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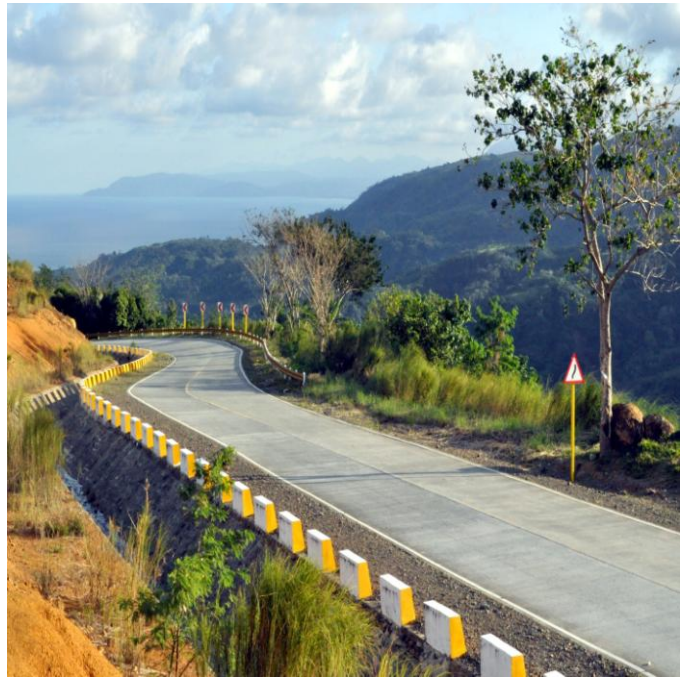
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Making Roads Safe with the International Road Assessment Program and AAP

Deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes are a major and growing public health epidemic worldwide. Each year 1.3 million people die and 50 million more are injured or permanently disabled in road crashes all over the world. Road crashes are now the leading cause of death for children and young people aged between 10 and 24. The burden of road crashes compares with malaria and tuberculosis and costs one to three percent of the world's GDP.



In an effort to reduce the incidence of road crashes, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) as the lead road safety agency, is preparing the Philippines' next road safety action plan that will align with the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020) initiated by the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Foundation and implemented here by the Automobile Association Philippines as the only FIA affiliate in the country.

Strong partnership

The International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) is dedicated to saving lives in developing countries by promoting safer road infrastructure. iRAP inspects high-risk roads where many people are killed and seriously injured and identifies affordable safety engineering programs that can reduce the number of road-related deaths and injuries.

The initiative relies on the strong partnership of key local stakeholders and international experts working together to make roads safe. The road assessment programs are active in over 50 countries worldwide including Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Costa Rica, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Serbia, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and now the Philippines.

iRAP Philippines

In 2008, representatives of iRAP were invited by key road safety stakeholders in the Philippines to discuss the feasibility of establishing an iRAP project that would help to improve road infrastructure safety. In March 2010, an initial project plan was developed for consideration by the stakeholders. The World Bank and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), as the lead road infrastructure agency, agreed to proceed with an iRAP project for the Philippines that would employ the iRAP methodology assigning road safety star ratings to the roads for vehicle occupants, motorcyclists and pedestrians; developing recommendations for high return of investments in safety and engineering; and providing training for local stakeholders in the project.

The steering committee will meet a second time on October 20 for the Memorandum of Agreement signing whereby iRAP will receive financing from the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility to assist the DPWH in assessing the safety of some 4,400 kilometers of roads. Aside from funding, the best outcomes of an iRAP project are achieved when there is local ownership and the contribution of local experts. To ensure the effective and coordinated implementation of the program, an Inter Agency Steering Committee has been established to oversee the project. The steering committee is chaired by DPWH Assistant Secretary Maria Catalina Cabral with DOTC Assistant Secretary Dante Lantin as Vice-Chairman.

The steering committee in which AAP is represented by AAP Vice President Johnny Angeles, will provide leadership, commitment and support for the project; facilitate actions required for its success; review its results and propose directions for the future of iRAP in the Philippines; aside from leading the longer-term implementation of iRAP recommendations.

The steering committee will be supported by a technical working group (TWG) and iRAP Team headed by DPWH Director Melvin Navarro. Through the TWG, stakeholder organizations will assist the steering committee and facilitate the project with practical help and support for visiting iRAP Team members and experts and arrange any necessary permits for participation in the project. Alex Loinaz represents AAP in the TWG while the TWG secretariat is headed by Cynthia Reyes of AAP.

