

# Strengthening Emergency Care: Enhanced Safety Provisions for Road Ambulances

## Draft amendments to AIS-125 introduce specialised ambulances, mandatory rescue equipment and provisions for e-ambulances

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The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has proposed amendments to the Automotive Industry Standard (AIS)-125 to strengthen the safety, functionality and medical capabilities of road ambulances across the country. Road ambulances are critical life-saving links in emergency care, facilitating the transportation of patients to hospitals and providing advanced life support for critically ill patients. India also records a significant number of road accident fatalities every year, many of which are preventable through timely medical intervention. Studies indicate that nearly 50% of road accident deaths can be averted if victims are admitted to hospitals within the first hour.

While schemes such as the "**Prime Minister - Road Accident Victims' Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment (PM-RAHAT) Scheme**" have been notified to ensure necessary medical treatment coverage for all victims involved in road accidents caused by the use of motor vehicles, it is equally important to ensure that road ambulances are readily available to citizens in need and are designed to provide operational convenience for medical personnel as well as maximum possible comfort and safety for patients during transit.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, vide notification G.S.R. 868(E) dated 8th September, 2016, had notified standard AIS-125 (Part 1) to ensure compliance with the constructional and functional requirements of road ambulances. Further, AIS-125 (Part 2) was published as a guideline standard specifying the medical equipment requirements for different categories of road ambulances to enable them to perform their designated functions.

Amendments to AIS-125 (Part 1) and AIS-125 (Part 2) have now been adopted to enhance the safety and functional efficiency of road ambulances. The amendments include the specialised road ambulances, such as:

- (i) **Neonatal Road Ambulance** – designed to transport sick or premature newborns from one hospital to another, usually for higher levels of medical care; and
- (ii) **Multi-stretcher Road Ambulance** – designed to carry multiple stretchers while typically focusing on intensive care support on one patient at a time.

**Mandatory rescue equipment** - Further, all road ambulances falling under Class B, C, and D categories shall be equipped with emergency and rescue tools to facilitate the extraction of victims from vehicles damaged in road accidents, as well as to provide rescue support in the event of the road ambulance itself being involved in an accident.

**Dedicated power source for e-ambulances** - To support the transition towards green mobility without compromising patient care, e-ambulances shall also be provided with dedicated power sources for operating medical equipment. In addition, AIS-125 (Part 2) specifies the standards to which all medical devices installed in ambulances shall conform.

The draft notification GSR 382(E), dated 14.05.2026 has been issued and presently uploaded in the Ministry's website for inviting public comments for enabling finalisation. The amendments shall come into effect from the date specified in the final notification.

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**GDH/DS**

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