



Stopping Power: Considering Your Brake Pads

Torque is important, deceleration is more important. When it comes to choosing the right brake pads, Gill Logistics has made it a science.

Coming in for a quick stop, Harminder Singh Gill (aka Harry), talked to Asian Trucker about his approach to finding the best possible brake pads for his trucks. While it may seem like a simple matter of choosing aftermarket parts over the OEMs version, Harry has made it somewhat of a science to define the right brake pads to be used on his vehicles running in Gill Logistics Sdn Bhd.

At the heart of the matter is the fact that the industry is coming under more and more pressure and every cent that could be found to be saved makes a difference. As such, Harry would ask OEMs to use their parts as long as the trucks are still under warranty or in a service and maintenance contract. "However, at some point, it is better for us to take the vehicle out of that contract and to service them in-house. We have trained mechanics that know how to treat the trucks right." One issue Gill Logistic is facing is that the service centres of OEMs cannot prioritise any one transporter. Consequently, if the workshops run at full capacity, the scheduled services could take longer than a day. Using their own workshops, they do not have to factor in additional time that a truck might not be available. "Oftentimes, we notice that the OEMs workshops or their appointed partners take longer than a day to have our vehicles fixed." A situation that is not ideal in his view.



Servicing a fleet of 160 trucks in three in-house workshops, Gill Logistics stocks its own spare parts. "Especially, tires, brake parts and lubricants are easy to deal with in-house and we keep a sufficient stock at all time to swiftly service our vehicles." What Harry has observed is that aftermarket parts and components oftentimes are as good as OEM parts, however costing up to 50 percent less. The brake pads from Fras-le he is currently using are one such item that he utilises as they are offered at a lower price with top quality.

Gill Logistics is primarily engaged in transporting goods using curtain siders and running a fleet of car carriers. By his own admission, the goods moved are comparably light-weight, however the climate and road conditions put a lot of stress on the trucks, especially the brakes. Moving goods to Kuantan for instance is always a burden on the material as the Karak highway is mountainous. "Allegiance has approached us to trial the Fras-le brake pads. We decided to use them on the less demanding routes, such as the North-South Highway going to Johor or Penang." Besides the topography of our country, the climatic conditions put brake pads to the test.

"What most do not consider is how to reduce the wear on brake pads through all the other technology we have available," Harry opined. Adding ABS, EBS and retarders to his trucks and trailers has significantly reduced cost incurred by having to frequently change brake pads and lining. When calculating the cost of changing brake pads and linings, one has to factor in that the truck is not running to generate income. Typically, the exchange of brake pads is taking up a lot of time as the swap requires the change of bushes and other components as well, while also requiring tyres to be taken off. "All in all, the cost adds up and one has to consider the down time if one has to change brake pads more frequently."


With the combination of a suitable truck, electronic support systems and avoiding overloading, Harry is able to get a high milage out of the Fras-le brake pads. "One has to understand that the entire weight of the vehicle, all of the deceleration will be absorbed by the brake pads. We try to minimise the impact on them as much as possible." What Harry laments is that Malaysia only allows for foreign workers to be employed in Malaysia for 10 years. His workshop is run by a highly motivated and

trained mechanic that has embraced the ideas brought forward by Harry and suppliers like Allegiance and Seri Zenith when it comes to improving the uptime of their trucks. Ultimately, in Harry's view, one has to monitor and analyse every aspect of the operation to find the right combination of trucks for the respective job, the components used on the trailers and the use of either OEM or aftermarket wear and tear parts. **F**

Fras-le, a Randon Company, is one of the largest friction materials manufacturers in the world. With manufacturing plants in Brazil, United States, China, Argentina, Uruguay and India, distribution centres in Argentina, Germany, United States and Colombia and commercial operations in Chile and Mexico, Fras-le keeps a well-structured team to serve its customers in more than 126 countries on five continents. With a broad portfolio of products in several brands, with a line including brake pads and linings for heavy vehicles, and brake pads, linings and shoes for light vehicles. Another line offers moulded and woven brake linings and universal plates.

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