phased basis and issued to employees as soon as they are available. CWU Area Delivery and Area Safety Reps should be consulted in good time and informed of the detail locally so that they can support the new policy and discuss any deployment issues.

5. Compulsory Wear

Cycle helmets and high visibility garments will be provided to all those who undertake cycle deliveries. The helmet and high visibility garments must be worn at all times whilst the employee is cycling. They need not be worn otherwise although Service Delivery would recommend that the helmet and garments are worn at all times whilst the employee is in control of the cycle.

In cases where there is an objection to wearing safety headgear on the grounds of personal belief, which is already recognised under law (e.g. Sikhs and motor cycle helmets), Royal Mail will recommend that helmets are worn, but will not insist

6. Approach to Non Compliance

The wearing of Cycle Helmets and High Visibility Garments will be mandatory as soon as they have been received and the appropriate information, training and instructions have been given. (subject to paragraph 5 above).

Issues of non-compliance will be dealt with in accordance with the Compliance procedure Standards set out below.

The Cycle Helmet and High Visibility Garment must be worn at all times whilst the employee is cycling on public. They need not be worn at other times but it is recommended that the Helmet and High Visibility Garments are worn at all times whilst the employee is in control of the Cycle.

Staff may if they wish wear the Cycle Helmets and High Visibility Garments to and from work.

It is important that managers work in close consultation with CWU Area and local Representatives to encourage and ensure that high cycle safety standards are achieved through the wearing of Cycle Helmets and High Visibility Garments.

A sensitive and measured approach will be taken at all times by managers seeking to achieve the new safety standards set out herein. This will consist of counselling, persuasion, provision of clear information, instruction and training plus Union involvement.

Conduct code action must be a managers last resort. Success of this safety initiative will depend on co-operation and support of the staff and their Representatives. Managers will seek to resolve any issues by understanding the wearer's situation.

Where staff are not complying with the wearing of Cycle Helmets and High Visibility Garments, begin by speaking privately to the individual and

asking why they are not conforming to the agreed safety standard. Encourage the employee to comply and support the safety initiative.

Ensure the employee understands the Royal Mail requirement to wear a Cycle Helmet and High Visibility Garment.

Ask if there are any personal circumstances or other relevant reason which may be influencing them not to comply with the safety standards.

Consult the CWU Area Safety Representative in good time about the potential problem and afford the Representative the facility to speak in private with the employee.

Check records to see if the Cycle Helmet and High Visibility Garment has been supplied.

Check records to see if any loss has been reported or replacement/renewal requested.

If the above has not resolved the issue and further investigation or enquiries are not required, seeking advice as necessary, advise the employee to comply with the Cycle Helmet and High Visibility Garment Safety standard.

If non-compliance continues, then as a very last resort and if all reasonable steps have been taken by management, including the involvement of the Area Safety or Area Delivery Representative again at this stage, prior to the formal application of the conduct code, then the use of the conduct code procedure may be considered. The employee and his Representative must be informed of your intention, giving time to the individual to consider compliance.

If the individual still refuses to comply, the agreed Conduct Code rules should then be applied progressively.

7. Timescales

Cycle Helmets will be rolled out from January 2003. Recourse to the Conduct Code will not be applicable until 1 October 2003.

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Adrian Warren
Royal Mail Service Delivery

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Dave Joyce
CWU

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