

2. TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS SECTOR

2.1 Simplifying procedures for vehicle registration, fitness certification, and operation of automated testing stations (ATS)

India's transport rules are evolving with new MoRTH amendments to streamline vehicle registration and fitness checks, promote hydrogen-fuel vehicle regulations, and mandate ABS and certified helmets for two-wheelers from 2026 to boost safety and green mobility. While these reforms push transparency and tech adoption, challenges remain around costs and infrastructure for inclusive implementation.

Refined Reflections:

India's transport regulatory landscape is undergoing a meaningful shift, guided by the twin goals of road safety and future-ready mobility. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), through G.S.R. 223(E) dated April 9, 2025, amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to streamline processes around vehicle registration, fitness certification, and automated testing stations (ATS). These changes reflect India's broader push toward transparency, digitisation, and reducing human discretion in compliance.

Building on that momentum, MoRTH also released two draft notifications in June, 2025. The first proposes inserting a new sub-rule under Rule 50 to define how hydrogen-fuelled vehicles should display registration marks laying regulatory groundwork for green fuel adoption. The second targets two-wheeler safety, mandating ABS compliance for L2 category vehicles starting January 1, 2026, and requiring two BIS-certified helmets at the point of sale an overdue move to counter India's high two-wheeler accident rate. These reforms are significant for several reasons. Firstly, streamlining vehicle registration, fitness certification, and testing protocols will reduce procedural delays and improve compliance, especially as more vehicles come under automated monitoring. Secondly, the move to include hydrogen-fuelled vehicles under formal regulatory norms signals a long-term vision for green mobility, encouraging infrastructure development and technological adoption. Thirdly, mandating ABS and BIS-certified helmets enhances rider safety critical in a country where two-wheelers dominate road traffic and accident rates are high.

However, the proposals may not be entirely frictionless. The ABS mandate could increase the cost of entry-level two-wheelers, affecting affordability for low-income buyers. Similarly, hydrogen vehicles are still in early stages, and enforcing compliance without sufficient refuelling and servicing infrastructure could burden early adopters. The challenges lie primarily in implementation, ensuring that cost, technology access, and regional disparities are accounted for. Without inclusive rollouts and industry support, even well-meaning reforms risk widening digital and regulatory divides.

Official Notification: Central Motor Vehicles (Second Amendment) Rules, 2025

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2.2 DGCA releases procedure for issuing Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A), initial Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC), and Noise Certificate

India's DGCA has introduced streamlined procedures for Airworthiness Review Certificates for light aircraft and launched a digital Electronic Personnel License system to enhance pilot licensing transparency and compliance. These reforms aim to modernize aviation safety and reduce delays but must balance digital adoption with support for smaller operators.

Refined Reflections:

When we say an aircraft is "airworthy," it is not just about its ability to fly. It must meet strict design standards and be maintained according to regulatory and safety norms. Globally, agencies like the FAA in the United States require aircraft to fulfill rigorous criteria and maintain complete documentation before issuing an airworthiness certificate. Even minor paperwork lapses can ground a technically sound plane. This distinction became tragically evident with the recent Air India incident, which renewed discussions on compliance, pilot preparedness, and systemic gaps in airworthiness oversight.

On May 2, 2025, India's DGCA issued detailed procedures for granting Airworthiness Review Certificates and Noise Certificates for light aircraft. The regulations streamline checks, documentation, and inspections for non-complex aircraft such as small airplanes (maximum takeoff mass up to 2,730 kilograms), rotorcraft (up to 1,200 kilograms and four occupants), and other similar light aircraft. The CAR-ML mandates structured maintenance, compliance with type design, and proper record-keeping. Chapter 2A was also introduced to provide standardized guidelines aligned with international protocols like ICAO Annex 8. These certificates are valid for 12 months and include specific rules for invalidation and inspections based on aircraft size.

Along with these changes, the DGCA launched the Electronic Personnel License system in May 2025, bringing pilot licensing into the digital age. This system enables real-time license verification via a mobile app, using QR codes and ICAO-compliant digital signatures. From June 2025, renewals for Commercial Pilot Licenses and Flight Radio Telephony Operator Licenses will also move online. These reforms reduce paperwork and enhance transparency and accountability. While this modernization reflects India's commitment to safer aviation, challenges remain in helping smaller operators and regional training centers adapt. True safety depends not only on equipment but also on the entire ecosystem of oversight, training, and accessible enforcement.

Official Notification: Chapter 2 of Airworthiness Procedures Manual: Procedure for Issuance of Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A), Initial Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) and Noise Certificate (NC)

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2.3 Government announces nationwide cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims

In May 2025, MoRTH launched the Cashless Treatment Scheme for Road Accident Victims, providing up to ₹1.5 lakh for immediate hospital care without upfront payment at empanelled hospitals. The scheme uses digital tools for real-time coordination and claims processing, aiming to improve emergency care while relying on insurers and a dedicated accident fund for coverage.

Refined Reflections:

In May 2025, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways formally notified the Cashless Treatment Scheme for Road Accident Victims, expanding on a pilot started in March 2024. The scheme aims to provide immediate hospital care without requiring upfront payment. Victims can receive cashless treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh for seven days at empanelled hospitals, including those under the Ayushman Bharat and National Health Authority portals. The use of electronic Detailed Accident Reports and a Transaction Management System allows real-time coordination between police and hospitals, making pre-authorisation, ambulance transfers, and claims processing faster and more efficient.

The funding structure is clearly defined. Insurers cover cases involving insured vehicles, while the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund supports victims in hit-and-run or uninsured cases. State Road Safety Councils, district collectors, and State Health Agencies oversee the scheme to ensure accountability at the local level. This policy addresses critical delays that often cost lives. The main challenge now is to ensure smooth implementation. This includes enrolling more hospitals, training staff on the digital system, and raising public awareness. If these challenges are addressed effectively, the scheme has the potential to make emergency healthcare more accessible and responsive across India.

Official Notification: Cashless Treatment of Road Accident Victims Scheme, 2025