

ROAD TRANSPORT SAFETY THROUGH STANDARDISATION ACTIVITIES

Malaysia has been listed among countries in the world with the highest fatal accident rates in year 2016. There were 2.55 deaths recorded for every 10,000 vehicles registered in the country during the period. It is the nation's best interest to reduce fatalities and save innocent lives. Hence, Malaysia is aiming to reduce road fatalities in the country by 50% by 2020.

There is a sense of urgency in addressing this at the global, regional and national level. Several programmes and initiatives have been created by stakeholders across the sectors, to promote safer vehicles and roads, protect road users and reduce road accidents and fatalities. One good example is the inclusion of global goal to reduce number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by half in 2020, which is highlighted in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Malaysia have constantly work to improve consumer safety through standardisation activities, especially in standards development. The Industrial Standard Committee on Transport, and its Technical Committees have developed 252 Malaysian Standards (MS). Standards Malaysia develops MS to protect the health and safety of consumers, amongst others. Some of the products that already have their related MS are helmet, new pneumatic tyre, retreaded pneumatic tyre, airbag, seat belt, replacement brake, lighting and signalling devices as well as electric motorcycle. Basically, most MS related to these products are being referred to in regulations and made mandatory by the relevant regulatory bodies, such as the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperative and Consumerism and the Road Transport Department. From the total of 252 MS, 17 standards have been made mandatory. Products complying to mandatory standards definitely can help the public especially consumers to distinguish quality and safe products through certification marks and labelling that are recognised by the respective regulators.

Since road transport and its safety management affects consumers' everyday life, Standard Malaysia has taken steps to develop MS related to road safety management systems, i.e. MS ISO 39001:2013- Road traffic safety (RTS)

management systems - Requirements with guidance for use which is identical to the ISO standard. This MS specifies requirements for a road traffic safety management to provide organisations with a tool to reduce and ultimately eliminate the incidence and risk of death and serious injury resulting from traffic accidents. As such, the use of the MS is to help the country establish and implement an effective road traffic safety system.

In addition to that, Malaysia has established The Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research (MIROS) in 2007 to provide a platform to serve as a central repository of knowledge and information on road safety including standards development, road safety awareness and education.

Malaysia is an active member of ISO Technical Committee 22 on Road Vehicles and Technical Committee 241 on Road traffic safety management systems. The involvement of Malaysia in the standardisation activities at national and global arena is in line with The Road Safety Plan of Malaysia 2014-2020 which aims to minimise the road accidents, injuries and fatalities by the year 2020.

For the standards component, the New Economic Model stresses the importance of ensuring that goods and services are at par with those in developed countries in terms of quality and performance. This will promote Malaysia as an investment destination of choice. In addition, Malaysia as an external-oriented economy, will need to develop and use standards that meet international requirements for its products and services. It is acknowledged that this needs to be accompanied by a framework of compliance that will also allow Malaysia to ensure the implementation of these standards. Malaysia needs to use or adopt international standards for sustainability good governance and at the same time, be a trend-setter in international standards.

In addition to this, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) has embarked on an initiative to provide opportunities to technopreneurs to commercialise their R&D products while addressing key issues of commercialisation. At this juncture, standardisation complements the commercialisation initiatives and

become significant tool and mechanism that fits the agenda. Hence, as a whole the Government of Malaysia acknowledges the value of standardisation activities and the impact it brings for economic and societal well-being. With the existence of standards, products can be tested and verified/certified safe based on these standards, giving the feel of confidence and comfort to the public and consumers.