



Trittech Offers Ways of Making Roads Safer

While hi-tech can assist in the ambition to reduce traffic accidents, it is sometimes simple procedures and tools that can have a big impact.

Returning to MCVE was Trittech, a leader in road safety equipment. At the event we spoke to Andrew Lee, Managing Director, Trittech Sdn Bhd about how road safety can be enhanced through the use of fairly simple tools and adhering to proven and tested procedures. In the context of the pandemic it is crucial to point out again that the commercial vehicle industry did not stop and that the drivers would have been out in the field every day to ensure a filled supply chain.

"We have seen the industry being impacted though. For instance, when PUSPAKOM shut down during the pandemic, crucial vehicle checks could not be performed as scheduled." Overall, Lee assesses that the industry is split into those that prioritise safety and others that do not emphasise this in their daily operation. "In that respect, nothing much has changed during the past two years."

However, Lee said that an investment into safety pays big dividends. Using petroleum transporters as an example, he told Asian Trucker that time and again, the application of safety equipment makes a lot of business sense. Fully reflectorised, managed right and always using new trucks, the reference petroleum company has seen less accidents, therefore reduced insurance cost; fewer accidents and incidents also mean less vehicle downtime and repair cost. An investigation may even ground the entire fleet, resulting in significant financial losses. "Every time your vehicle has to stop for repairs, there are all sorts of other cost associated with it." Reflectors being one of the easiest to use as safety tools, Lee pointed out that all vehicles over 3.5 tonnes should be equipped with approved reflectors. However, he noticed that not all transporters adhere to the laws associated with this, simply because education and enforcement is lacking. "It is important to use those reflectors that are compliant."

Gearing up to new legislation to be introduced, Trittech was showcasing equipment and videos that address the upcoming needs for the commercial vehicle industry. Citing Malaysia's industrial code of road safety practice,

ICOP SHE, he points out that every commercial vehicle will have to carry a number of items. For instance, a driver needs to have a safety vest handy which has certain properties to ensure that the vest is performing as it should. "Other items that commercial vehicles have to carry along are safety cones and a safety triangle." Oftentimes, his clients contact him after an accident, having realised that these relatively simple items could have prevented harm to people and damage to assets. As such, the purchase of these items is not an expense, but an investment.

Safety triangles have been a very effective tool to protect people during roadside breakdowns for a long time. However, Lee points out that most people do not use them correctly. "To begin with, you need the right size. The one for commercial vehicles is bigger. Again, there are standards that need to be complied to and we urge users to buy only those that are approved." There are good reasons why the safety triangles are designed the way they are. Bigger ones for commercial vehicles are needed as the triangle should be visible from a further distance and also because commercial vehicles are generally not painted in bright colours, thus they are not as visible.

Having the right equipment is part of securing a breakdown properly. "Tree branches and luggage bags don't really work," Lee quipped. Properly placed, the triangle should be placed at a distance that allows for traffic to react in time to the hazard. The distance is about 50 yards, which is about 50 steps. "While doing so, wear a safety vest and hold the triangle towards the oncoming traffic, not just on the side." Being an internationally recognised sign for danger, the triangle will be understood by anyone on the road. In addition to that, the safety cones should then be placed to direct traffic around the broken down vehicle. "Unfortunately, the use of these items is not followed by all road users that need to secure a site," Lee said.

"We have come a long way, but there is still work to be done. Do not wait until an accident happens. Invest in safety equipment and training as it is going to save a lot of money in the long run."