



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

- **Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice**
- **Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts**
- **Organisation Chart**
- **From Subordinate Courts to State Courts**
- **Our Divisions**
- **Our Commitment to Justice**
- **Awards and Accolades**
- **Our People**



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

► **Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

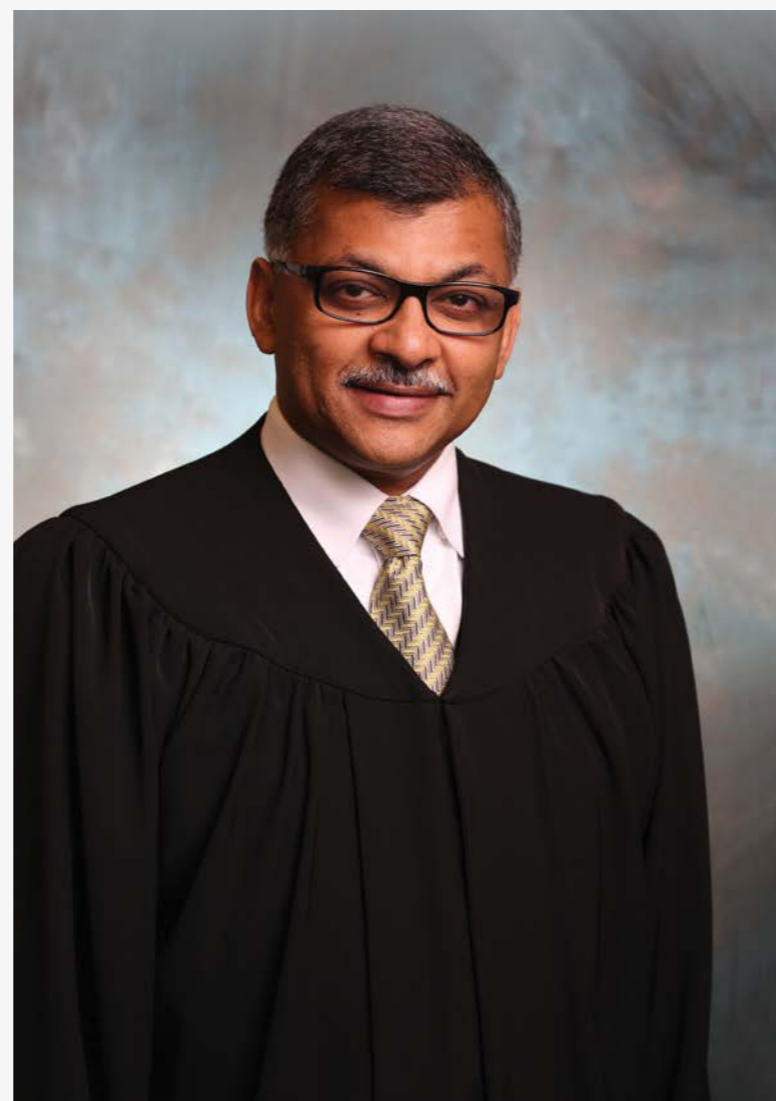
Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

FOREWORD BY THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE



This annual report is the very first to be published by the State Courts of Singapore. This new name, which was very recently conferred in March 2014, marks a fresh start for the Courts as they embrace their integral role of dispensing justice in our nation-state.

It is with a fresh perspective that the State Courts now survey the year that has just passed. These Courts have chosen to review their work with the goal of “renewing [their] commitment to justice”, as encapsulated in the report’s title. The State Courts’ work traverses a wide range of offences and disputes occurring in our society, and their decisions have immense impact on many spheres including commercial dealings, closest familial relationships and public safety. It was observed as far back as the 17th century by Thomas Hobbes that the “law is the public conscience”. Being a central part of the Singapore Judiciary, the State Courts play a major role in safeguarding this public conscience and ensuring confidence in the Rule of Law. It is therefore crucial that the State Courts’ continual quest for improvement be constantly underpinned by the simple yet profoundly fundamental concept of justice.

In this connection, I am heartened to read in the annual report about the ways in which the State Courts have in the past year enhanced their delivery of justice and facilitated greater access to justice. Their reforms have ranged from developing comprehensive filing and case management systems like the Integrated Electronic Litigation System and the Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System, to many efforts to assist litigants such as publishing toolkits to help them navigate civil applications, introducing an Amicus Curiae scheme for family disputes involving children and publishing a comprehensive third edition of the “Blue Book” concerning sentencing practice for criminal offences.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

► **Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

These Courts are also firmly committed to equipping their Judges to handle challenges that may arise in the administration of justice. A series of judicial training videos had been created, and the Courts' judicial training framework had been refined to facilitate comprehensive training for core judicial skills. The annual report also features notable judgments made by the State Court Judges in 2013. In sum, the State Courts' commitment to deliver justice excellently has been displayed on many fronts.

As the State Courts renew their commitment to justice, I trust that their Judges and Court Administrators will continue to make a discernible impact on all their court users. I extend my very best wishes to the State Courts as they commence a new chapter with the same unstinting commitment to justice.

SUNDARESH MENON

Chief Justice

Republic of Singapore



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

► Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE STATE COURTS



On 30 September 2013, we bade farewell to former Chief District Judge Tan Siong Thye, who was elevated to the Supreme Court. We wish to express our deepest gratitude to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye for his visionary leadership and guidance over five sterling years, and to convey our heartiest congratulations and best wishes on his new appointment.

The theme for the Annual Report 2013 is “Renewing Our Commitment to Justice”. This is indeed apt as amidst the many changes that we began to initiate in 2013, we remain steadfastly committed to delivering fair and accessible justice to serve the people of Singapore.

Renaming of Subordinate Courts to State Courts

In 2013, we began work on rebranding the Subordinate Courts, which were renamed State Courts on 7 March 2014. The State Courts’ new corporate logo was selected by our staff. The appointment of Chief District Judge was re-designated on 14 April

2014 as “Presiding Judge of the State Courts”, an appointment which is held by a Judge or Judicial Commissioner of the Supreme Court. Judges have been wearing judicial robes since 23 May 2013 when presiding over open court hearings, as a symbol of the importance of the judicial function while emphasising that each Judge acts with fairness, integrity, even-temperedness, patience, and absolute rectitude.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

► **Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Global Performance Excellence Awards

In July 2013, the Courts were awarded the World Class Award of the Global Performance Excellence Awards (GPEA) by the Asia Pacific Quality Organization (APQO). The World Class Award is the highest honour conferred by the APQO, and the Courts were the only recipient of this award in the “Not-for-Profit” category in 2013. The GPEA is the only formal international recognition of organisational and business excellence.

Judicial Governance Programme

Twenty-seven participants from 15 countries, including Chief Justices, Superior Court Judges, Registrars, Judge Administrators and Permanent Secretaries, attended the inaugural Judicial Governance Programme from 8 to 12 July 2013. This Programme, which was jointly organised by the Courts and the Civil Service College, promoted knowledge sharing among foreign judiciaries and other organisations with regard to Singapore’s judicial administration, development, and governance model. It also helped to profile Singapore’s legal system internationally.

Primary Justice Project

In his keynote address during the Subordinate Courts Workplan 2013, The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon announced that the Courts would embark on the Primary Justice Project (PJP). Akin to a primary healthcare provider that assists a patient before deciding whether to refer him to a hospital or specialist, the PJP would serve as an intermediate step to attempt to resolve a dispute without necessarily bringing the case to the Courts.

The Courts began work with The Law Society of Singapore to build up a corps of primary justice lawyers. These lawyers will provide a basic tier of legal services at a fixed fee. The Courts will work with the Law Society to produce toolkits for their work and link them to suitable parties through the Community Justice Centre.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

► Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Community Justice Centre

The Community Justice Centre (CJC) was officially opened by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon on 1 March 2013. Building on the services provided by the HELP (Helping to Empower Litigants-in-Person) Centre, the CJC provides a range of assistance to litigants-in-person. It is an independent charity which involves the State Courts, Ministry of Law, Ministry of Social and Family Development, Tan Chin Tuan Foundation, and The Law Society of Singapore as its stakeholders.

eLitigation for Civil and Family Cases

The Integrated Electronic Litigation System (eLitigation) was officially launched in the Civil Justice Division on 30 September 2013 and in the Family and Juvenile Justice Division on 2 December 2013. Replacing the Electronic Filing System, eLitigation provides court users with a single access point for the active case management of court matters, and serves as a one-stop portal for all case-related interactions with the Courts. To facilitate the implementation of eLitigation, the relevant Rules of Court and the Practice Directions were amended accordingly.

Simplification of the Procedure for Lower Value Civil Claims

The current regime prescribes the same procedure in all civil disputes, regardless of their monetary value. Around 89 per cent of writs filed at the Civil Justice Division involve sums of \$60,000 or less. A review was undertaken with a view to proposing a simplified process for claims of \$60,000 and below to reduce the cost of litigation, emphasise consensual outcomes, and adjudicate those cases that have to proceed for trial more expeditiously.

Motor Accident Guide

Claims arising from motor accidents form about 30 per cent of the civil cases filed in the State Courts annually. In 2013, we began work on the Motor Accident Guide (MAG). The MAG would be a quick reference guidebook that provides a range of likely liability findings for a comprehensive series of motor vehicle accident scenarios. This will allow parties as well as stakeholders such as insurance companies and workshops to make informed decisions for their cases, with a view to settlement, to save time and other resources.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

► **Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Toolkits to Assist Litigants-in-Person

To assist litigants-in-person in navigating our court processes, two toolkits – the Examination of Judgment Debtor Toolkit and the Interpleader Summons Toolkit – were launched in 2013. Both toolkits are user-friendly, offering overviews of the relevant court processes, practical guidance on filling up the court forms and the types of supporting documents required.

Reforms to Family Justice

An inter-agency group comprising Supreme Court Judges, Family Court Judges, and representatives from Ministry of Law and Ministry of Social and Family Development, was formed to work with family law practitioners and academics to consider possible reforms in the area of family justice. These include the use of collaborative law in family justice, adoption of a less adversarial approach in hearings, and establishing a separate Family Justice Court.

Family Justice Practice Forum

The inaugural Family Justice Practice Forum was held on 18 October 2013. Jointly organised by the Courts and the Ministry of Social and Family Development, the event was attended by more than 300 participants representing more than 100 agencies. The Forum's theme was "Collaborations for Holistic Outcomes", and it focused on understanding family violence issues and divorce and custody processes. The Forum provided the relevant stakeholders with a useful platform to share their organisations' work and roles in the family justice system.

Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System

The Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System (ICMS) is an integrated e-filing and e-workflow case management system for the Criminal Courts. Phase 1A of the ICMS was launched in July 2013, and it is being progressively rolled out in phases. This is a paperless system that enables all enforcement agencies to commence criminal prosecutions and other criminal matters electronically without a courthouse visit. The prosecution and defence will be able to file applications and receive court orders and documents online.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

► Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Publication of Practitioners' Library: Sentencing Practice in the Subordinate Courts, 3rd edition

Fondly known amongst criminal law practitioners as the "Blue Book", the third edition of the *Practitioners' Library: Sentencing Practice in the Subordinate Courts* was officially launched on 20 August 2013. This is the only sentencing book in Singapore that comprehensively analyses the sentences meted out for myriad offences, providing a useful guide to the sentencing tariffs for those offences. The new edition has been updated to include new case law and updated legislation, such as the Criminal Procedure Code (amended in 2011) and the Penal Code (amended in 2008).

Enhanced Resolution of Regulatory Offences

Offenders may be allowed to resolve certain categories of minor regulatory offences, by requesting for these matters to be compounded at the Court's 'doorstep' on the day of the hearing, without their cases being mentioned in Court. Another enhancement is facilitating the payment of fines for plea of guilt and composition cases in minor traffic offences by leveraging on technology (i.e. mobile AXS applications and internet payment facilities).

Witness Support Scheme

The Witness Support Scheme assists witnesses in court preparation by providing a tour of the courtroom and explaining the criminal court proceedings, commonly used terms in Court and the role of the witnesses. Such trial preparation assistance seeks to make testifying in Court a less stressful experience for lay witnesses. The Scheme will also provide counselling and referral social services to vulnerable witnesses.

Conclusion

2013 has indeed been a fruitful year for us. I am fully confident that under the guidance of The Honourable the Chief Justice and with the dedication and support of my colleagues, the State Courts will continue to forge ahead with renewed commitment in the coming years.

SEE KEE OON

Presiding Judge of the State Courts



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

ORGANISATION CHART



Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

► Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

► From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

FROM SUBORDINATE COURTS TO STATE COURTS

The Subordinate Courts play an integral role in the administration of justice in Singapore. With an annual caseload of about 350,000 and managing more than 95 per cent of the Judiciary's total caseload, the Courts are far from being "subordinate"; they are the primary dispensers of justice, dealing with a wide spectrum of disputes including criminal prosecutions, coroner's inquiries, civil disputes, small claims, family disputes and juvenile justice, and ensuring that access to justice is available to all.

Renaming to "State Courts"

To more accurately reflect the role and function that the Subordinate Courts play in the Judiciary and society, the Subordinate Courts (Amendment) Bill ("the Bill"), with the renaming of the Subordinate Courts to State Courts as a key feature, was first introduced in Parliament on 11 November 2013. In the second reading of the Bill, Senior Minister of State for Law, Ms Indranee Rajah, SC, noted that the choice of the name "State Courts" reflects "the important national function that the State Courts perform in adjudicating disputes and dispensing justice, and combines dignity with gravitas".

