

Gear up heavy carriers better

Experts: Encourage retrofitting of older models

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PETALING JAYA: With increased emphasis on road safety and putting the brakes on accidents caused by heavy vehicles, a new standard operating procedure (SOP) will be revealed next month with emphasis on ensuring that these vehicles are safe and do not pose a danger to other motorists.

Road safety experts said strict enforcement of lane restrictions for heavy vehicles on highways are among immediate steps that can be taken by the authorities.

Road safety expert Assoc Prof Dr Law Teik Hua said monitoring systems must be improved.

He called for an increase in the number of Automated Enforcement System cameras and high speed-weight in motion systems to catch overloaded or speeding vehicles automatically.

To eliminate human error, the new heavy vehicle SOP should require the installation of collision avoidance technology and electronic stability control as well as dashcams.

"Retrofitting older heavy vehicles with these safety features is feasible, although costs and compatibility vary.

"Incentives should be offered to transport industry players, especially for smaller operators.

"A phased mandate, combined with certified installers and public awareness campaigns, would ensure smoother implementation of the rules," said Law, who heads the Road Safety Research Centre at the Engineering Faculty of Universiti Putra Malaysia.

He said the SOP should hold transport companies accountable for infractions through public reporting.

Dr Nurrul Hafeezah Sahak from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia proposed the installation of tyre pressure monitoring systems.

"This will provide real-time monitoring of tyre pressure and temperature.

"It allows heavy vehicle drivers to detect and address any issues before they become major safety concerns," said the lecturer at the university's Science and

Technology Faculty.

She also said that enforcing lane restrictions should be part of the ministry's SOP.

"Improving safe driving courses should be emphasised as they play a crucial role in helping drivers respond effectively during emergency situations," she added.

Pan Malaysian Bus Operators Association president Datuk Ashfar Ali said industry players should be involved when drafting the SOP.

"We are willing to give our feedback. At the very least, we should be able to have a look at the draft too so we can give input," he said.

"We will support any initiative by the authorities to ensure safety on roads."

Ashfar also said the association, whose members have about 2,000 buses nationwide, emphasises safe driving etiquette among its drivers.

"It's not goods that we are ferrying but human lives," he said, adding that drivers are also briefed on safe practices before each journey on top of during

Recent heavy vehicle road accidents in Malaysia

2025

■ April 13

A tipper lorry crashed into 15 vehicles along the Bandar Serenia toll plaza slip road towards Cyberjaya. The driver lost control after experiencing a brake failure.

■ April 12

A man was killed and two others injured in a collision between a lorry and a car at KM308.6 of the North-South Expressway (northbound) near Kampar, Perak.

■ March 30

Three people were killed and four others injured in an accident involving a five-tonne lorry and four passenger vehicles. The accident occurred when the lorry skidded, struck the road divider, and entered the opposite lane.

■ March 27

Five people were killed in an accident involving a trailer and

three cars at KM58.1 of the North-South Expressway along Kluang, Johor. The accident happened when the front-right tyre of the lorry burst.

■ Jan 15

Three individuals died in a collision involving a lorry and three cars at KM226.5 of the North South Expressway near Rembau. The lorry was en route from Ayer Keroh to Senawang when the driver allegedly lost control.

■ Jan 7

A woman was killed and eight others injured in a collision involving a lorry and an MPV along Jalan Johor Baru-Ayer Hitam. The lorry driver lost control of the vehicle and entered the opposite lane.

Source: News reports

The Star graphics

their weekly meetings.

A motorist said he saw heavy vehicles speeding and overtaking on the far-right lanes when travelling from Kuala Lumpur to Johor Baru during the recent Hari Raya holiday.

"I have visited other countries,

especially developed nations and I saw how disciplined their lorry, trailer and bus drivers are.

"They stay on one lane and drive at a safe, minimal speed.

"Why can't our Malaysian drivers be like that?" said the driver who wanted to be known as LS.