

Darker rear windows now an option

PUTRAJAYA: Starting today, private car owners can tint their rear windshield and rear passenger windows as dark as they want to after the Transport Ministry relaxed the tinting rules on vehicles.

Instead of limiting themselves to tinting their rear windows and windshield to adhere to the 30% visible light transmission (VLT) rule, motorists can block out all the light, provided they still have working side mirrors on their vehicles.

VLT refers to the amount of light that passes through a lens or glass. The lower the VLT rate, the more light is blocked. Transport Minister Anthony Loke said these changes were made in response to demands from motorists who want darker windows as protection from the heat.

The changes are also in line with the United Nations Regulations on safety glazing materials installation on vehicles (UN Regulation No.43).

However, the front windshield and windows on the driver's and passenger's side need to remain at 70% and 50% VLT levels respectively for safety reasons. "We will not compromise on regulations for tinted windows on the front side of vehicles," Loke said.

Additionally, motorists who prefer to have all their windows fully tinted for security and health reasons need to apply for permission to do so.

Those applying for security reasons will be charged a RM50 service fee for each application. If their application is approved, they will be charged RM5,000 for permission to have all their car windows fully tinted.

"Each approval will last for two years and they need to reapply each time," Loke said, adding that the approval would be determined by a special committee headed by Road Transport Department (JPJ) director-general Datuk Seri Shaharuddin Khalid, which will meet monthly to process the applications.

The committee will vet through every application and conduct cross-checks with the police to determine whether applicants have a clean record and no outstanding summonses.

The approval process can take up to three months and once it is done, applicants will be provided with an approval letter signed by the minister and a hologram sticker which will be affixed to the windshield.

Shaharuddin said the new procedures were aimed at making the application process more transparent and charging fees could be a new revenue channel for the government.

"We know those who would want fully tinted windows on their cars are dignitaries and they can afford the fees.

"Even if the ministry did not charge a fee in the past, we heard that there were middlemen who collected a commission to make the applications on their behalf. We want to cut out the middleman.

“In the past, those who wanted to have all their windows tinted probably knew the minister personally and just wrote in,” he said, claiming that the previous transport minister approved more than 5,000 applications between 2011 and 2018.

However, those applying to have all windows fully tinted for health reasons are exempted from charges but need to provide written validation from government medical professionals to prove their claim.

The new regulations will only apply to private vehicles, including those used for e-hailing services.

JPJ enforcement officers will start their checks on vehicles under the new regulations in three months.

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