The Bill was passed on 21 January 2014 and on 7 March 2014, The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon officially launched the new name and logo of the State Courts.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

► From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People



The State Courts logo features an emblematic illustration of the new State Courts Complex together with a stylised bridge. On the left of the logo, a clean representation of the tower complex is applied – two coloured tower blocks representing the courtroom tower and the administrative tower. The towers are solid at the base, illustrating a firm commitment to justice anchored in the law while the angled peaked tops represent progress and aspiration towards excellence. The modern and sturdy typeface signifies the State Courts as a forum where justice prevails and disputes are resolved fairly and amicably.

The flat arc symbolically represents a bridge connecting the two towers of the State Courts Complex. Metaphorically, the stylised bridge that connects both the tower blocks not only emphasises the inter-connectivity between the judicial and administrative functions for the smooth running of the courthouse, but is also a symbolic reminder of the need to ensure access to justice to the people of Singapore through the State Courts' unstinting commitment to serving society.

The Bill also introduced other changes in relation to the apex post in the State Courts and the appointment of their Judges.

Elevating the Office of the "Chief District Judge" to "Presiding Judge of the State Courts"

The office of the Chief District Judge was elevated to that of the Presiding Judge of the State Courts, to reflect the wide-ranging jurisdiction and power vested in the State Courts, and the growing complexity of the cases filed there. It is also an assurance of the highest standard of leadership for the State Courts.

The position of the Presiding Judge is held by a Judge or Judicial Commissioner of the Supreme Court, and the appointment is made by the President of Singapore, on the recommendation of the Chief Justice. On 14 April 2014, Mr See Kee Oon was sworn in as a Judicial Commissioner and appointed the Presiding Judge of the State Courts.



Photo courtesy of Ministry of Communications and Information



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

► From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Increasing the Minimum Statutory Requirement for the Appointment of District Judges and Magistrates

The minimum statutory requirement for a legally qualified person to be a District Judge was increased from five years to seven years, while the minimum statutory requirement for a legally qualified person to be a Magistrate was raised from one year to three years. Raising the criterion for these appointments guarantees a more experienced and mature Bench and underscores the importance of the responsibilities that these Judges carry out. This would, in turn, enhance the standing of the State Courts.

Refreshing the State Courts' Justice Statement

Along with the name change, the State Courts' justice statement, comprising their shared vision, mission and core values, was refreshed. Although not substantially different from the previous version, the refreshed justice statement reaffirms the State Courts' commitment to inspiring public trust and confidence through an effective and accessible justice system.



SHARED VISION Inspiring public trust and confidence through an effective and accessible justice system

MISSION Serving society with quality judgments, timely dispute resolution and excellent court services

CORE VALUES Fairness
Accessibility
Independence, Integrity, Impartiality
Responsiveness



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

► From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Donning of Judicial Robes by Judges

Since 23 May 2013, Judges in the State Courts have been wearing judicial robes when presiding over open court hearings. A practice common in other jurisdictions where judges in the first instance courts, like the superior courts, also wear judicial robes, the introduction of the robes in the State Courts is to remind Judges and parties in a courtroom of the roles and functions of the Courts and their officers. During the inauguration of the judicial robes, the Chief Justice explained the significance of the robes:

“... most judicial systems recognise that there is an important symbolism that is embedded in this practice of donning the judicial robes. I think there is both an internal as well as an external dimension to this and both are rooted in the special sense of identity that the robe conveys.

“The internal dimension is that of the Judge who is urged to constantly remember, each time he dons the robe, that he is putting aside his usual self and taking on the very important identity of a Judge together with the responsibility that comes with it of being a symbol of fairness, integrity, even-temperedness, patience and absolute rectitude.

“The external dimension is that of others in the courtroom, who are reminded by the visible and manifest difference in the Judge’s outer appearance of that Judge’s inner identity that is rooted in his utter commitment to be independent and impartial, and to do right by all without fear or favour, affection or ill-will.”

Notwithstanding these changes, the State Courts will continue to fulfil their role as the primary dispensers of justice in the Singapore Judiciary, ensuring access to justice to the people of Singapore through their unstinting commitment to serving society.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

- ▶ Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT

The Internal Audit Unit (IAU) is an independent unit established in February 2013. It reports directly to the State Courts Audit Committee, which is chaired by the Presiding Judge of the State Courts. The IAU's mission is to provide independent and objective assurance and consulting services to the Audit Committee. It evaluates and improves the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes, and mitigates risks that might affect the achievement of the State Courts' strategic goals.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

▶ Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION

The Criminal Justice Division is the largest division in the State Courts. It handles more than 99 per cent of all criminal cases in Singapore. For the efficient disposal of the myriad of criminal cases that come before the Criminal Courts, the Division is organised into seven specialised groups.

Function	Courts*
Centralised Pre-Trial Conference (PTC) Court to centrally manage resources and assign trial cases to the various specialised Criminal Trial Courts	Court 17
Specialised Criminal Trial Courts for commercial crimes, corruption, immigration, special drugs and intellectual property cases	Courts 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 18, 24, 35, 39
Specialised Criminal Trial Courts for crimes against property (including housebreaking), Common Gaming House Act & Gambling offences and Employment Act / Employment of Foreign Worker Act / Employment Agencies Act cases	Courts 4, 8, 12, 13, 34, 37, 38
Community Courts for community / public order related cases	Courts 19 & 20
Specialised Criminal Trial Courts for crimes against persons cases	Courts 3, 5, 15, 16, 33, 36, 40
Mentions Courts for criminal cases (Courts 23 & 26); Specialised Courts for bail matters (Court 26), traffic cases (Court 21), summonses & regulatory matters (Court 14) and Coroner's cases (Court 22)	Courts 14, 21, 22, 23, 26 [#]
Administrative support to the Criminal Courts, Magistrate's Complaints and criminal case mediation cases	Crime Registry

* Correct as at January 2014. The Courts may periodically be allocated to different groups.

[#] Court 26 also operates as a Night Court i.e. Court 26N



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

▶ Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION

The Civil Justice Division comprises the Civil Registry, Primary Dispute Resolution Centre, Civil Trial Courts, Small Claims Tribunals and Bailiffs Section.

The Division handles civil claims that are within its jurisdiction. The Civil Registry hears and disposes of interlocutory applications such as the necessary preliminaries of service, pleadings and particulars. In accordance with the Rules of Court, the Civil Registry summarily disposes of claims through, for example, the summary judgment framework. In addition, the Civil Registry handles non-contentious probate matters in relation to estates whose value does not exceed \$3 million.

All civil cases are actively managed and monitored to ensure the optimal use of resources. Cases that are assessed as being suitable for mediation are channelled for resolution at the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre (PDRC), thereby reducing the need for trials which require more resources. Over the years, the PDRC has been able to achieve a 90 per cent success rate in settling claims. Cases that are not suitable for mediation and cases which are not settled despite mediation are then returned to the trial track. When these cases are ultimately ready for trial in accordance with the Rules of Court, they are dealt with in the Civil Trial Courts. Cases that require an assessment of the quantum of damages are sent to the Civil Registry after a trial and channelled for "Assessment of Damages" hearings by registrars.

The Small Claims Tribunals (SCT) deal with claims which have a monetary value of up to \$10,000. The SCT is an inexpensive system which deals with claims arising out of simple retail contracts and contracts for services.

In the State Courts, the Bailiffs Section undertakes all types of enforcement under the Rules of Court, after judgment has been obtained on claims.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

► Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

FAMILY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION

The primary role of the Family and Juvenile Justice Division (FJJD) is to handle family-related legal disputes. Family disputes are unique because of their very personal nature. Thus, a critical part of FJJD's role is to provide holistic solutions that focus on the parties' future, repair their relationships and protect their obligations to the family.

The FJJD deals with four main categories of cases: divorce and divorce-related proceedings; family protection and maintenance matters; mental capacity cases; and matters relating to children and young persons.

Divorce and Divorce-related Proceedings

The FJJD hears divorce and divorce-related applications, including applications:

- to commence divorce, nullity or judicial separation proceedings;
- for the consequential division of matrimonial assets (where the value of the assets is below \$1.5 million), orders relating to custody, care and control of children, and maintenance orders; and
- for subsequent variation of maintenance orders and orders concerning the children, where circumstances have changed since the grant of the order(s).

Parties are given ample opportunities throughout the divorce proceeding to work towards an amicable resolution of their cases, through the use of collaborative and less adversarial processes.

The Child Focused Resolution Centre (CFRC) was set up in September 2011 to conduct mandatory counselling and mediation for divorcing parents with at least one child below eight years old. The CFRC programme was extended to parents with at least one child below 14 years old with effect from 1 July 2013.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

► Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Family Protection and Maintenance Matters

The FJJD hears all applications for orders relating to:

- Family violence and protection;
- Maintenance (not consequent on divorce);
- Children under the Guardianship of Infants Act;
- Enforcement of maintenance orders;
- Enforcement of maintenance orders made by the Syariah Court; and
- Enforcement of maintenance orders made by the Tribunal for the Maintenance of Parents.

Mental Capacity Cases

The FJJD handles all proceedings under the Mental Capacity Act, and can make orders appointing deputies to act on behalf of persons lacking mental capacity.

Matters Relating to Children and Young Persons

The Juvenile Court handles criminal charges against juveniles in Singapore, but with a focus on the rehabilitation and restoration of the individual, and takes into account factors and circumstances from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The Juvenile Court also handles applications for “Care and Protection” and “Beyond Parental Control” orders under the Children and Young Persons Act.

The Family Court issues custody and adoption orders under the Guardianship of Infants Act and Adoption of Children Act respectively.

Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

The FJJD maintains partnerships with stakeholders who provide critical support services. They include the Ministry of Social and Family Development, the Panel of Juvenile Court Advisers, governmental and non-governmental family support agencies, family service centres and volunteer mediators.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

▶ Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

CORPORATE AND COURT SERVICES DIVISION

The Corporate and Court Services Division (CCSD) provides essential support services to the other divisions of the State Courts. Led by the Deputy Presiding Judge, the CCSD is the administrative backbone of the State Courts and is organised into various departments which are staffed by a team of subject specialists.

Communications Department

The Communications Department comprises the Corporate Communications Section, Service Relations Section and Call Centre.

The Corporate Communications Section (CCS) serves as a link between the State Courts and external parties, particularly the media, local and overseas visitors, and the general public. The CCS undertakes various communication activities to enhance the public's understanding and awareness of the work of the State Courts. This is done through communication channels like the media, website, corporate collaterals, and outreach programmes.

The Service Relations Section (SRS) aims to deliver excellent court services through the identification of training programmes for service staff. The SRS supervises service-related activities, including managing feedback and compliments from court users, and providing support to the Quality Service Manager.

The Call Centre was established in August 2013 to handle telephone enquiries from court users. This is part of the State Courts' service excellence efforts. Serving as a one-stop access to information on matters related to the State Courts, the Call Centre helps to improve the Courts' service delivery, as telephone enquiries are attended to by staff who are trained to address cross-divisional queries. In addition, the Call Centre is well-equipped to handle the high volume of calls made to the State Courts' public enquiry lines.

Human Resource Department

The Human Resource Department (HRD) aims to position the State Courts as an employer of choice in Singapore. Besides reviewing existing human resource strategies and policies regularly, the HRD actively develops new strategies to attract, develop and retain competent and talented employees. The department is responsible for the training, education and professional development of State Courts' Judges and staff. It oversees the development of the annual Master Learning Plan, a blueprint for addressing the training needs of the various divisions and the organisation. At the strategic level, the HRD is responsible for formulating an optimal manpower plan to ensure organisational excellence, sustainability and renewal.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

▶ Corporate and Court Services Division

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Finance Department

The Finance Department manages the State Courts' financial resources and provides value-added advice for planning and court administration. The Department offers prompt financial services by optimising revenue collection, payment processes and budget management.

Infrastructure Development Department

The Infrastructure Development Department (IDD) is committed to providing a safe and conducive environment for court users and staff. Besides managing the facilities of the State Courts building and Family and Juvenile Court building and the construction of the new State Courts Complex, the IDD also oversees procurement-related matters. In addition, the Department regularly reviews and develops strategies to ensure the safety and security of court users and staff.

Language Services Department

The Language Services Department aims to provide quality interpretation and translation services, and administers the statutory declarations and affidavits of court users. The Department also provides mediation services for maintenance disputes at the Family Court and assists in the bail and other applications made at the various registries. The Department's Indian Language Services Section also oversees the Foreign Interpreters Management Unit which manages the foreign interpreters engaged to assist court users who require interpretation and translation services in languages other than Chinese, Malay and Tamil.

Records Management Unit

The Records Management Unit ensures that court records are readily available upon request. This is done through an effective system of preservation, cataloguing, storage and retrieval of court documents.

Digital Recording and Transcription (DART) Unit

The DART Unit administers the digital recording of court proceedings, which frees Judges from the task of recording notes of evidence by hand and allows them to dedicate their full attention to hearing the cases before them.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

► Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

Organisational excellence in an organisation requires careful planning, analysis and anticipation of future challenges. The Strategic Planning and Technology Division (SPTD) assists the State Courts' leadership team in charting strategies to map a path between the present and the State Courts' vision of the future, and to work towards thought leadership in the area of administration of justice.

Working closely with the other divisions, the SPTD supports the building of a high performance culture to facilitate innovation and to ensure that Judges and staff are well-equipped to respond to the opportunities and challenges arising out of changes in their environment.

Planning Department

Planning Unit

The Planning Unit develops strategies and makes recommendations for meeting both short-term and long-term challenges. It alerts the leadership team to relevant developments in areas such as judicial and court administration, assesses their impact, proposes suitable responses or strategies, and supports the leadership team in decision making.