Making Motoring Fun: AAP represents private motorists in the Road Board

The Road Board has been making the headlines again because of the controversial disbursements of the proceeds from the Motor Vehicle User's Charge (MVUC). I am, however, optimistic that soon, the Board may make the headlines again, but this time, in a different light. I have reason to have high hopes for the Board since 1) we are now under a new administration and 2) as the law requires, three private sector representatives: Atty. Rodolfo Jacson, representing the Bus Operators Association of the Philippines, Col. Rodolfo de Ocampo (ret.), president of the Confederation of Truckers Association of the Philippines and yours truly, have been appointed to the Board.

The Road Board is an inter-agency body composed of seven members and assisted by a Secretariat whose Executive Director is appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Board's ex-officio head is the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), while ex-officio members are the Secretaries of the Departments of Transportation and Communications, Finance, and Budget and Management. As I mentioned earlier, three members come from the private sector.

MVUC allocation

The Road Board was created in 2001 under Republic Act (RA) 8794 – MVUC Law as an attached agency of the DPWH “to implement the prudent and efficient management and utilization” of four special funds: the Special Road Support Fund (80%), the Special Local Road Fund (5%), the Special Road Safety Fund (7.5%) and the Special Vehicle Pollution Control Fund (7.5%). The Board is tasked to see to it that the MVUC collection shall be “earmarked solely and used exclusively 1) for road maintenance and the improvement of road drainage, 2) for the installation of adequate and efficient traffic lights and road safety devices, and 3) for air pollution control.” Notice that the first two, representing 85%, may only be used for the *maintenance* of existing roads and not for the construction of new roads and bridges.

According to the Senate Tax Study and Research Office (STSRO), the total MVUC collection from 2001 to 2006 was P27.5B, while from 2001 to 2008, it was P51.78B. The MVUC is collected from motor vehicle owners as part of the annual registration of their vehicles with the Land Transportation Office (LTO). It varies per vehicle depending on the gross vehicle weight, age, and classification.

Representative of private motorists

This is not the first time that a representative from the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) was appointed to the Road Board. During the term of DPWH Secretary Gregorio Vigilar, Gen. Angel Kanapi (ret.), an AAP director, was one of the private sector representatives in the Board.

The AAP is the country's biggest and oldest existing auto club. Founded in 1931 and formerly known as the Philippine Motor Association (PMA), AAP is a non-stock, not-for-profit organization committed to the general welfare of motorists in the Philippines. Over the years, AAP has been very active and vocal in pursuing motoring-related issues and concerns especially on road safety, traffic policies, and the environment. With my appointment to the Road Board, we, at AAP, hope to further champion the interests of Filipino motorists.

I hope that more AAP members and the motoring public as well will take the next step to make their voices heard and their views counted. As the private motorists' representative in the Road Board, I would like to hear from you about your concerns and suggestions, to make motoring enjoyable and safe in our country. Call AAP 723-0808 or email aaproadsafety@yahoo.com



Road Boards' private sector representatives, AAP President Gus Lagman (left) and CTAP President Col. Rodolfo de Ocampo (ret.) (right), pose for a picture with DPWH Secretary Rogelio Singson (center) after the oath-taking ceremony.

AAP joins the 4th Auto Review Run for Road Safety and Courtesy

The Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), along with car manufacturers, oil companies and other road safety-conscious organizations supported and joined the 4th Auto Review Run for Road Safety and Courtesy at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig on September 25, 2010. Themed “Run Fit, Drive Fit,” the annual run aims to raise public awareness about the correlation between good health and safe driving. The event is organized every year by Ron de los Reyes, the producer and host of Auto Review, a motoring show that is telecast every Saturday 1:30 to 2 pm on NBN 4 and also on Sky Channel 6 and Destiny Channel 8.

According to de los Reyes, research has shown that people who engage in sports have a good disposition when they are driving. He also claimed that runners appreciate the road and other people using it better, thus, when they drive, they are more considerate of the safety of pedestrians and other road users.

Almost 2,000 runners including 20 AAP employees wearing pedestrian lane-inspired blue or red singlets participated in the event. The singlets had a reflective strip at the back, making it ideal to wear when jogging during night time or early in the morning. The run included 10km, 5km and 3km races as well as a mini car show, pedestrian safety dribbling challenge and road safety quiz contest, among other activities.

Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) chairman Nelson Laluces graced the event on behalf of President Noynoy Aquino and delivered the President’s speech.

The event concluded with the awarding of this year’s Auto Review winners. By supporting events like the Auto Review Run for Road Safety and Courtesy and continuously developing other projects that increase public awareness of road safety and courtesy, AAP aims to make roads safer for all road users.



