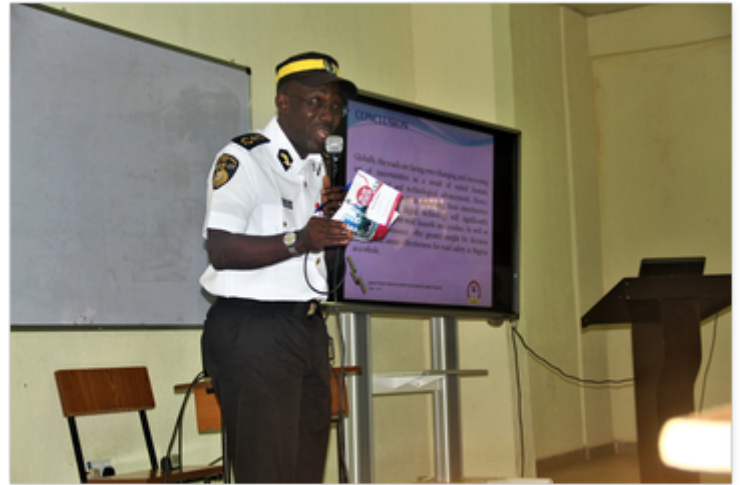


Right Tools, Digital Technology will Isolate Risk of Traffic Menace -Expert

With the roads globally facing ever-changing and increasing set of uncertainties as a result of varied human, environmental and technological advancement, having the right tools and the use of digital technology in addressing these uncertainties would significantly alienate the risk of road hazards and crashes.

This was the position of the Director, Vehicle Inspection Service (VIS), Lagos State Ministry of Transportation, Engr. Gbolahan Toriola, at a recent Town and Gown Seminar of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Covenant, where he spoke on the topic, 'Service Model'. Engr. Toriola, who was the Guest Speaker, assured that having the right tools and digital technology would improve performance, offer greater insight for decision making and ensure road safety in Nigeria.



Engr Gbolahan Toriola making his presentation at the Department of Mechanical Engineering's Town and Gown Seminar

The VIS, he said, was one of the enforcement agencies the Lagos State Government used to facilitate compliance with road traffic laws and vehicle policies such as roadworthiness, vehicle license, hackney permit, testing and training of applicants for driver's license/rider's card.

While speaking on how the VIS had evolved over the years in road traffic law enforcement, the Guest Speaker said that prior to the introduction of technology, peak period operations were targeted at impoundment of rickety vehicles, while off-peak period operations involved random check/stops of vehicles to confirm validity of documents and other physical requirements of vehicles. According to him, Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO) had challenges performing these tasks. These included the lack of synergy with other stakeholders, lack of cooperation from the public; interference from other law enforcement agencies such as the Army and the Police; and non-compliance with stipulated/laid-down rules and regulations.

Engr. Toriola said that to ameliorate the highlighted challenges, the VIS had employed technology to enhance compliance with road regulations in Lagos State, with the hope that it would not only promote security of lives and property, but would significantly benefit the VIS in data gathering and reporting, incident management and disaster recovery as well as promote voluntary compliance and better code of conduct among others.

He noted that the VIS was keen on digital technology, hence had employed various technologies in line with best practice to stimulate his organisation's activities in order to ensure voluntary compliance by road users and equally access real time data and statistics. The technologies employed included the Computerised Vehicle Inspection Centres (CVIC), Magneto-Optical Machine/AutoVIN, Automatic Number Plate Recognition Device (ANPR), E-testing of driver's licence applicants, and automation of Road Worthiness Certificate (RWC).

Engr. Toriola said that the VIS had so far recorded significant achievements using the new technologies and the "Safe Road Users" approach, which entailed continuous and consistent enlightenment programme for the general public and upgrading the Lagos State manual driver's license testing procedure to e-testing, into which the three major Nigerian languages as well as English language had been incorporated.

Earlier in his remarks, the Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Professor Sunday Oyedepo, noted that the Department was focused on widening the scope of knowledge of students by bringing experts not only from the core engineering discipline for the Town and Gown seminar. The students, he said, would benefit maximally from the Guest Speaker's wealth of experience considering the sector he came from. "It was very important for you to know the policies guiding road transport," Professor Oyedepo counseled.

Other personalities at the event were some members of faculty and staff of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, and members of the Guest Speaker's entourage.

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