Research and Knowledge Development Unit

The main role of the Research and Knowledge Development Unit is to drive research-based programmes and initiatives to support the Planning Department in its strategic planning function. The Unit has been proactively strengthening its capabilities in horizon-scanning and benchmarking against the international legal landscape and judicial developments. Since its establishment, the function of this Unit has expanded from that of "foundation-building" to "capacity-building" so as to better cater to the organisation's needs.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

► Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Knowledge Management & Library Department

Knowledge Management Section

Established in 2011, the Knowledge Management Section encourages a culture of knowledge capturing and sharing, and ensures that judicial knowledge and experiences are properly documented, continuously enriched and easily accessed.

Library

The Library at the State Courts is one of the few specialist libraries which offer resources and services to meet the needs of the legal community, academic institutions and the public. In 2013, the Library collaborated with the Infrastructure Development Department and Information Technology Department to create the e-Library Services at the State Courts' atrium. This is to publicise the legal information services that are available in the Library and provide information and directions to relevant stakeholders seeking legal information and resources.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Internal Audit Unit

Criminal Justice Division

Civil Justice Division

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Corporate and Court Services Division

► Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Organisational Excellence and Performance Management Department

Organisational Excellence Unit

The Organisational Excellence Unit (OEU) was set up to institutionalise and coordinate initiatives for the development of organisational excellence and attainment of higher standards. The OEU is instrumental in facilitating the State Courts' drive towards sustained organisational excellence through the adoption of international standards, including the International Framework for Court Excellence, and the development of programmes to strengthen the Courts' internal systems and processes.

Statistics and Analysis Section

The Statistics and Analysis Section (SAS) tracks, monitors and reports on the performance of the State Courts through the analysis of operational data, results of key performance indicators, and surveys. Such statistical information is intended to enhance the ability to refine court processes and case management, as well as to improve resource management. The SAS also keeps abreast of the ratings and rankings accorded to the Singapore Judiciary or legal system, to assist the organisation to ascertain its relative position and standing in the international community.

Information Technology Department

The Information Technology Department (ITD) ensures that the State Courts' functions and operations are effectively and efficiently enhanced through the strategic use of information technology (IT). The ITD seeks to harness IT to contribute to the fulfilment of the Courts' core values and their aspiration of providing a world class model of service delivery that meets court users' needs in a professional, user-friendly and cost-effective manner.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

▶ Significant Cases

- ▶ • Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

SIGNIFICANT CASES

Criminal Justice Division

Corruption involving Public Servants

The Criminal Courts dealt with two cases of corruption involving senior public servants in 2013. Ng Boon Gay, the former Director of the Central Narcotics Bureau, claimed trial to four charges of corruptly obtaining sexual gratification from a sales representative who worked for two companies that marketed products to government agencies. The Court acquitted the accused after finding that there was no corrupt element or guilty knowledge as the sexual acts arose in the context of an intimate relationship between the accused and the sales representative. The Prosecution withdrew its appeal against the order of acquittal after the Grounds of Decision was released by the Court.

Peter Lim, the former Commissioner of the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), claimed trial to one charge of corruptly obtaining sexual gratification from a manager working for an SCDF vendor. The Court rejected the accused's defence that he was in an intimate relationship with the manager, and found that there was a corrupt element and guilty knowledge in the transaction. The Court sentenced the accused to six months' imprisonment.

Coroners' Cases

Dr Shane Todd, an American researcher working in the Institute of Microelectronics (IME) in Singapore, was found hanged in his apartment in June 2012. The case generated significant attention locally and internationally when Dr Todd's parents suggested that their son had been murdered because of the military-related research that he had done in IME, whereas investigations by the Singapore Police Force suggested that he had taken his own life. After an extensive and far-reaching Coroner's Inquiry involving 10 days of testimony by 74 local and foreign witnesses, the Coroner concluded that Dr Todd had committed suicide by hanging and that there was no foul play involved. After the verdict, the Embassy of the United States in Singapore stated that the Coroner's Inquiry was "comprehensive, fair, and transparent".



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre
Honouring Court Volunteers
Internship Programmes
Caseload and Statistics
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Dinesh Raman s/o Chinnaiah was an inmate in Changi Prison. On 27 September 2010, he attacked a prison officer. This resulted in him being placed in a prison cell under restraint in a prone position. While in the cell, he succumbed to positional asphyxia. He had experienced breathlessness due to pepper spray being applied to his face when he was under physical restraint. A senior prison officer pleaded guilty to a charge of causing his death by doing a negligent act as he had failed to adequately supervise the restraint operation. The Court imposed a fine of \$10,000 after noting that the accused had no motive or intention to cause serious injury or death to the deceased.

After the conclusion of the criminal case, the State Coroner exercised his discretion under section 39 of the Coroner's Act to not proceed further with the Coroner's Inquiry into the death of Dinesh Raman s/o Chinnaiah. The family of the deceased made an application to the High Court for leave to apply for judicial review of the Coroner's decision. The High Court denied the application and found that there was no evidence that the State Coroner had acted illegally, improperly or irrationally.

Commercial Sex with Minors

In 2012, a total of 51 men were charged under section 376B(1) of the Penal Code for paying for the sexual services of an underaged female. In 2013, the person who recruited the underaged female as a prostitute was dealt with by the Court.

Tang Boon Thiew pleaded guilty to 20 charges in relation to his activities as the person behind an online vice ring. Sometime between 2009 and 2010, he set up an online social escort agency from which he operated an online vice business, sourcing for women to provide sexual services to clients. He would recruit women for his business through channels such as social media websites. At one point, he had 17 women providing sexual services to his clients. Between September 2010 and November 2011, they earned a total of \$371,450 and Tang's share was about 50 per cent of that amount. He was sentenced to a total of 58 months' imprisonment and a fine of \$90,000. His appeal against the sentence was dismissed by the High Court.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

▶ Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- ▶ • Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Civil Justice Division

Unilink Credit Pte Ltd v Chong Kuek Leong

The Plaintiff, a licensed moneylender, was seeking to recover the balance of a loan which had the following repayment terms and interest charges:

- Interest – 72 per cent per annum
- Late interest – 240 per cent per annum
- Late payment charges - \$80 per day
- Loan tenure – 10 months repayable in monthly instalments

The Deputy Registrar (“DR”) had found that the interest rates charged were unreasonable. He exercised his powers under section 23 of the Moneylenders Act to review if the interest rate or other fees charged were excessive and the transaction unconscionable. In lieu of the interest rates claimed, the DR allowed the Plaintiff to impose interest at 18 per cent per annum for both the principal amount and the late payment interest.

The Plaintiff appealed against the DR’s decision. At the Registrar’s Appeal, the Court hearing the appeal directed the Plaintiff’s lawyer to provide more information on the rates of interest charged by financial institutions for similar non-collateralised loans.

The Court was then told that the market rate for such interest rates ranged from 15.06 per cent per annum to 32.33 per cent per annum. The interest rates also varied depending on the annual income of the borrower and the tenure of the loan.

At the hearing of the Registrar’s Appeal, the issue was whether the interest rates charged were excessive and the transaction unconscionable or substantially unfair, within the meaning of the Act. This is because the Act had been amended in 2008 to remove the cap on the interest rate to be charged by moneylenders. In place of a cap, the Court is authorised to exercise its powers to review a transaction if it finds that the interest rates charged are excessive or the transaction is unconscionable.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre
Honouring Court Volunteers
Internship Programmes
Caseload and Statistics
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

In this case, the Court observed that:

- (a) The Plaintiff's interest rate on the principal sum lent, at 72 per cent per annum, was about five times that charged by banks.
- (b) In comparison against the interest rates charged by credit card companies on overdue payments, the late interest rate of 240 per cent per annum charged by the Plaintiff was high, or excessive and was clearly disproportionate to any real loss that the Plaintiff could prove.

The Court eventually found that the rates charged by the Plaintiff were either unconscionable or substantially unfair. The Court set aside the DR's award of interest at the rate of 18 per cent per annum and substituted it with the rate of 24 per cent per annum.

Philip Mockridge v Ruby, Thai Inspired Cuisine

What harm can a hot cheese ball cause? This issue occupied more than a day in a Magistrate's Court in a case between a customer and a Thai restaurant. Both parties were unrepresented.

The Plaintiff had visited the Thai restaurant with a friend. They ordered chicken cheese balls, amongst other dishes. When the cheese balls were served, the Plaintiff took a bite of a cheese ball and hot cheese squirted out and splashed onto parts of his left forearm. The Plaintiff alleged that this caused him great pain for several days.

The Plaintiff saw a doctor five days later. The doctor found seven second-degree burn spots of dimensions mostly about 1 cm, with the largest spot measuring 1 cm x 0.8 cm. When he testified in Court, the doctor was asked to examine the Plaintiff's left forearm. He noted no permanent scarring on the forearm.

The Defendant's case was that the cheese balls were meant to be served hot and his service staff had warned the Plaintiff of the hot cheese balls when serving the dish. The Defendant added that his staff had followed the manufacturer's directions to use hot oil in a frying pan to prepare the cheese balls. The Defendant countered that the Plaintiff had been careless when he ate the cheese ball. Furthermore, there had been no similar incidents in his restaurant.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

The Court found that the Defendant did owe the Plaintiff a duty of care to warn him that the cheese balls were hot and care had to be taken when eating them because of a foreseeable risk of hot cheese squirting out. Thus, the service staff's standard warning had fallen short.

The Plaintiff, citing a 1996 Magistrate's Court decision, sought \$7,000 in damages for the pain and suffering that had been caused to him. Distinguishing this case from the earlier decision because of smaller burn spots and no permanent scarring, the Court ordered the Defendant to pay the Plaintiff \$1,500 in damages.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division

- ▶ • Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Application under the International Child Abduction Act

A German father applied under the International Child Abduction Act for the return of his child to Germany from Singapore. The Singaporean mother had resisted the application by relying on the defence in Article 13(b) of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, namely that there is a grave risk that the child's return would expose him to physical or psychological harm or otherwise place the child in an intolerable situation. The mother claimed that she had been abused by the father and her mother-in-law, and that if she returned to Germany, the continued abuse would place the child in an intolerable situation.

The Family Court allowed the father's application. It decided that any friction between the child's mother and her mother-in-law did not impact the child. There was also no allegation of any child abuse, ill-treatment or violence by the father against the child. The Court attached little weight to a doctor's report that it would be unwise to separate the mother and child, as it was solely based on information provided by the mother. The mother appealed against this decision.

The Family Court's decision was upheld by the High Court. The mother then appealed to the Court of Appeal. On 3 December 2013, the Court of Appeal ordered the return of the child to Germany on the basis of various undertakings by both parties being performed.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division

• Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Application to be Appointed Deputies under the Mental Capacity Act

Two siblings applied under section 20 of the Mental Capacity Act (“MCA”) to be appointed as deputies of their sister (“the Patient”) whom they alleged lacked mental capacity, in relation to her property and affairs.

In arriving at its decision that the Patient lacked mental capacity, the Family Court considered, among other factors, evidence from doctors, medical experts, family members, the Patient’s evidence in Court, and a series of events within the Patient’s family from which inferences on her mental capacity were drawn. The Court concluded that the Patient was unable to retain relevant information long enough to weigh it and make decisions in respect of her property and affairs, as well as understand and appreciate the implications of her actions.

The Family Court’s decision was overturned by the High Court on appeal. The High Court stated that the legal test to ascertain a lack of mental capacity has two components, namely functional and clinical. The functional component is a legal inquiry to assess the individual’s ability to make a decision. All practicable steps must first be taken to help the individual to understand, retain and weigh the information and communicate a decision. The High Court decided that these had not been done and therefore the assessment of the functional component was inaccurate. The matter is currently pending before the Court of Appeal.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- ▶ Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

Internal Audit Unit

The Internal Audit Unit established a formal charter that defines the purpose, authority and responsibilities of the Unit. It implemented a risk-based approach in developing the annual audit plan, to ensure that critical processes are reviewed at appropriate intervals. This is to ascertain that the processes are properly managed in a manner that is consistent with the organisation's objectives and adheres to a high standard of governance practice. The Unit also purchased a data analytics software to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its auditing process.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

• The Internal Audit Unit

▶ • Criminal Justice Division

• Civil Justice Division

• Family and Juvenile Justice Division

• Corporate and Court Services Division

• Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Criminal Justice Division

Publication of Practitioners' Library: Sentencing Practice in the Subordinate Courts, 3rd Edition



20 August 2013 saw the official launch of the third edition of the *Practitioners' Library: Sentencing Practice in the Subordinate Courts*, fondly known amongst criminal law practitioners as the "Blue Book". This comes a decade after the second edition was published and as with the earlier publications, this new edition was produced in collaboration with LexisNexis (Southeast Asia).

