**RIDING SAFE ON BAC TOURS**

 We require that the Ride Leader (RL) send this statement to participants shortly before the tour, attached to a message which may again highlight the difficulties stated in the Ride Rating paragraph of the Ride Description. Riding Safe requires preparation of the MIND, BODY and the BIKE.

**THE MIND**

 Cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers of other road vehicles but, other than pedestrians, we are the most vulnerable. Be always attentive to anything that might suddenly happen on the road or bike path, especially at intersections. Constantly monitor everything in front of and behind you. Situations where you should pull off the road can happen quickly. Be attentive to the road surface for potholes and debris can cause a flat. Watch for anything large likely to be in your path: other vehicles, pedestrians, animals and large objects. Limit speed, especially riding downhill, to ensure you can safely avoid these hazards. Exercise more caution in bad weather. Respect traffic laws and drivers will, or should, respect you.

 Most bike accidents do not involve cars. BAC riders frequently ride in groups to be social, to share navigation and to feel safer in case of an accident or bike problem. However riding in groups requires extra precautions. Establish with your group before each ride: the importance of riding single file, keeping a proper distance from one another and an agreed-on signal when stopping. If many cars are trying to pass a large group on a narrow road, agree to spread out so that a car can safely pass 1-2 riders at a time and return to the travel lane, rather than having cross the center line to pass the whole group at one time. Establish a communication plan in case some members of the group get separated or lost. (Do not call the RL for help).

Remember that riding in a group on a BAC tour is voluntary and those choosing to ride together must all agree to do so. We suggest that you join a tour planning to ride daily with at least one compatible rider.

**THE BODY**

 Assess your fitness for biking, your skill and adaptability to new locations or physically challenging riding. The RL may interview applicants to determine their experience and ability to complete his/her tour. Train until you can comfortably cover the miles and elevation gains on the trip. We require you wear a helmet, positioned and secured properly. To enhance your awareness of all in front and behind you, a rear view mirror is essential. Wear high visibility clothing rain or shine. Remember to carry (and consume!) enough food and water. Carry sunscreen, personal medications and clothing for inclement weather (regardless of the weather report!). The RL should inform riders of locations en route to replenish and rest.

**THE BIKE**

 To ensure your bike is in its best condition, have a trusted bike mechanic inspect it thoroughly and err to side of caution in replacing chains, cogs, tires, cables, etc. Readiness should be done well in advance to allow road testing all repairs and replacements. Carry tools needed to change a flat and make minor repairs on your bike. If you are unable to fix a problem one of your riding group or a stranger may use your tools to help you. Fenders help in the rain. Bags or panniers carry these things plus essential clothing for bad weather. Bike lights front and rear are essential for tunnels, bad weather or long days on the road.

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY**

 Since many riders will have cell/mobile phones the RL should inform riders to first dial 911, or its equivalent overseas, and ensure instructions to reach emergencies services are provided at the first meeting. After an accident, take action to keep the rider(s) from further injury and administer first aid as needed. Be very cautious on taking responsibility for assessing the severity of injuries to yourself or another rider. Lastly, inform the RL and/or van driver (at numbers which should appear on route sheets for each day) about the accident or possible late arrival at your destination for any reason.

 Ensure that your accident or an accident you witness is correctly and promptly reported to the BAC office office@bicycleadventureclub.org as required by BAC policy. Refer to Enclosure #5 of the Ride Leader or Ride Coordinator Guidelines for preparing and submitting a report.