

Charting new vehicle norms

With the global auto majors chalking out aggressive plans for India, the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) is working overtime to make it a smooth drive for them. ARAI's newly appointed president



R Adige

Byas Anand about the association's efforts and the future scenario.

What is your agenda?

I have decided to prepare a mission and a vision statement for ARAI. As a first step, we are trying to work more closely with the international vehicle testing and certifying agencies to get an international status and make ARAI an internationally recognised body. This can help us collaborate with them in broader aspects like emission control and even devising a perfect air model.

Will this lead to a mutual recognition of vehicle certificates?

That's the aim. In certain areas our strengths are already recognised. Now, we are trying to reach a stage where India-made vehicles need not have to be shipped in advance to other nations and certified again. Tie-ups with these institutes will finally make them recognising our certificates and vice versa. This will help the vehicle manufacturers.

Which areas will be covered under automotive safety regulations?

In the urban areas, traffic density has gone up. Also, with the progress in highway modernisation, inter-state movement has become much faster. These developments have necessitated a number of active and passive safety regulations. On the active side, tighter regulations are being contemplated in areas like high speed braking, safety belts, seat anchorage, steering impact, lateral protection and rear underrun protection. On the passive side, the norms contemplated are visibility requirement of the driver, rear view mirror specification and installation, lighting system, warning triangles, telltale requirements and windscreen wiper specification.

What are the proposed regulations?

Starting this month, the vehicle manufacturers have been directed to install rear seat belts on all vehicles. Starting January 1, 2003, rear view mirror specifications will be issued to the manufacturers and we will issue the horn and windscreen wiper installation specifications. In addition, manufacturers will have to meet electromagnetic radiation from vehicles. Side guards and plastic fuel tanks will also be made mandatory for 4-wheelers while 2-wheelers manufacturers will be directed to install pillion hand holds.

Around 28 items have been notified for implementation by January 2003. Many regulations will be notified for implementation beyond 2003.