The Blue Book is the only sentencing book in Singapore that provides a comprehensive analysis of the sentencing tariffs for myriad offences. It also has useful commentaries that provide insights into the applicable sentencing principles and considerations for various offences.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

► Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- • Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

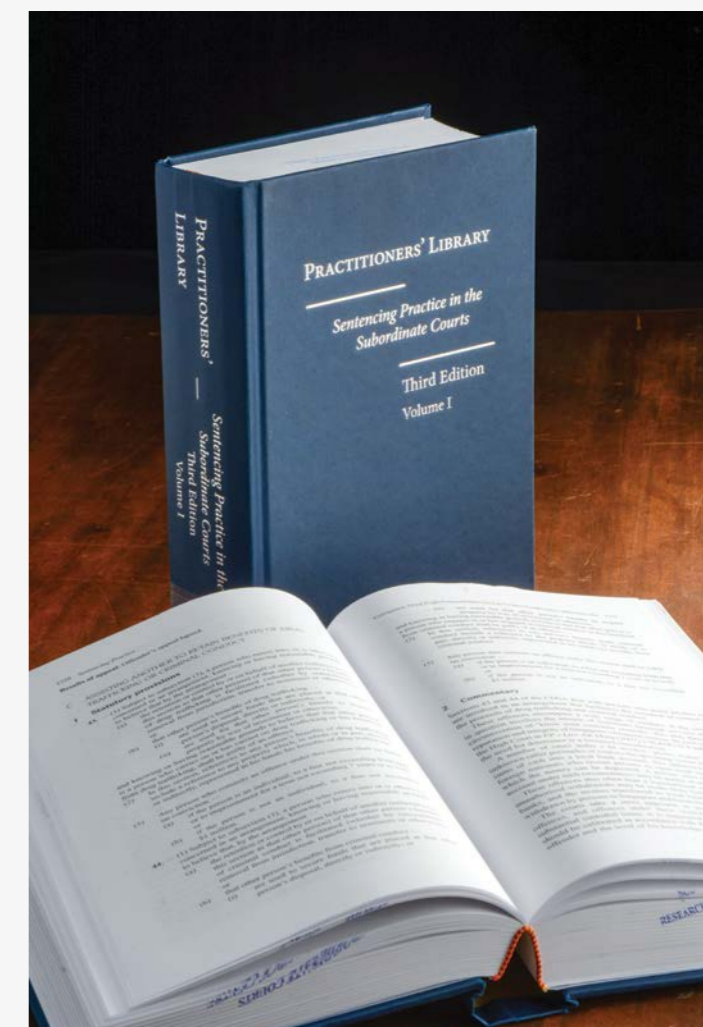
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

The new edition is the result of the hard work and commitment of 27 Judges. It is updated with new case laws and revised to integrate new legislation such as the Criminal Procedure Code (amended in 2011) and the Penal Code (amended in 2008), both of which introduced many changes to the criminal and sentencing laws in Singapore. Additional chapters have also been included to ensure that due attention is given to offences, which, though not new, have taken on greater prominence in recent years. It serves as a useful aid to the practitioners in the Criminal Bar as well as the prosecutors in relation to sentencing matters for offences that are regularly dealt with in the Courts; references to the Blue Book are commonly made when parties deliver their submissions.

Mr Amolat Singh, a solicitor at Amolat & Partners, said, "Prior to the sentencing practice book, we had to go about talking to fellow lawyers in the Bar Room or even popping into a Court to see what kinds of sentences were being meted out. Now we do not feel 'handicapped' in Court."





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- ▶ • Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Implementation of Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System

The Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System (ICMS) is an integrated e-filing and e-workflow case management system for the Criminal Courts. It transforms the previously paper-based process into a paperless, digital environment. It enables enforcement agencies to commence criminal prosecutions and other criminal matters electronically without making a trip to the courthouse. Prosecution and Defence are able to file applications and documents online at any time of the day.

The ICMS also provides a single, common source of information on criminal cases and enables instant sharing of selected information amongst users. All case workflows, from the filing of charges to the disposal of the cases, are tracked in the system.

The ICMS is being implemented in phases. The first phase, which kicked off in July 2013, applies to criminal proceedings and criminal matters relating to pre-trial and “plead guilty” procedures, procedures relating to bails and bonds, and procedures for forfeiture orders dealt with under section 370 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

The second phase will be rolled out in 2014 and will apply to the Traffic Court and to prosecutions undertaken by all law enforcement agencies and counsel acting on behalf of the Public Prosecutor.

The final phase is targeted to be rolled out in 2015 and will involve private prosecution matters and the coronial system.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- ▶ • Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Civil Justice Division

Launch of eLitigation

On 30 September 2013, the Integrated Electronic Litigation (eLitigation) system was officially launched in the Civil Justice Division. The eLitigation system replaces the Electronic Filing System (EFS) which had been in operation since 2000. The new system builds upon and significantly extends the capabilities of the EFS by incorporating modern technologies and the latest advancements in content management systems. It offers court users a single access point to commence and thereafter manage their case files throughout the litigation process. The much-improved functionalities provide a more accessible system for court users, and allow for a more streamlined and efficient approach towards the conduct of electronic litigation. To facilitate the implementation of the eLitigation system in the Civil Justice Division, the Rules of Court and the Practice Directions were amended with effect from 30 September 2013.

Mediation Advocacy Workshop

On 6 and 7 May 2013, the Civil Justice Division, together with The Law Society of Singapore, supported the Singapore Mediation Centre in conducting the inaugural Mediation Advocacy Workshop. This workshop aimed to spread the awareness of mediation and to equip legal practitioners with the necessary skills to advance their clients' interest through mediation. This joint partnership forms part of the Courts' ongoing efforts to work together with their stakeholders to further develop the alternative dispute resolution scene in Singapore. The workshop was well attended by legal practitioners, and there are plans to conduct similar workshops on a regular basis in future.

Supporting the Peacemakers Conference

Since 2010, the State Courts have been supporting the annual Peacemakers Conference, through the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre. The Peacemakers Conference is held in collaboration with the Ministry of Education for secondary school students to learn mediation skills from experienced mediators. Selected students also get to hone their skills during an inter-school mediation competition held during the Conference. The State Courts have been providing financial sponsorship for the event and judges for the competition.

Toolkits to Assist Litigants-in-Person

In view of the rising numbers of Litigants-in-Person (LIPs), the Civil Justice Division continued to explore ways to assist them in navigating court processes through user-friendly toolkits. After the successful launch of the Probate and Administration Toolkit in 2012, the Civil Justice Division launched two other toolkits in 2013, the Examination of Judgment Debtor Toolkit and the Interpleader Summons Toolkit. Both toolkits offer a clear overview of the relevant court processes, practical guidance on filling up the court forms and the types of supporting documents required.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- ▶ • Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Inaugural Family Justice Practice Forum

The Family and Juvenile Justice Division (FJJD) adopts a holistic approach to family dispute resolution, which includes repairing family relationships and upholding a child's interests. This requires the close cooperation of the relevant stakeholders.

On 18 October 2013, the FJJD co-organised the inaugural Family Justice Practice Forum (FJPF), themed "Collaborations for Holistic Outcomes", with the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). The Forum sought to engage the relevant stakeholders, such as the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and the Family Bar, as well as to exchange ideas and update one another on their respective programmes and initiatives.

Three hundred and fifty participants attended the half-day event which comprised two sessions: "Family Violence – Collaborations to Protect and Preserve Families" and "Divorce and its Legacy on Children". There were presentations by speakers from MSF, FJJD, the Family Bar, SPF, HELP Family Service Centre and the Care Corner Project START. Each session culminated in a panel discussion with active participation from the audience.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- ▶ • Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Appointment of Amicus Curiae

To facilitate the holistic resolution of child-related matters, the FJJD commenced the Amicus Curiae (AC) project in 2013 on a pilot basis. An amicus curiae, or friend of the Court, can be appointed in divorce cases or Originating Summons (Family) cases under the Guardianship of Infants Act when the Court considers the case a suitable one; some degree of settlement or mediation has been attempted by the parties; and it is clear that the case is likely to proceed for a contested hearing.

The AC's role is to assist the Court on matters of law and fact. The AC and a counsellor from the FJJD will work together on each case and report to the Court their recommendations as to the best interests of the child. If the case is not resolved with the assistance of the AC and counsellor, the matter will be fixed for hearing within six months of the AC's appointment.

The first AC was appointed on 4 April 2013, and the case report was rendered on 23 August 2013. An interim judgment for divorce was granted on an uncontested basis on 27 August 2013 and at a further court mediation session, the parties settled on all ancillary matters. The divorce was made final on 10 December 2013.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
 - Criminal Justice Division
 - Civil Justice Division
 - Family and Juvenile Justice Division
 - ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
 - Strategic Planning and Technology Division
- Launch of the Community Justice Centre
Honouring Court Volunteers
Internship Programmes
Caseload and Statistics
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Corporate and Court Services Division

Updated Guide for Court Reporters

In 2013, the Corporate Communications Section (CCS) updated its guide for reporters who are new to court reporting. Formatted as a compilation of frequently asked questions (FAQs), the guide informs new reporters of the dos and don'ts in the courtroom as well as the types of case-specific information that may be provided to the media. During the highly-publicised Coroner's Inquiry into the death of Dr Shane Todd, an engineer who was working in Singapore at the time of his death, the FAQs proved especially helpful to the foreign reporters who were unfamiliar with the Courts' media protocol and court etiquette.

Subordinate Courts Facebook Page

In November 2013, the Subordinate Courts made their foray into social media. The CCS created the Subordinate Courts* Facebook page to provide updates on happenings in the Courts. As at December 2013, the Facebook page had attracted more than 200 "Likes". This is part of the Courts' efforts to reach out to and better connect with the social media users in Singapore.

While the viral nature of social media may be worth exploiting to disseminate news and information fast and wide, its use should be strategic and measured, especially in relation to issues of privacy. To guide staff on the responsible use of social media, personally and professionally, the CCS also reviewed the social media policy in the Courts' Code of Conduct handbook.

* The Subordinate Courts Facebook page is now named "State Courts Singapore".

Wall Mural Dedicated to Court Administrators

Court Administrators play a crucial role in contributing to the work of the Courts. To honour the Court Administrators and remind all staff to put in their best at work, the Service Relations Section produced a wall mural on the ground floor of the State Courts building. A key feature of the wall mural is the honour roll of the "Court Administrator of the Year" and "Service Staff of the Quarter" award recipients. Staff and court users alike have commented favourably on the wall mural, saying that it is both a morale booster for staff, and a reflection of the Courts' commitment to delivering quality service.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Call Centre for Improved Call Management

Members of the public and court users frequently make phone calls to the State Courts to obtain information on various matters. To improve call management and service delivery, the Communications Department set up an in-house Call Centre in August 2013.



Managed by experienced call handlers who are trained to attend to cross-divisional queries and equipped with sophisticated call-handling capabilities (such as the ability to place calls in a queue and to route calls to the first available call handler), the Call Centre provides a one-stop access to callers for information on matters related to the State Courts. With the Call Centre, counter staff can devote their time to attending to in-person queries and processing cases without having to answer telephone enquiries at the same time, thereby improving their productivity. As the Call Centre

offers real-time update on call volume and records the call transactions, supervisors can also review the call records to ensure that service delivery standards are met. Since its launch until December 2013, the Call Centre had handled close to 18,000 enquiries.

Strategic Workforce Planning

Strategic workforce planning (SWP) is a process that helps to ensure that an organisation has the right people, at the right time and at the right place to execute its strategies. The Human Resource Department (HRD) has embraced this process to facilitate its effort to develop an optimal manpower plan for the Courts. A workshop on SWP was conducted for the senior management members and all senior court administrators to provide them with a better appreciation of this process. With the tools and skills acquired from the workshop, they are now in a better position to perform SWP for their work units.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Dedicated HR Account Manager for each Division

In order to better serve its internal stakeholders, the HRD implemented the HR Account Manager Framework in May 2013. Under this framework, each division is served by an HR account manager whom the division can contact for its HR-related matters. Besides this, the HRD also organised an inaugural HR Communications session entitled "HR & I" in August 2013 where staff were updated on the various new HR initiatives and policies.

Pro Work-Life Harmony Programmes

In 2013, the HRD augmented its range of pro work-life harmony programmes with a pilot telecommuting scheme and the "Back to School with Mom and Dad" programme. The former provides staff with greater flexibility in managing their work and personal commitments while the latter gives time-off to staff with young children starting school or kindergarten, to enable them to help their children adjust to school during the first week of school.

Staff Development Initiatives

The HRD also introduced new initiatives that focused on developing staff. Besides mentors, each new staff member is paired with a peer from the same division under the "Buddy System" to facilitate his/her induction into the organisation. In addition, a talk on effective supervisory skills was conducted for supervisors to sharpen their people management skills.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Enhanced Training Programmes

In 2013, efforts were intensified to enhance the professional development of Judges and to ensure that all Judges are routinely inculcated with the necessary skills and tools to discharge their core responsibilities of managing and adjudicating cases in a proficient manner. Key initiatives included the refinement of the Judicial Training Framework and Roadmap, the institutionalisation of the Court Craft Excellence Programme, the implementation of the Judicial Mentorship Programme, the introduction of the Leadership Mentorship Programme and the creation of judicial training resources.

A competency framework that is aligned with the Courts' goals and objectives was introduced to guide the learning and development of Court Administrators. Among the many new initiatives introduced for Court Administrators in 2013 was the inaugural Learning Day - a full-day, off-site learning event - which explored the use of a variety of learning methodologies to offer a series of fun and interactive learning activities for Court Administrators at all levels.



\$ave Award

The Finance Department introduced the \$ave Award in January 2013 to incentivise staff to review and refine processes, optimise resources and identify ways from which dollar savings can be reaped. Employees are encouraged to devise ideas that improve the quality of services or processes while generating savings. The purpose of the award is to instil the values and ethos of fiscal prudence, as well as to reiterate the importance of stretching every tax dollar. Since its launch, a total of 25 suggestions had been submitted, resulting in approximately \$220,000 in savings.

Enhanced Financial Management System

In 2013, the Finance Department collaborated with the Information Technology Department, the three justice divisions and the Accountant-General's Department to integrate its Finance Management System (FMS) with the Accountant-General Department's new financial system. The integrated FMS enhanced the payment-related processes, resulting in cost savings, increased productivity and shorter processing time.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Restoration of the Family and Juvenile Court building's Façade

In August 2013, the Infrastructure Development Department (IDD) returned the Family and Juvenile Court building, a national monument, to its former glory. After 10 months of intensive works, the building's Shanghai plaster façade was restored.



Management of Courtroom Resources

In an eventful year that saw the Courts handle an unprecedented number of cases that attracted a high level of public interest, the IDD introduced several measures to ensure that the trials went on smoothly. Among them were QR (Quick Response)-coded entry passes for managing trials that attracted a high demand for the public gallery seats in the courtrooms, and the reconfiguration of courtrooms to increase the seating capacity.

