

# Calls to encourage dashcams in all vehicles

**PETALING JAYA:** Road safety experts weighed in on the use of dashcams on e-hailing and commercial vehicles, pointing out how it could transform the investigations of accidents and the enforcement of traffic laws.

Universiti Putra Malaysia's Road Safety Research Centre head Assoc Prof Dr Law Teik Hua said dashcam technology could provide law enforcement with faster and more precise outcomes, improve reconstruction of road accidents and witness identification.

"Empirical research generally shows that dashcams are very effective in capturing and recording accidents, although the level of deterrence against reckless driving shows varying results.

"The use of video recordings often helps to establish blame and settle arguments, and in some instances, fraudulent claims are exposed. In commercial or fleet

driving with telematics, driver monitoring, or feedback systems, dashcams show positive results in decreasing reckless driving and collision rates," he told *The Star*.

On the pros and cons of mandating the use of dashcams in all vehicles, Law said apart from improving accident investigations, it would help reduce insurance fraud and provide better statistics to aid in planning for better road safety.

"It would also help ensure driver accountability and boost credibility in accident investigations.

"On the other hand, mandatory dashcams raise serious concerns regarding civil liberties and individual freedoms. For instance, it would mean constant recording of individuals in public places and in their own vehicles. There are also concerns regarding cost," he said.

Former police commissioner

Datuk Koh Hong Sun said dashcams should be considered a compulsory accessory for new vehicles, describing them as a practical safety tool and a deterrent against bad behaviour on the roads.

"Dashcams are useful not just for recording accidents but also for preventing arguments and fights that often break out after a collision," he said, adding that such incidents captured on video by onlookers are commonly found on social media.

The former federal traffic police head also pointed out that dashcams provide an objective record of events, and such footage has helped police arrest road bullies and repeat offenders.

"We have seen many cases where dashcam recordings helped enforcement agencies take action. Also, when drivers know they are being recorded from the front and back, they

tend to behave better. It creates a form of self-discipline on the roads," he said, adding that dashcams should ideally be installed in all new cars.

However, Koh stressed that dashcams alone are not enough in enforcing traffic laws.

"Real deterrence comes from consistent enforcement and effective penalties," he told *The Star*.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia traffic and road safety psychologist Prof Dr Rozmi Ismail echoed similar views and said the government should hold campaigns to encourage the use of dashcams in vehicles.

He said among the perks that the government can offer are personal tax exemptions for the installation of dashcams in private cars.

"Apart from traffic accidents, it can help solve crimes and even provide information on wildlife

straying from their habitat. Many of these animals, such as elephants, have been killed by moving vehicles.

"Motorcyclists especially, who comprise the highest number of traffic fatalities, should consider using dashcams, as they are highly vulnerable to accidents," Rozmi said.