

Vape industry calls for more time to certify devices

SIRIM RULING

VAPE INDUSTRY CALLS FOR MORE TIME TO CERTIFY DEVICES

4 months not enough to test and check all products, says group

HANA NAZ HARUN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

THE government should give electronic cigarettes, or vape, players more time before enforcing rules that require electronic cigarettes or vape devices to be Sirim-certified.

Malaysian Vape Industry Advocacy (MVIA) said given the lengthy certification process for vape devices, industry players needed more time to comply with the ruling.

Its president, Rizani Zakaria, said while MVIA believed that the gazette was a move in the right direction, the four-month window for industry players to comply was "insufficient" and would impact the trade.

"(The gazette) would protect the safety of users when it comes to using vape devices.

"It is also in line with practices in other countries to ensure products are regulated.

"Based on the gazetted law, all devices in the industry are required to comply with the new ruling by Aug 3, 2022.

"That is four months from now, and vape devices are required to

be certified and labelled with the Sirim mark by then.

"The industry's main concern at the moment is that the timeframe is insufficient for industry players to comply, given that the time needed to process certification for vape devices," he told the *New Straits Times*.

He said the process for one product to undergo testing and product certification would take between three and four months without disruption.

Rizani said the production timeline would also need to include the mandatory labelling, which could be done only after it completed testing to be certified.

"All of this takes time. Today in the market, there are hundreds of vape devices and spare parts that need to fulfil this requirement by that deadline.

"This is also going to be compounded by the fact that everyone will be rushing to Sirim to conduct testing and product certification, resulting in long queues and delays."

On Tuesday, the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry said local manufacturers and importers of electronic cigarettes or vape devices must apply for MS Sirim certification



Sirim technicians testing a product at its facility in Shah Alam. FILE PIC

and labelling from Sirim QAS International Sdn Bhd.

This was after a federal move to gazette the Trade Descriptions (Certification and Marking) of Electronic Cigarette Devices Order 2022 under the Trade Descriptions Act 2011.

The ministry said the order, which would take effect on Aug 3 this year, was to ensure that vape products were safe for use.

Companies that fail to comply with the new law could be fined up to RM200,000, and second or repeat offenders could be fined up to RM500,000. Individuals, if

convicted, could be fined up to RM100,000 or imprisoned up to three years, or both.

Second or repeat individual offenders could be fined up to RM250,000, imprisoned up to five years, or both.

Rizani said penalising those who did not comply with the ruling was the right approach, as failure to follow the rules would jeopardise the safety of users.

"However, it is not for the government to punish industry players if we are given such a short timeframe to comply with this ruling.

"We urge the government to reconsider this as it would mean many industry players are going to be affected by the ruling."

He said since vape standards had been adopted and gazetted back in 2018, vape devices had also changed and significantly improved, thanks to the industry's technology and innovation.

"Given this landscape, we believe the authorities need to review and refresh the standards.

"This is to ensure that standards that are adopted in Malaysia are in line with international practices."