

UCI Scorecard: Implementation of the CIRC Recommendations

Brian Cookson took over the UCI Presidency in late 2013, heralding a new direction in pro cycling, and proposing sweeping changes in the way that the sport was managed and overseen. It was widely hoped that his election would signal the beginning a new and cleaner era in pro cycling. One of the key initiatives in Cookson's early agenda was to create the Cycling Independent Reform Commission (CIRC) – a panel of independent experts to look at the history of cycling, and to make recommendations for cleaning up and better managing the sport in the future. The Commission was funded to the tune of €3 million, was led by three independent experts, and supported by a small internal staff it spent a year assessing the current situation in pro cycling. It interviewed some 174 individuals, including past and present riders, team managers, doctors, scientists, owners, sponsors, event organizers, and representatives from various national federations, anti-doping agencies, and WADA.

In February of 2015 the CIRC issued a 227-page report, which dealt primarily with a historical review and analysis of doping practices in the sport. After the report was released, we [pointed out](#) some deficiencies and oversights in the process, including the Commission's lack of authority to compel appearances or sanction riders, and its focus on the just the period of 1998-2013. More critically, one of the three key objectives of the CIRC process — and the stated “main purpose” of the report — was “to provide recommendations for the future” and to “make targeted recommendations.” In terms of this task, where the Commission had the greatest opportunity for positive impact, the report was unfortunately somewhat light. The recommendations cover a mere 11 pages at the end of the report, and while some of them raised new and specific ideas, many were either self-evident, had already been proposed in far more detail elsewhere, or were very overly broad and generalized. Nonetheless, it is important to dig into these recommendations in more detail, and to gauge where the sport is today – in reference to what was suggested almost a year and half ago.

There were 34 different individual recommendations in all, some of which were very broad and sweeping, while others were quite narrow and specific. Some of the recommendations were immediate in nature, while some were much more generalized ideas that could only be gradually put in place over a number of years. To assess the longer-term impact and value of these recommendations, as well as the progress that has been made to date in implementation, we broke these 34 recommendations down into four key categories.

To read our full analysis and conclusions, please click on the file below.

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Steve Maxwell and Joe Harris, June 30, 2016