Response to Critical Environmental Situations

Singapore saw one of the most serious haze situations in recent history in 2013. To ensure the well-being of staff and court users, air purifiers were installed, among other measures, to alleviate the situation. The IDD also formalised a comprehensive plan for handling critical events such as the haze situation.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- ▶ • Corporate and Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Enhancements to Building Infrastructure

To enhance the Courts' security, full high-definition closed-circuit television cameras were fitted to increase the efficacy of detecting suspicious persons, vehicles and objects. State-of-the-art video analytics were also installed to offer real-time alerts of suspicious activities in and around the Courts' premises.

In line with the government's economic drive campaign, energy-saving light-emitting diode lamps replaced fluorescent ones at the car park and staircases. Motion detectors were also installed to further reduce energy consumption.

Language Classes for Front-line Staff

In 2013, basic Malay and Mandarin classes were conducted for front-line staff with a keen interest in languages. After completing the course, the participants were better able to assist and serve members of public who do not understand English well. Due to their popularity, the Chinese and Malay Language Services Sections will conduct another round of classes in 2014.

Knowledge Sharing Session for Foreign Interpreters

The Foreign Interpreters' Management Unit (FIMU) conducted a knowledge sharing session in 2013 on court processes and procedures for its foreign interpreters. This is part of FIMU's efforts to maintain the high service standard and professionalism of the foreign interpreters.

Completion of Microfilming for Criminal Justice Division

In 2013, the Records Management Unit completed the microfilming project for the Criminal Justice Division, which involved the preservation of some 18 million pages of court records. The Unit also increased its productivity by shortening the time needed to retrieve court documents.

Quality Assurance Programme for Better Court Transcripts

In 2013, the Digital Recording and Transcription Unit initiated a quality assurance programme to carry out periodic checks on microphones, audio mixers and software to pre-empt technical issues to prevent them from escalating. This led to better quality court transcripts.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- ▶ • Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Design Thinking

One of the core functions of the Planning Unit is to drive planning initiatives such as the annual Corporate Retreat and the Workplan Seminar. The Corporate Retreat in July 2013 was the first time that the Planning Unit introduced the concept of "Design Thinking", a human-centred methodology that may be applied to gain a deeper understanding of the users of a system, and generate new ideas to meet their needs. The Courts used this concept to interview their stakeholders and obtain insight and other qualitative information that could not be gleaned from empirical data. Such information was then used to facilitate discussions during the Corporate Retreat.

Research Bulletin "Court-in-Sight"

The Research and Knowledge Development Unit's inaugural issue of the research bulletin titled "Court-in-Sight" was launched in October 2013. This is a publication which examines a topic of interest that is judiciary- or legal-related and expounds on that topic for awareness and discussion. The three research articles featured in the inaugural issue were: "Successfully Dispensing Justice While Rehabilitating the Juvenile Offender: A Comparative Study of the Juvenile Profile and Juvenile Arrest Charges", "The Rule of Law and Economic Freedom: An Analysis Study on Judicial Rankings for Singapore" and "Access To Justice – The Singapore Experience".

Judicial Training Videos

Following the launch of the first series of judicial training videos covering basic court craft skills, and management of litigants-in-person and counsel in 2012, the Research and Knowledge Development Unit completed and launched the second series of videos in November 2013, namely, "Dealing with Challenging Counsel" and "Managing Litigants-in-Person".

New Intranet Portal

The Knowledge Management Section re-developed the Intranet, as part of the overall strategy to strengthen the structure, management and sharing of knowledge in the Courts. Launched in June 2013, the new Intranet houses all crucial links and institutional information. It is designed to be a one-stop gateway to all important information, applications, portals and sites.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

► Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- • Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Inaugural Organisational Health Survey

In 2013, the Organisational Excellence Unit (OEU) conducted the inaugural Organisational Health Survey. The results were benchmarked against the Public Sector Employee Engagement Survey Norm that considered data from 40,355 employees from 49 public agencies in Singapore, as well as the Towers Watson Singapore National Norm that considered data from 147,565 employees in both the public and private sectors in Singapore. The analysis showed that the State Courts were on par with or significantly better than the norms in most categories.

Organisational Excellence – Sharing and Learning

The OEU regularly conducts sharing sessions and presentations on organisational excellence initiatives implemented by the State Courts for agencies such as the Infocomm Development Authority, Maritime Port Authority, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, SIM University, Singapore Civil Defence Force, as well as foreign delegates of the Asian Productivity Organization programme. The OEU also participated in the PS21 ExCEL Convention 2013 to showcase the Courts' efforts to ensure access to justice and uphold the rule of law.

The OEU also organised many activities to enhance the organisational excellence experience amongst staff. A lunch-time talk on productivity measurement and improvement, and learning journeys to the Institute of Technical Education, Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore and PS21 ExCEL Convention were conducted.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

► Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- • Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

ICT Master Plan

In 2013, the State Courts' fifth ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Master Plan was formalised. This Master Plan covering the period 2013 to 2015 provides a holistic approach to the future development and implementation of new information systems and technologies, ensures the delivery of high-quality service to all court users, and enables the Courts to implement government policies in relation to the Information Society.

Inaugural Judicial Governance Programme

The inaugural Judicial Governance Programme (JGP), held from 8 to 12 July 2013, was co-organised by the Subordinate Courts and Civil Service College to share with overseas judiciaries and organisations the Courts' experiences in court governance, administration and judicial capabilities.

Besides knowledge sharing, the JGP aimed to contribute proactively to the development and reform of the judiciaries and legal systems of developing countries, thereby enhancing Singapore's international standing as a legal hub.

The JGP was delivered through briefings, discussions, workshops, interactions with the stakeholders in the Singapore justice system, and learning journeys to the Attorney-General's Chambers, Singapore Academy of Law, Subordinate Courts, Supreme Court and The Law Society of Singapore.

Twenty-seven participants comprising Chief Justices, Deputy Chief Justices, Superior Court Judges, Registrars, Judge Administrators and Permanent Secretaries from 15 countries participated in the JGP.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- ▶ Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People



The feedback on the programme was encouraging. Many participants found the training contents and course materials useful and indicated that they would apply the knowledge gained in their country's court systems.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

▶ Significant Initiatives

- The Internal Audit Unit
- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family and Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate and Court Services Division
- ▶ • Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

"By attending, participants not only learned from the Singapore experience, they were also afforded the opportunity to share with one another their own challenges and experiences. It has been refreshing to attend a course aimed at practical initiatives rather than theoretical knowledge. Participants will go home as inspired visionary leaders striving towards court excellence, equipped with the basic tools for achieving such vision."

"Singapore is a small country with big-hearted people who set an example to the rest of the world and inspire others to follow your example."

"The passion of the people working at the Subordinate Courts was extremely inspiring."

Feedback received from participants of the JGP



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

► Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

LAUNCH OF THE COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTRE

The Community Justice Centre (CJC), a registered charity with Institute of Public Character status, was officially launched in March 2013. Jointly established by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, Ministry of Law, State Courts, The Law Society of Singapore and Tan Chin Tuan Foundation, the CJC was set up as a one-stop hub to provide Litigants-in-Person (LIPs) with support services such as legal clinics, information and referral services.

The mission of the CJC is to provide access to justice, especially for needy LIPs, of whom a vast majority come from low-income backgrounds and have only primary and/or secondary school education. Community partnerships are forged with volunteers, social agencies and the legal sector to provide a three-tiered approach in assisting the needy.

The Court Facilitators programme, which is aided by volunteer students from the Law Faculty of the National University of Singapore and Singapore Management University, helps LIPs to navigate within the court setting and provides practical support like explaining the different court processes to the LIPs.

The "Guidance for Plea" Scheme has volunteer lawyers giving pro bono and immediate advice to LIPs who may be unaware of their legal rights while the "Friends of Litigants-In-Person" programme provides emotional support and guidance to LIPs.

Moving forward, the CJC will be adopting a holistic approach to better support litigants in a challenging predicament. For litigants who are unable to afford a lawyer and do not qualify for legal aid, the CJC will offer schemes such as the Primary Justice Project where basic legal services are provided at a low cost, with a view to achieving out-of-court settlement even before a case is filed in Court.

An interim welfare support system for families of court users facing financial hardship will also be introduced. This is to assist the unrepresented litigants while they await the outcomes of referrals by the CJC to family service centres for longer-term and sustainable support.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

▶ Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

HONOURING COURT VOLUNTEERS

At the Court Volunteers' Appreciation Dinner on 8 November 2013, three volunteers were recognised for their sterling contributions. The Guest-of-Honour, The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, presented the awards to the outstanding volunteers during the dinner at the Furama City Centre Hotel:

- Outstanding Volunteer - Advocate and Solicitor Category: Mr Lim Tat
- Outstanding Volunteer - Open Category: Mr Chng Beng Guan
- Outstanding Volunteer - Student Category: Ms Laura Eng



The Chief Justice (3rd from left) with the Outstanding Volunteer Award recipients (from left) Mr Lim Tat, Mr Chng Beng Guan and Ms Laura Eng



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

▶ Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

In his Opening Remarks, the Chief Justice expressed his gratitude to the volunteers, who may serve as a mediator, volunteer referee or provide free legal advice to the indigent, for their dedicated service and contributions. He encouraged the volunteers to participate in the new "Friends of Litigants-in-Person" scheme under the Community Justice Centre. Under this scheme, volunteers will accompany parties without lawyers to civil trials and assist them by taking notes and working through the outcomes of the hearing, or any directions of the Court as well as any follow up steps that may need to be taken. The volunteers will provide both practical guidance and moral support to the parties.

Mr Lim Tat has been an Associate Mediator with the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre since 2009, when its volunteer programme first started. In the last four years, Mr Lim has proven to be one of the most avid mediators. He gives his full commitment to each case he mediates - there were several occasions when he scheduled a second mediation session at his own time, so the case had greater chances of settlement. Mr Lim's keen interest in mediation is reflected in his active involvement in other alternative dispute resolution (ADR) initiatives with the Courts. In 2012, The Law Society of Singapore partnered the State Courts to organise a seminar publicising the presumption of ADR for civil disputes. Mr Lim spoke at the event to share his perspectives on what it means to be a mediation advocate. More recently, in a joint collaboration of the Singapore Mediation Centre, the Law Society and State Courts to organise a mediation advocacy workshop for lawyers, Mr Lim contributed by being a trainer in the two-day workshop.

Mr Chng Beng Guan is a Justice of the Peace who has volunteered as a Mediator at both the Crime Registry and Maintenance Mediation Chambers since 2005. Absolute and just, he gets the parties to view the complaint or issue from different perspectives, which is useful when facilitating a settlement. Many cases mediated by Mr Chng were successfully resolved. Approachable and friendly, Mr Chng always displays enthusiasm in trying to mediate conflicts between parties, often arriving early for his sessions and making an effort to finish each case on time.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

▶ Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

Ms Laura Eng volunteers with the Community Justice Centre as a Court Facilitator in the Family Court and Court 23, a Criminal Mentions Court. As a Court Facilitator, she guides litigants-in-person on the court procedures and processes, and ensures the paperwork is in order before a hearing. Armed with a positive attitude and readiness to help others, Ms Eng also provides a listening ear to those who need to ventilate. Ms Eng also assisted to develop a training kit for future Court Facilitators.



Musical performance by Raffles Institution Chamber Ensemble



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

► Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

Since 2000, the State Courts have offered internship opportunities to interested law undergraduates. The programme has since expanded, and in close collaboration with the Legal Service Commission, Singapore Academy of Law and Public Service Division, the internship opportunities are now open to students from different academic backgrounds and disciplines. The programmes offer the interns an insight into the judicial administration process, in an environment of mentorship, interaction and collegiality.

In 2013, the Internship Committee hosted 455 interns, across several internship programmes.

Internship Programme	Interns' Profile	Duration of Internship
Civil Service Internship Programme	Undergraduates from any discipline with a keen interest in a career in public service	8 weeks
Legal Service Judicial Internship Programme	3 rd and 4 th year law undergraduates interested in court administration and judicial work	1 week
Public Service Commission (PSC) Scholars' Mid-Term Programme	PSC scholars and 2 nd year law undergraduates who are likely to join the Singapore legal service after graduation	2 weeks
Singapore Academy of Law Litigation Internship Programme	Law undergraduates from local universities with interest in litigation work	2 days
Temasek Polytechnic Law Internship Programme	Students of Temasek Polytechnic's Diploma in Law & Management programme	3 months
Legal Service Senior Officers Law Clerks' Programme	Law undergraduates from local and foreign universities with interest in judicial work and legal research	8 weeks



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

▶ Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

The internship programmes have received favourable responses from the interns. The participants found the internships interesting and educational.

"At the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre, I was given the chance to use eLitigation in day-to-day operations. This allowed me to become familiar with the system. One of the things which I enjoyed doing most was to fix hearing dates for law firms using eLitigation. All in all, I truly enjoyed my three months here. Everyone, including the guards and cleaners, is so welcoming. My experience at the Courts is one that I will never forget. I will definitely make good use of everything that I have learnt here."

Gan Guo Jing

Temasek Polytechnic Law Internship Programme

"I was not expecting to learn much due to the short duration of the internship. However, what I have learnt far surpassed any expectations I had, and it was a very informative and enjoyable experience. I really appreciate the Judges taking time out of their busy schedules to talk to us and imparting both legal and life advice. Experiencing the operations of the different justice divisions gave me a good insight into the range and scale of the work handled there."

