CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Urbanisation of cities in Malaysia is happening rapidly. This is a result of holistic development spearheaded by Malaysian government. This is happens in line with the Malaysians’ vision to achieve the status of being an advanced country with high national income by year 2020, as first initiated by former Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad.

Urbanisation process has greatly improved the life quality of the citizens. In general perspective, urbanisation is the symbol of prosper and livability. However, urbanisation process is usually plagued with a serious issue, namely traffic congestion problems.

Traffic congestion is a problem which is common to most of the advancing third world countries. Traffic engineers around the world are implementing various kind of solutions to solve the problem.

For Kuantan City, as a result of lack of funding to upgrade major intersections into graded intersections, one way traffic system is implemented to ease traffic congestion problem.
1.1.1 Kuantan City

Located on the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Kuantan (3° 49' 0" N, 102° 20' 0" E) is the capital city of Pahang state, the third largest of Malaysia, after Sarawak and Sabah. It is surrounded by Maran and Jerantut Districts on its west, Terengganu State in the north, and Pekan District in the south.

Blessed with abundant natural resources, Kuantan has been rapidly growing into a modernised and urbanised city for the past few decades. The growth has been accelerated by the government’s planning to make Kuantan district the Special Economic Zone of East Coast Economic Region (ECER). Under this plan, integrated development approach including commercial, residential, education, industries, service, and knowledge components, which account for up to 80% of ECER’s economic output and 45% of job opportunities generation by year 2020, are being introduced and implemented. This makes Kuantan City the power house of the region. Quality and efficient physical infrastructure is vital to transform ECER into a developed region.

1.1.2 One way traffic

One way traffic is traffic which moves in one direction. A one-way street is a street either facilitating only one-way traffic, or designed to direct vehicles to move in one direction.

One way traffic is implemented in many cities worldwide, most notably New York City Metropolitan (particularly Manhattan region). In United States, the system was implemented since 30s to 50s of 20th century. The conversion is done after automobile became the major transportation mode. One-way streets were an attempt to accommodate traffic in areas which were initially not built for the automobile.
One way traffic is also implemented for safety reason. Cities that converted to one-way street have shown a significant decline in accidents. The obvious advantage of one-way streets is that road users need only to concentrate on one-direction when watching for traffic.

Theoretically, one-way streets should result in higher average speeds because traffic signal could be synchronised to enable driver to proceed without stopping at a fixed rate of speed. As a comparison, traffic on two-way streets is often delayed by special right-turn signals.

In more general term, implementation of one-way traffic is expected to result in smoother traffic flow with shorter travel delay time.

### 1.1.3 One Way Traffic in Kuantan City

On 22nd July 2013, Kuantan Municipal Council (MPK) ran a trial for implementation of one-way traffic flow system. This system is then made permanent during 21st October 2013, after improvement by responding to feedback from the public.

As stated by Datuk Zulkifli Yaacob, the president of MPK, motorists are ‘comfortable’ and ‘well-versed’ with the new routes. He also further stated that traffic congestion problems have improved with the new system. The move has resulted in a smoother flow of traffic, especially along Jalan Gambut and Jalan Tun Ismail, which most of the financial institutions and shopping malls are located.