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**MOTORCYCLE HELMET WEARING IN VIET NAM:
LEGISLATION, COMPLIANCE AND CURRENT CHALLENGES**

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Background With motorcycles representing 95% of Viet Nam's 33 million vehicles, safety for this vulnerable user group is of crucial importance. Motorcycle helmets are an effective road safety intervention that has been implemented to various degrees in Viet Nam since 1995. Previous attempts were largely unsuccessful until the mandatory law took effect from 15 December 2007.

Purpose To review the history of motorcycle helmet legislation in Viet Nam including factors that have contributed to or impeded successful implementation and current challenges and potential solutions.

Methods Various sources of information were utilised including primary and secondary data on helmet wearing and road trauma, Vietnamese road safety legislative documents and personal communication with key local road safety stakeholders.

Results More than 15 000 road traffic fatalities were reported in 2010 of which an estimated 75% are motorcycle riders and passengers. With the implementation of the national law in 2007, wearing increased from approximately 42% to more than 99% in select locations and importantly has been maintained. Whilst information is limited, small but significant reductions in the number of head injuries have been reported since the introduction of the law. Enforceability of helmet wearing for child passengers as well as the quality of helmets remain major ongoing challenges.

Significance Road trauma is a leading cause of death in Viet Nam, however the successful introduction of mandatory helmet legislation is a major milestone for improving road safety and represents important experience for other low and middle income countries where a large proportion travel by motorcycle.