Seraphina Chew

Legal Service Judicial Internship Programme



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases
Significant Initiatives
Launch of the Community Justice Centre
Honouring Court Volunteers
Internship Programmes
▶ Caseload and Statistics
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

CASELOAD AND STATISTICS

CASELOAD PROFILE*	2012	2013^(p)
CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION	262,336	253,600
Criminal and Departmental/Statutory Board		
Criminal Charges ¹	58,992	60,800
Departmental/Statutory Board Charges and Summonses	128,587	114,200
Traffic Charges and Summonses	67,548	72,300
Others		
Coroner's Court Cases	4,172	4,100
Magistrate's Complaints	3,037	2,200
CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION	73,793	66,480
Originating Processes	42,490	37,650
Writs of Summonses (DC & MC)	37,944	32,800
Originating Summonses	524	450
Probate	4,022	4,400
Interlocutory Applications	15,074	14,180
Summonses ²	10,344	10,000
Summonses for Directions (O.25/37)	4,289	3,800
Summary Judgment (O.14)	441	380
Others		
Taxation	162	150
Assessment of Damages	2,633	2,600
Small Claims Tribunals		
Claims	13,434	11,900



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases
Significant Initiatives
Launch of the Community Justice Centre
Honouring Court Volunteers
Internship Programmes
▶ Caseload and Statistics
Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades

Our People

CASELOAD PROFILE*	2012	2013^(p)
FAMILY & JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION	24,119	23,680
Maintenance	6,609	6,160
Fresh Applications	1,737	1,500
Enforcement of Maintenance Orders	3,176	3,000
Variation/Rescission/Suspension of Maintenance Orders	1,181	1,200
Enforcement of the Maintenance of Parents Tribunal Orders	53	50
Enforcement of Syariah Court Orders	462	410
Family Violence	3,347	3,340
Fresh Applications for Personal Protection Order (PPO)	3,069	3,100
Variation/Rescission of PPO	169	120
Breach of PPO	109	120
Divorce		
Divorce Writs	6,276	6,400
Ancillary Matters	1,877	1,700
Others		
Adoption	387	370
Originating Summonses (Family)	530	530
Breach of Syariah Court Orders	258	240
Summonses (Family) ³	3,614	3,600
Juvenile Court	1,221	1,340
Juvenile Arrest Charges	966	1,100
Beyond Parental Control ⁴	68	90
Child Protection Orders ⁴	69	40
Police Summonses/Summonses & Tickets, and Other Charges	118	110
Total	360,248	343,760

Notes

^(*) Figures for 2012 were revised in 2013

^(p) Projected figures

¹ Includes DAC, MAC, PSS, PS & other charges

² Excludes O.25/37

³ Includes Divorce, Originating Summons (Family) and Adoption summonses

⁴ Refers to number of juveniles



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Significant Cases

Significant Initiatives

Launch of the Community Justice Centre

Honouring Court Volunteers

Internship Programmes

Caseload and Statistics

▶ Court Users Survey 2013

Awards and Accolades


Our People

COURT USERS SURVEY 2013

Court Users Surveys are regularly conducted to ascertain the level of confidence in the Courts and the level of satisfaction on the quality of the services rendered to court users. Such feedback is vital for the Courts to remain responsive to their users and environment. This survey has been conducted since 2001 and the latest conducted in 2013 was administered by Forbes Research Pte Ltd.



A total of 2,035 lawyers, public prosecutors, and court users responded to the Court Users Survey 2013. The results were:



✓ **9 in 10** of the respondents had confidence in the fair administration of justice in Singapore. 

✓ **98%** of the respondents were satisfied with the services provided by the Courts. 

✓ Perceptions of the Courts aligning themselves with their core values of F.A.I.R (Fairness, Accessibility, Independence, Integrity, Impartiality, Responsiveness) were very positive among the surveyed court users, with all the value categories achieving more than **90%** favourable rates.

✓ The three justice divisions, namely the Criminal, Civil, and Family and Juvenile Justice Divisions, were well-perceived by the respondents, with **9 out of 10** giving favourable feedback and agreeing that they had met their expectations.

✓ **96%** of the surveyed users agreed that the use of technology had brought about greater efficiency in the Courts. 


✓ Almost all of the respondents found the Courts' personnel courteous, helpful, knowledgeable, efficient, responsive, empathetic and had good communication skills. 




ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

- ▶ Local Award
- International Award
- Our International Profile
- Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges
- Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
- Notes of Appreciation

Our People

LOCAL AWARD

Community Chest Award

The Subordinate Courts were accorded the SHARE Bronze Award in 2013 for their participation in the SHARE (Social Help & Assistance Raised by Employees) programme. SHARE is a donation programme run by the Community Chest to raise and provide a stable source of funds for its beneficiaries. The SHARE Award is given by the Community Chest as a tribute to the fundraising efforts of the award winners, their sense of corporate social responsibility, and their partnership with Community Chest to help those in need.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

▶ International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

INTERNATIONAL AWARD

World Class Award of the Global Performance Excellence Awards

In 2013, the Subordinate Courts were awarded the apex World Class Award of the Global Performance Excellence Awards (GPEA) under the "Not-for-Profit" category.

The World Class Award is the highest honour conferred by the Asia Pacific Quality Organization (APQO), a non-profit organisation founded in 1985 by National Quality Organisations in Asian and Pacific Rim countries. Launched in 2000, the GPEA is the only formal international recognition of quality performance and business excellence. The award encourages organisations to strengthen their strategies and performance to succeed in the fast-expanding global marketplace.

In 2013, the Courts were the only recipient under the "Not-for-Profit" category. This marks another important milestone in the organisational excellence journey of the Courts. It is a testament to their commitment to better serve society by delivering quality justice for all.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

OUR INTERNATIONAL PROFILE

In 2013, Singapore scored well in various surveys conducted by several international organisations. These results are a tribute to the high quality of justice dispensed by the Singapore Judiciary.

INSTITUTE FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT (IMD) WORLD COMPETITIVENESS YEARBOOK 2013

In May 2013, IMD ranked 60 countries on their ability to create and maintain the competitiveness of enterprises. One assessment component was whether the legal and regulatory framework encourages the competitiveness of enterprises. In this aspect, Singapore's ranking has been consistently high since 1997. In 2013, Singapore's legal framework was once again rated very positively and was ranked second¹ after Hong Kong (Figure 1).

Another assessment component was whether justice has been fairly administered. Singapore was ranked fifth, the highest among the Asian countries surveyed. This is a notable improvement from the 10th position attained in 2012. Other Asian regions that were ranked in the top 20 were Hong Kong and Japan, which took 10th and 18th place respectively (Figure 2).



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

Figure 1

IMD – Ranking of Singapore’s Legal and
Regulatory Framework, 1997 – 2013²

The legal and regulatory framework encourages the competitiveness of enterprises			
Year	Ranking of Singapore	Rating (0 = worst 10 = best)	No. of countries ranked
1997	1	8.46	46
1998	1	8.20	46
1999	1	8.64	47
2000	1	8.82	47
2001	6	8.03	49
2002	1	8.50	49
2003	1	8.22	53
2004	1	8.34	60
2005	2	7.52	60
2006	2	8.11	61
2007	1	8.65	55
2008	1	8.65	55
2009	2	7.09	57
2010	1	7.67	58
2011	1	7.70	59
2012	2	8.07	59
2013	2	7.63	60

Figure 2

IMD – Ranking of Singapore’s Administration of
Justice , 1995 – 2013³

Justice is fairly administered			
Year	Ranking of Singapore	Rating (0 = worst 10 = best)	No. of countries ranked
1995	9	7.91	48
1996	4	8.31	46
1997	14	7.64	46
1998	4	7.92	46
1999	7	8.54	47
2000	5	8.59	47
2001	14	7.73	49
2002	7	8.50	49
2003	6	8.49	53
2004	10	8.24	60
2005	15	7.71	60
2006	13	8.11	61
2007	11	8.12	55
2008	6	8.60	55
2009	13	7.95	57
2010	7	8.35	58
2011	12	7.96	59
2012	10	8.44	59
2013	5	8.51	60



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF) GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS REPORT 2013 - 2014

The WEF 2013-2014 report ranked 148 countries to present a picture of the competitiveness of the economies. Twelve pillars of the economy were evaluated and one of them was the institutional framework. This is a critical component as strong institutions protect the rights of the people and provide the stability and confidence to engage in economic activities. Five sub-indicators under the institutional pillar related to judiciary were:

- (a) Efficiency of Legal Framework in Settling Disputes
- (b) Efficiency of Legal Framework in Challenging Regulations
- (c) Judicial Independence
- (d) Property Rights
- (e) Intellectual Property Rights

Singapore attained favourable scores and rankings in all five sub-indicators and was ranked either first or second in areas of efficiency of intellectual property rights, property rights and legal framework in settling disputes.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

Figure 3 WEF – Ranking of Singapore’s Judiciary , 2002 – 2013⁴

Institution Pillar - Ranking of Singapore (1 = worst, 7 = best)								
Year	Efficiency of Legal Framework – (i) Settling Disputes (ii) Challenging Regulations		Judicial Independence		Property Rights		Intellectual Property Rights	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
2002	16	5.7	25	5.1	8	6.3	12	5.7
2003	11	5.8	27	5.2	5	6.4	12	5.9
2004	14	5.7	24	5.3	12	6.3	13	5.7
2005	8	5.8	19	5.4	6	6.4	5	6.1
2006	14	5.8	29	5.2	11	6.3	9	6.0
2007	10	6.0	19	5.6	5	6.4	5	6.2
2008	2	6.2	15	5.9	4	6.5	2	6.3
2009	(i) 1, (ii) 4	(i) 6.3, (ii) 5.6	19	5.8	4	6.4	1	6.2
2010	(i) 1, (ii) 6	(i) 6.3, (ii) 5.3	21	5.6	3	6.3	3	6.1
2011	(i) 1, (ii) 8	(i) 6.3, (ii) 5.3	20	5.6	3	6.4	2	6.1
2012	(i) 1, (ii) 6	(i) 6.2, (ii) 5.5	20	5.7	3	6.4	2	6.1
2013	(i) 1, (ii) 12	(i) 6.1, (ii) 4.9	17	5.7	2	6.3	2	6.1



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

- ▶ Our International Profile
- Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges
- Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
- Notes of Appreciation

Our People

FRASER INSTITUTE ECONOMIC FREEDOM OF THE WORLD REPORT 2013

Fraser Institute's 2013 annual report contained an index measuring the degree in which the policies and institutions of the countries were supportive of economic freedom. One hundred and fifty-two countries were rated on their degree of economic freedom. One assessment indicator was "legal structure and property rights". The variables measured under this indicator include⁵:

- (a) Judicial Independence
- (b) Impartial Courts
- (c) Protection of Property Rights
- (d) Military Interference in Rule of Law and Politics
- (e) Integrity of the Legal System
- (f) Legal Enforcement of Contracts
- (g) Regulatory Restrictions on Sale of Real Property
- (h) Reliability of Police
- (i) Business Cost of Crime

Singapore has maintained a top 20 per cent banding for this indicator since 2000⁶. In the latest report, Singapore was ranked fifth among the 152 countries rated and first among the Asian countries assessed. Hong Kong and Japan were ranked 12th and 22nd respectively⁷.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

- ▶ Our International Profile
- Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges
- Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
- Notes of Appreciation

Our People

WORLD BANK STUDY DOING BUSINESS REPORT

In this study, 189 economies were ranked on their ease of doing business, based on various assessment variables, including contract enforcement.

Singapore was ranked in 12th position globally in the contract enforcement variable, which measured the efficiency of the judicial system in resolving a commercial dispute, in terms of the number of procedures involved, time taken and cost required. Among the Asian economies ranked, Singapore was third-highest, after Korea (second) and Hong Kong (ninth) (Figure 4).

The ease of doing business index was an indication of whether the regulatory environment was conducive to the operation of business. Singapore topped the ranking for this index. In addition, Singapore was rated to have the least number of procedures involved for a lawsuit (21 steps) and the shortest duration of 150 days to process a case.

Figure 4

Enforcing Contracts (Top 15 Countries)⁸ – 2012 and 2013

Ranking	2012	2013
1	Luxembourg	Luxembourg
2	Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea
3	Iceland	Iceland
4	Norway	Norway
5	Germany	Germany
6	Austria	Austria
7	France	France
8	Finland	Finland
9	Hong Kong SAR, China	Hong Kong SAR, China
10	Russian Federation	Russian Federation
11	Singapore	United States
12	United States	Singapore
13	Belarus	Belarus
14	Australia	Australia
15	Hungary	Hungary



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

- ▶ Our International Profile
- Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges
- Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
- Notes of Appreciation

Our People

WORLD BANK GOVERNANCE MATTERS

AGGREGATE AND INDIVIDUAL GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project is a project by the World Bank. The 2013 project reported the aggregate and individual governance indicators for over 200 countries and territories over the period 1996–2012, for six dimensions of governance⁹:

- (a) Voice and Accountability
- (b) Political Stability and Absence of Violence
- (c) Government Effectiveness
- (d) Regulatory Quality
- (e) Rule of Law
- (f) Control of Corruption

Singapore scored well under the Rule of Law component, which captures perceptions of the extent to which agents had confidence in and abided by the rules of society, and, in particular, the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the court, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence.

Singapore has been well-placed in the top 10 per cent over the past 10 years under the Rule of Law indicator (Figure 5).

Figure 5

World Bank – Governance Indicators 2002-2012¹⁰

Rule of Law			
Year	Ranking of Singapore	Rating (Max 2.5 points)	No. of countries ranked
2003	15	1.61	203
2004	12	1.73	210
2005	10	1.76	210
2006	17	1.63	210
2007	17	1.64	210
2008	17	1.64	209
2009	18	1.60	212
2010	16	1.68	212
2011	15	1.73	214
2012	10	1.77	212



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

HERITAGE FOUNDATION AND WALL STREET JOURNAL INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM REPORT

The Index of Economic Freedom measured 185 countries (177 countries were ranked) across 10 indices of economic freedom. In 2013, Singapore was ranked second to Hong Kong in the overall rankings, and scored a high of 90 points for the “property rights” index, a score that has been maintained since 1995. The report commented that Singapore has a strong property rights regime and maintains an efficient judicial framework that sustains the Rule of Law. New Zealand was the only country that earned a higher property rights grade than Singapore.

