

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT ROAD SAFETY SITUATION IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Road safety has long been considered as one of social responsibilities to the Malaysian Government. In the visibility of this responsibilities, multiples bodies concern on road safety have been formed within the government departments, private agencies and voluntary organisations. The Cabinet Committee of Road Safety chaired by the Prime Minister himself was formed by the Government. A National Road Safety Plan then was formulated to give an attention to road safety research programmes, behavioural modification of road users, road engineering and vehicle safety, medical treatment and safety administration.

This paper attempts to review the present status of road safety in Malaysia with special reference to road safety initiatives carried out by the Malaysian Government especially the Ministry of Works Malaysia. The contents of this paper will uses an overview of present road accident statistic, national road safety target, Road Safety Programmes by Ministry of Works Malaysia, and discussion of future strategies to reduce traffic accident.

Keyword: Road safety target, accident rate, accident statistic

STATUS OF ROAD ACCIDENTS IN MALAYSIA

Traffic accidents in Malaysia have been increasing at the average rate of 9.7% per annum over the last three (3) decades (see Fig.1). Compared to the earlier days, total number of road accidents had increased from 24,581 cases in 1974 to 328,264 cases in 2005, reaching more than 135% increase of accident cases over 30 years. The number of fatalities (death within 30 days after accident) also increased but at slower rate compared to total road accident from 2,303 in 1974 to 6,200 in 2005. However the upward trend of fatalities dropped in 1997 after Malaysia Government established a 5-year national road safety target to reduce road accident deaths¹ by 30% by the year 2000.

The increase of road accidents is in link with the rapid growth in population, economic in development, industrialisation and motorisation encountered by the country. Since 1970's, Malaysia had experienced a remarkable growth in these sectors. In facts, there is an increase in Malaysian population from 10.4 million in 1974 to 26.1 million in 2005 at an average growth rate of about 2.1% per year².

¹ Law, T.H., Wong, S.V. and Radin Umar, R.S. *The Malaysian Government's Road Accident Death Reduction Target for Year 2010*. Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2004.

² Department of Statistics, 2005