Twenty AAP employees joined the 4th Auto Review’ Run for Road Safety and Courtesy.

AAP to continue assisting motorists at the Skyway



The Automobile Association Philippines recently signed a contract with the Skyway Operation & Maintenance Corp. (SOMCO) to continue providing Emergency Roadside Service (ERS) at the Skyway and ground level expressway that runs from Magallanes to Alabang. Since 2008, AAP has been the exclusive ERS provider at the Skyway and expressway. AAP offers ERS to non-members at very reasonable rates while AAP members are entitled to free ERS. Motorists caught in an emergency roadside situation may call AAP hotlines at 723-0808, 726-0191, 0917-8480191, 0922-8601603, 0917-8126000 or 0918-8126000. SOMCO officer-in-charge Ramon Borromeo (second from left) shakes hands with AAP president Gus Lagman during the contract signing. Also in the photo are (from left to right) SOMCO head of legal department Ronald Guillermo, SOMCO head of special operations and projects Ed Nepomuceno and SOMCO traffic and security management manager Gen. Luisito Maralit.

2010 PTCC and PPCC Series Kick Off together with the Race of Champions

The 2010 Philippine Touring Car Championship (PTCC) and the Philippine Production Car Championship (PPCC) Series organized and promoted by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) kicked-off its Leg 1, Rounds 1, 2, 3 and 4 last October 2-3 at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The 2010 Series is co-presented by Concept One Wheels – Official Wheels, Nitto Tires – Official tires of the PTCC and Starfire tires – Official Tires of the PPCC with Seaoil Extreme 97 and Mako lubes – Official fuel and lubes of the PTCC and PPCC. It is also supported by Aeromed Ambulance Service, Velocity Motors, Six Fingers, Cut and Paste Digital Designs and media partners Turbo Time, Chequered Flag and Power Wheels.

Action-Packed

It was an action-packed kick-off Leg as 17 drivers competed for the chequered flag, including eight novice drivers who showed off their driving skills against experienced drivers, giving them a slot on the podium in the 4-round race weekend. In the Production class, Marcus Wong of Tuason Racing School dominated the weekend followed closely by his teammates Sean Redpath and Bobby Noriega. Meanwhile, some excitement was created when Arnel Carlos and Dean Joson of DKC Racing Team including newly entered Chevrolet Cruze of BRE/Chevy Racing Team all tried to overtake the 1.8 Ford Focus of the TRS Team.

In the PTCC class, Joey Pery of the SRA Racing Team dominated the highest class in the series, making it a 3-1 win after suffering a blown engine in round 2. This gave his team mate Juny Binamira the number one spot followed closely by Dennis Uy of Seaoil/Velocity Racing Team. It was also a great weekend race for Jeff Borja and Jonmark Ong who debuted in the PTCC class, giving the “Big Boys” a head to head battle to the finish line. Joselu Salas joined the PTCC class after racing in the prestigious Miata Cup races.

Race of Champions

The weekend of Leg 1 of the PTCC and PPCC also made motor sport history when well-known former race car champion drivers had a reunion in the Concept One Race of Champions. Liuson initiated this one-of-a-kind event in which the former champion drivers raced again against one another but under a different format, a Time Attack race style using one car make, the Chevrolet Cruze. The Race of Champions attracted famous drivers like Georges and Louis Ramirez, Mike Potenciano, Pepon Marave, Jojo Silverio, and multiple rally champion Mandy Eduque.. Edgen Dyliaacco, Paeng Nodalo and many others raced against the clock and relived the excitement of their golden days in motor sports. “It was like a homecoming for everyone who attended Leg 1 of Race of Champions,” said Sammy Liuson. “Organizing this event was my way of bringing them back to the sport”

The Second Leg and rounds 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the 2010 PTCC and PPCC Series are set for November 20-21 at the Batangas Racing Circuit together with Leg 2 of Concept One’s Race of Champions, this time using the Mini Cooper S. For more details, please call Mark Desales of AAP Motorsports Department at 723-0808.



The 2010 Race of Champions featured Philippine motorsports' finest drivers. (From left-right) Race of Champions race director Jun Espino, Concept One's Sammy Liuson, Mike Potenciano, Pepon Marave, Jojo Silverio, Georges Ramirez, Popong Andolong, AAP Motorsports Committee Chair Mandy Eduque, Doby Atilano, Louis Ramirez, Ivan Isada, Edgen Dyliaacco, Paeng Nodalo and Mark Desales of AAP.