The continual strong protection of property rights in Singapore not only lays the groundwork for but also enables the sustainability of economic freedom.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

► Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

THE WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

RULE OF LAW INDEX

The Rule of Law index developed by The World Justice Project assessed countries' compliance to the Rule of Law. In the report released in 2013, 97 countries were ranked according to nine broad dimensions:

- (a) Limited Government Power
- (b) Absence of Corruption
- (c) Order and Security
- (d) Fundamental Rights
- (e) Open Government
- (f) Regulatory Enforcement
- (g) Civil Justice
- (h) Criminal Justice
- (i) Informal Justice

Access to civil justice calls for a just system that is effective and affordable by which anyone can use to resolve disputes amicably, while an effective criminal justice system is impartial and efficient, and sees that criminal acts are rightfully punished. Singapore was regarded favourably in these two areas of justice. Among the 97 countries ranked, Singapore was third for an effective criminal justice system and fourth for accessibility to the civil justice system.

¹ Based on the rankings published in the IMD World Competitiveness Report 2013

² Compiled from the rankings published in the IMD World Competitiveness Report for the relevant years

³ Compiled from the rankings published in the IMD World Competitiveness Report for the relevant years

⁴ Compiled from the rankings published in the WEF Global Competitiveness Report for the relevant years

⁵ The last three variables were added in 2007.

⁶ Based on rankings published in the Fraser Institute Economic Freedom of the World Report, 2000 (2002 edition) – 2009 (2011 edition)

⁷ Based on rankings published in the Fraser Institute Economic Freedom of the World Report dataset

⁸ Compiled from the rankings published in the World Bank Doing Business Report for the relevant years

⁹ All facts and figures related to worldwide governance indicators are cited from The World Bank Governance and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2012 Report.

¹⁰ This is a compilation of the rankings in the Governance Indicator Report for the relevant years.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

► Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND EXCHANGES

Date	Name of Judge / Court Administrator	Name of Event	Organiser
10 - 11 Jan	Deputy Presiding Judge Jennifer Marie	E-Justice Conference: Transparency & Efficiency in Court Functioning & Judicial Service Delivery - The Impact of Information & Communication Systems & Technology	The Hague Institute for Global Justice
	District Judge James Leong		
26 - 30 Jan	Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye	Conference of Chief Justices, Midyear meeting	National Center for State Courts
	District Judge Chia Wee Kiat		
13 - 14 Feb	District Judge Ng Peng Hong	Long and Complex Trials Seminar	The Judicial College (United Kingdom)
26 Feb	District Judge Lynette Yap	Train the Trainers Programme: Designing and Developing Craft of Judging courses	The Judicial College (United Kingdom)
	District Judge Chia Wee Kiat		
27 - 28 Feb	District Judge Lim Keng Yeow	Applied Research in Crime and Justice Conference	NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR)
1 Mar		Visit to BOCSAR	
7 - 9 Mar	Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye <i>(as speaker)</i>	Asia Pacific Courts Conference 2013	Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration
	Senior District Judge Leslie Chew <i>(as speaker)</i>		
	District Judge Wong Choon Ning		
	District Judge Lorraine Ho		
	Chan Wai Yin <i>(as speaker)</i>		
	Lim Lay Kim		
11 - 13 Mar	Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye	Study Trip to the New Zealand Courts	Hosted by New Zealand District Courts
	Senior District Judge Leslie Chew		
11 - 12 Mar	Deputy Presiding Judge Jennifer Marie	Civil Law Seminar	Judicial College of England & Wales, United Kingdom
13 - 15 Mar	District Judge Ow Yong Tuck Leong	Attachment Programme at the Royal Courts of Justice (Court of Appeal and High Court)	Hosted by the United Kingdom Supreme Court and Royal Courts of Justice



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

▶ Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

17 - 20 Mar	District Judge Muhammad Hidhir Abdul Majid Chiam Toon Han	6 th World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights	International Convention Management Services
17 - 22 Mar	District Judge Jasbendar Kaur	National Judicial Orientation Programme	National Judicial College of Australia
2 - 23 May	District Judge May Mesenas	17 th Governance and Leadership Programme	Institute of Policy Development, Civil Service College Singapore
3 - 8 May	District Judge Ong Chin Rhu	Mediator Skills Training	Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution, Asia Pacific
27 May - 7 Jun	Lim Hwei Chen	7 th CSC-Intan Joint Senior Executive Development Programme 2013	Civil Service College (CSC) Singapore
29 May - 1 Jun	Koh Li Lian	AFCC 50 th Anniversary Conference: Riding the Wave of the Future - Global Voices, Expanding Choices	Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC)
8 - 11 Jul	District Judge Marvin Bay District Judge John Ng	Decision Making Course	The National Judicial College (USA)
11 - 12 Jul	District Judge Janet Wang	UNODC-UNDP High-Level Judicial Integrity Expert Group Meeting	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and United Nations Development Programme (UNODC-UNDP)
15 - 16 Jul	Senior District Judge Foo Tuat Yien	Study Visit to the Court of Protection	The Royal Courts of Justice in UK in conjunction with the Hague Convention Permanent Bureau
17 - 19 Jul		Meeting of the International Hague Network of Judges specialised in family matters	
12 - 16 Aug	District Judge Loo Ngan Chor	Phoenix Magistrates' Programme	National Judicial College of Australia
4 - 6 Sep	Sophia Ang Jaslyn Ng	Child Informed Family Dispute Resolution Workshop	Family Transitions
6 - 27 Sep	Chan Kok Hoong	4 th Management Development Course	Institute of Policy Development, Civil Service College Singapore
23 - 26 Sep	District Judge Wong Sheng Kwai	Commonwealth Magistrates' & Judges' Association Conference 2013	Commonwealth Magistrates' & Judges' Association
30 Sep - 1 Oct	District Judge Victor Yeo	International Symposium on Code of Judicial Conduct	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
2 Oct	District Judge Tan Boon Heng	Conference for the Justice Sector of Timor-Leste	Australian AID funded Justice Sector Support Facility



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

► Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

Notes of Appreciation

Our People

6 - 8 Oct	District Judge James Leong	Global Performance Excellence Award Prize Presentation Ceremony and 19 th Asia Pacific Quality Conference	Asia Pacific Quality Organisation
	Phang Tsang Wing		
	Dalbir Kaur		
21 - 25 Oct	District Judge Carolyn Woo	Civil Mediation course	The National Judicial College (USA)
3 - 7 Nov	District Judge Joyce Low	6 th International Conference on the Training of the Judiciary	International Organization for Judicial Training
	Dang Ngoc Han Nguyen		
11 - 15 Nov	Senior District Judge Foo Tuat Yien	Study Trip for meetings with key stakeholders of the family justice system in London and Berlin	Committee for Family Justice coordinated by the Ministry of Law, Singapore
9 - 10 Dec	Presiding Judge See Kee Oon	International Association for Court Administration International Conference on Court Management	International Association for Court Administration
	District Judge Wong Peck		
	District Judge V. Jesudevan		



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

▶ Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
Notes of Appreciation

Our People

VISITS BY DISTINGUISHED GUESTS IN 2013

Date	Details
16 Jan 2013	Visit of delegation from the Department of Justice of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
25 Jan 2013	Visit of His Excellency Shaikh Dr Yaaqoub Bin Mohamed Bin Obaid Al Saidi, Chairman of the General Administration of Judicial Inspection, Oman, and delegation
11 Mar 2013	Visit of Ms Lyudmyla Okhrimchuk, Judge of the Judicial Chamber on Civil Cases, the Supreme Court of Ukraine, and delegation
2 May 2013	Visit of Mr Sein Than, Director General of the Supreme Court of the Union of Myanmar, and delegation from the Union Attorney General's Office
14 May 2013	Visit of the Right Honourable Justice Tan Sri Dato' Seri Zulkefli Ahmad Makinudin, Chief Judge of the High Court of Malaya and the Right Honourable Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Richard Malanjum, Chief Judge of the High Court of Sabah and Sarawak, and delegation
15 May 2013	Visit of the Honourable Justice Andrew Cheung, Chief Judge, High Court of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and delegation
15 May 2013	Visit of the Honourable the Chief Justice Mohit S. Shah, High Court of Bombay, and delegation
28 May 2013	Visit of the Honourable Justice Margaret Cleary, Family Court of Australia
27 Jun 2013	Visit of the Honourable Worawut Thawathasin, Research Justice of the Supreme Court of Thailand, and delegation
10-11 Jul 2013	Visit of Judge Margaret Cassidy, Federal Circuit Court of Australia
24 Jul 2013	Visit of delegation from Ministry of Justice, Thailand
16 Aug 2013	Visit of Mr Yohan Liyanage, Chief Registrar, High Court of Fiji
21 Aug 2013	Visit of Mr Hamid Yoosuf, Executive Director, Head of Juvenile Justice Unit, Ministry of Home Affairs, Maldives, and delegation
6 Sep 2013	Visit of the Honourable John Rau, Attorney-General, Deputy Premier and Minister for Planning, Industrial Relations, and Business Services and Consumers, South Australia, and delegation
6 Sep 2013	Visit of Mr Mark Beer, Registrar, Dubai International Financial Centre Courts



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

► Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013
Notes of Appreciation

Our People

11 Sep 2013	Visit of the Honourable Justice Ranjit V. More, High Court of Bombay, and delegation
18 Sep 2013	Visit of the Honourable Justice Robert Shenton French, AC, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia
25 Sep 2013	Visit of Counselor Wadie Hanna Nashed, Head, Training and Awareness Committee, National Coordinating Committee for Combating Corruption, Egypt, and delegation
27 Sep 2013	Visit of the Honourable Chestor Borrows, Minister for Courts, New Zealand, and delegation
22 Oct 2013	Visit of Judge Mata Tuatagaloa, District Court of Samoa, and delegation
24 Oct 2013	Visit of the Honourable Judith Collins, Minister of Justice, Minister for Accident Compensation Corporation and Minister for Ethnic Affairs, New Zealand, and delegation
29 Oct 2013	Visit of the Honourable Fikrat Mammadov, Minister of Justice, Azerbaijan, and delegation
30 Oct 2013	Visit of Ms Emma Lau, Judiciary Administrator of the judiciary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and delegation
31 Oct 2013	Visit of the Honourable Justice Anthony Gates, Chief Justice of Fiji, and delegation
26 Nov 2013	Visit of Chief Judge John Pascoe, Federal Circuit Courts of Australia
17 Dec 2013	Visit of Mr Sein Than, Director General of the Supreme Court of the Union of Myanmar, and delegation



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

► Notes of Appreciation

Our People

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

"Thank you for the inspiring presentation on the Courts in Singapore."

Mohit S. Shah

Chief Justice, High Court of Bombay, India
15 May 2013

"A great pleasure to have the opportunity to meet with you and learn about 'customer focused' justice."

John Rau

Attorney-General, Deputy Premier and Minister for Planning, Industrial
Relations, and Business Services and Consumers, South Australia
6 September 2013

"It was a memorable visit of great interest."

Anthony Gates

Chief Justice, Fiji
31 October 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

▶ Notes of Appreciation

Our People

"Belinda is an excellent staff - very patient, courteous and helpful. She is very knowledgeable too."

A court user

Appreciation for Ms Belinda Chng
Assistant Executive, Crime Registry, Criminal Justice Division
1 March 2013

"We wish to commend the Bailiff, Mr Omar, for carrying out an outstanding job on the day of execution. He communicated the terms of the Order made by the Court to the Defendant clearly and was patient, understanding and efficient in the performance of his duties as a Bailiff. We wish to thank Mr Omar for his efforts and sterling performance in ensuring that the Court's orders were carried out and appropriately enforced."

A judgment creditor

Appreciation for Mr Omar Bachik
Bailiff, Bailiffs Section
Civil Justice Division
1 March 2013

"Karen was very pleasant and knowledgeable and was concerned about me. She explained well, and I am pleased with her support and care."

A litigant

Appreciation for Ms Karen Fu
Senior Court Counsellor, Counselling and Psychological Services
Family and Juvenile Justice Division
2 April 2013

"Interpreter Peter Ong is meticulous and conscientious in his work and he has helped me a lot. I am very thankful to him."

A court user

Appreciation for Mr Peter Ong
Senior Language Executive, Chinese Language Services Section
Corporate and Court Services Division
10 June 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Local Award

International Award

Our International Profile

Participation in International Conferences and
Exchanges

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2013

► Notes of Appreciation

Our People

"I find the toolkit for probate and letter of administration very useful. In particular, I like the downloadable document template and forms. The part on fees is very useful. Many thanks for your effort to bring legal proceedings so close to a layman like me. Simply grateful to you."

A court user

Appreciation for the Probate Section, Civil Justice Division
22 July 2013

"Hui Ying was attentive and patient when listening to us. We are appreciative. Thanks, Hui Ying."

An SCT user

Appreciation for Ms Tan Hui Ying
Assistant Executive, Small Claims Tribunals (SCT), Civil Justice Division
31 December 2013

"She impressed me with her mediation skills. She started the meeting strategically such that the end result is a win-win situation. Thank you, Ms Ng."

A litigant

Appreciation for Ms Jasmine Ng
Senior Mediation Officer, Maintenance Mediation Chambers,
Family and Juvenile Justice Division
20 December 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

- ▶ A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
- Welcomes and Farewells
- Staff Event Highlights
- Our Judges and Staff
- Acknowledgements

A TRIBUTE TO JUDICIAL COMMISSIONER TAN SIONG THYE

Judges and staff bade a warm farewell to Mr Tan Siong Thye on 30 September 2013. After having spent close to 20 years of his legal service career at the Subordinate Courts, Mr Tan took on a new appointment as a Judicial Commissioner (JC) at the Supreme Court from 1 October 2013.

JC Tan was appointed as the Chief District Judge (CDJ) of the Subordinate Courts on 28 August 2008. Since his appointment, he had worked tirelessly to uphold the high standards achieved in the administration of justice.

When JC Tan took office as CDJ in 2008, there was a serious shortage of judges in the Subordinate Courts. With the support of then-Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong, he increased the number of judges to manage the Courts' huge caseload. Today, there are close to 100 judges in the Courts, a significant increase from the 70 in 2008.

After consulting the Attorney-General's Chambers and The Law Society of Singapore, JC Tan introduced the centralised Pre-Trial Conference (PTC) model in the Criminal Courts. This resulted in a better use of judicial resources and paved the way for more trial courts. It also significantly reduced waiting times for prosecutors and lawyers.

In 2009, JC Tan led the Courts through a strategic reorganisation and overhauled the organisational and reporting structure, the first in more than three decades. Under the new organisational structure, each division is responsible for all aspects of the processes within its practice areas. The justice divisions are given the autonomy to decide how to handle a case, from the moment it is filed to the moment it is disposed of. The divisions are also better able to address the unique environment that they operate in as well as engage their own group of stakeholders more effectively and regularly. The end result is a process that brings about greater benefits to court users and the organisation.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

- ▶ A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
- Welcomes and Farewells
- Staff Event Highlights
- Our Judges and Staff
- Acknowledgements

To improve the Courts' processes, JC Tan introduced several management concepts, one of them being *Kaizen*. *Kaizen* is a Japanese methodology that eliminates unnecessary workflows in order to streamline processes and make them more efficient. He instituted a practice for each division to submit a minimum number of *Kaizen* initiatives monthly. This imposed discipline on staff to continually strive towards process improvements, which translated to better service for court users. *Kaizen* has since grown to become a culture in the Courts. JC Tan also introduced the concept of "learning organisation" as a way to learn from the experiences of others, and to identify the organisation's inadequacies as well as its successes.

A firm believer in serving society, JC Tan transformed the ethos at the Courts to a service-centric one. The Service Relations Section was set up in 2009 to drive service excellence in the Courts and in August 2013, the Call Centre was launched to provide a one-stop enquiry service for callers.

Under JC Tan's leadership, the Courts leveraged on technology innovatively to enhance their administration processes. Video-conferencing, digital audio-recording and transcription, an online shared calendar for scheduling cases, the Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System and eLitigation system, to name a few, were introduced to manage hearings and cases more efficiently. With the end-users in mind, no effort was spared to ensure that the best possible benefits were reaped from these systems.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

- ▶ A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
- Welcomes and Farewells
- Staff Event Highlights
- Our Judges and Staff
- Acknowledgements

Recognising the gap in the assistance and resources available to the growing number of Litigants-in-Person (LIPs), JC Tan spearheaded the establishment of the HELP (Helping to Empower Litigants-in-Person) Centre to provide assistance to the LIPs, to help them navigate the court processes and procedures as well as provide pro bono legal advice. This initiative led to the Subordinate Courts being conferred the United Nations Public Service Award in the category of "Improving the Delivery of Public Services" for Asia and the Pacific region in 2012. This award is the most prestigious international recognition for excellence in public service; it rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions worldwide. Besides legal assistance, many LIPs require emotional and financial support. The Community Justice Centre (CJC) was set up in 2012 to expand the scope of services provided to LIPs. The HELP Centre is now part of the CJC.



The recognition that the Courts had gained, both in Singapore and overseas, during JC Tan's term as CDJ, is testament to his sterling leadership and unwavering commitment to realising the Courts' mission of delivering quality justice and excellent court services. Besides the United Nations Public Service Award attained in 2012, the Subordinate Courts received the coveted Singapore Quality Award (with Special Commendation) in 2011 and the World Class Award of the Global Performance Excellence Awards in 2013, both of which recognise efforts in business excellence and quality performance. In addition to the awards, every year, the Singapore Judiciary is accorded favourable ratings in local and overseas rankings and surveys.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

- ▶ A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
- Welcomes and Farewells
- Staff Event Highlights
- Our Judges and Staff
- Acknowledgements

For his sterling contributions to the nation, JC Tan was conferred the Public Administration Medal (Gold) (Bar) in 2011.

Of his term with the Subordinate Courts, JC said, *"The task of serving and leading the Subordinate Courts appeared very daunting when I first took over. However, my colleagues had provided me much encouragement and inspiration. Together, we had scaled several peaks of organisational excellence. These achievements would not have been possible without the commitment, cooperation and dedication of the staff."*

As I was packing my things to leave the office, I had mixed feelings and experienced moments of sadness in leaving the Subordinate Courts. I had spent close to 20 years of my legal service career in the Subordinate Courts. This is my most favourite and memorable posting. I love my job as a judicial officer. The Subordinate Courts will always have a special place in my heart."

"I am humbled and privileged to have inherited an organisation that is the envy of many jurisdictions. On behalf of the State Courts, I thank JC Tan Siong Thye for his leadership and guidance over the past five years. We will build on JC Tan's good effort to further strengthen the reputation and goodwill of the State Courts, and scale even greater heights."

- Presiding Judge See Kee Oon



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

▶ Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

This annual report's theme of "Renewing our Commitment to Justice" aligns closely to the State Courts' vision to provide an effective and accessible system of justice. Incoming staff and out-going staff share their thoughts on their experiences in the Courts.

Welcome Section

"Working in the State Courts is like being part of a big family. There is a strong sense of friendship and cohesiveness in the work groups. What really struck me is the "family's" commitment to the administration of justice. Everyone carries out his or her role with dedication and diligence, no matter how big or small. Many of the staff here are also very experienced, having worked in the organisation for many years. As a new joiner, I am grateful for their willingness to share their experiences and knowledge with me."

Ms Michelle Yap

Magistrate

Criminal Justice Division

Joined in June 2013

"I am impressed that the State Courts handle over 95 per cent of all cases in Singapore. This is further strengthened by the fact that the Courts had won the coveted Singapore Quality Award (with Special Commendation), an award which represents the pinnacle of business excellence in Singapore. As a member of the Human Resource team, I am excited to be able to contribute to the Courts' commitment to justice by actively partnering the divisions to look after our people, our most valuable asset."

Ms Tung Ai Jui

Assistant Director (Human Resource Department)

Corporate and Court Services Division

Joined in February 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

▶ Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

"I relate to the theme, "Renewing our Commitment to Justice" with the tasks that I perform on a daily basis. By providing accurate statistical insights to the management in a timely manner, they would be able to make informed decisions to ensure that justice is made accessible to court users in an effective and efficient manner."

Mr Joseph Wee

Assistant Executive (Statistics & Analysis Section)

Strategic Planning and Technology Division

Joined in February 2013

Farewell Section

"I re-joined the Subordinate Courts in 2009 and was re-posted in April 2013. I feel deeply privileged and humbled to have served in these Courts, where I experienced having to discharge the immense responsibility owed to those who look to the Courts to dispense justice. In an environment with remarkably resolute and single-minded colleagues in the pursuit of excellence, I constantly felt a renewal of my commitment to justice as I was always reminded of how every aspect of our work profoundly affects the lives of ordinary Singaporeans whom the Courts serve each day. It was a tremendously satisfying term, one for which I am extremely grateful and will look back with much affection."

Mr Paul Quan

Former District Judge

Civil Justice Division

Posted to the Supreme Court in April 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

▶ Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

“When I left the Subordinate Courts in April 2013, I realised that I had been here for almost eight years. In that time, I count it a privilege and a joy to be able to serve in all the three justice divisions. Every stint provided a different learning but no less rewarding experience. Whichever division I was at, I benefitted greatly from the mentorship, guidance and wealth of experience of my fellow Judges. Despite the fairly large volume of cases here, I believe that we are always mindful that each case is important, especially to the parties involved, and has to be judged fairly and firmly on its facts and circumstances. I remain grateful also to all our Court Administrators who, being as equally dedicated to the common goal of justice, work tirelessly to support the functions of the Courts.”

Ms Amy Tung

Former District Judge

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Posted to the Supreme Court in April 2013



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ Staff Event Highlights

- ▶ National Day Celebrations
- ▶ National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- ▶ Public Service Week Activities
- ▶ Organisational Cohesion Day
- ▶ Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

STAFF EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

National Day Celebrations

The annual National Day Observance Ceremony (NDOC) was held on 14 August 2013.

Leading up to the ceremony, the Special Events Subcommittee of the Staff Welfare Committee organised a fundraising carnival in support of the Autism Association Singapore (AAS). This was the first year the Courts adopted this charity. A total of \$36,177.60 was raised for AAS during the three weeks of activities.



The NDOC saw a unity of strength as a choir made up of Judges and Court Administrators gave a resounding rendition of the national anthem and recital of the national pledge. The spirit of patriotism was truly palpable as they belted out National Day songs to the accompaniment of a very enthusiastic and supportive audience.

During the NDOC, the recipients of the National Day Awards were recognised. Staff who had served for 10 years were presented the Subordinate Courts Long Service Awards in recognition of their dedication to the organisation.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ Staff Event Highlights

- National Day Celebrations
- ▶ • National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- Public Service Week Activities
- Organisational Cohesion Day
- Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards

National Day Awards

Public Administration Medal (Silver)

District Judge Tan Boon Heng

Public Service Medal

Pandiyan s/o Vellasami

Commendation Medal

Phua Thong Leng

Efficiency Medal

Teng-Soh Siew Foong

Zaini Bin Sojah

Long Service Medal (25 years of service)

District Judge P Siva Shanmugam

District Judge Shaiffudin Bin Saruwan

Suhana Bte Salleh

Mohamed Hatta Bin Abdul Razak

Wahidah Bte Somo

Zaleha Bte Ahmad



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ Staff Event Highlights

- National Day Celebrations
- ▶ • National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- Public Service Week Activities
- Organisational Cohesion Day
- Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

Subordinate Courts Awards

Long Service Award

District Judge Toh Yung Cheong
District Judge Kevin Ng Choong Yeong
District Judge Eugene Teo Weng Kuan
Norliah Bte Manijan

Court Administrator of the Year Award

The annual Court Administrator of the Year Award recognises staff who have shown great commitment and made exceptional contributions to the Subordinate Courts. Award recipients also perform the critical role as mentors to new officers and they participate actively to share good practices among Court Administrators.

The recipients of the 2013 Court Administrator of the Year Award were:

Michael Chua Yak Ngee
Senior Assistant Executive, Civil Justice Division

Phebe Ang Wei Yi
Senior Executive (Infrastructure Development), Corporate and Court Services Division

Phang Tsang Wing
Assistant Director (Organisational Excellence Unit), Strategic Planning and Technology Division



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ **Staff Event Highlights**

- National Day Celebrations
- National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- ▶ **Public Service Week Activities**
- Organisational Cohesion Day
- Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Public Service Week Activities

The Public Service Week (PSW) was held from 20 to 24 May 2013. Into its sixth year, the annual event reminds public service officers to take pride in their roles and to serve with commitment and dedication. In conjunction with PSW 2013, the Courts held their annual Service Excellence Day cum PSW 2013 Observance Ceremony on 23 May 2013. The organisation's theme for PSW 2013 was "Service with a Heart".

A series of activities leading up to the Service Excellence Day cum PSW 2013 Observance Ceremony was organised. The first-ever Service Excellence Race, similar to the reality television show "Amazing Race", was held over three days to provide an interactive platform for staff to learn about service excellence at the Courts. Each team of five members made their way to designated stations and received clues from the station masters before putting their hats together to answer questions about service standards and delivery at the Courts.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ **Staff Event Highlights**

- National Day Celebrations
- National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards

▶ **Public Service Week Activities**

- Organisational Cohesion Day
- Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

The highlight of Service Excellence Day was having Judicial Commissioner (JC) Tan Siong Thye (then Chief District Judge) serve court users at the various registries. JC Tan interacted with the court users, assisting them with their queries and applications. This provided him with the chance to walk in the shoes of front-line service staff by having the first-hand experience of serving court users. It also showed the management's commitment to service excellence – a morale booster for staff.



During a lunch-time talk for staff that day, Ms Karen Sik, Assistant Director for Services for Trauma and Abuse Recovery and Principal Clinical Psychologist from the Ministry of Social and Family Development was invited to give a presentation on "Managing Post-Complaint Trauma". Ms Sik shared practical knowledge, useful skills and strategies for managing the stress from handling difficult service transactions.

At the PSW 2013 Observance Ceremony, staff renewed their commitment to service excellence by reciting the Public Service pledge. JC Tan also presented the "Service Staff of the Quarter" awards to Ms Unikrishnan Jayanthi from the Crime Registry and Ms Cynthia Tan from the Service Relations Section in recognition of their excellent services to court users. In addition, Mr Bernard Soh, Mr Raymond Loh and Ms Zarinah Bte Muhamad were recognised as recipients of the "PS21 Star Service Award 2013". This annual award is accorded to public service officers who have consistently displayed commitment to high standards of service excellence.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ **Staff Event Highlights**

- National Day Celebrations
- National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- Public Service Week Activities
- ▶ **Organisational Cohesion Day**
- Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Organisational Cohesion Day



The Organisational Cohesion Day 2013 was held on 21 September at the Toa Payoh Stadium. The theme of the event was “Back to School – It’s Game Time!”, bringing back fond memories of the sports days commonly held in Singapore schools.

This was the first time that the event was fully organised by staff. Led by the Family and Juvenile Justice Division, the event’s organising committee choreographed an aerobic-dance to energise the participants to kick-start the day which was lined up with familiar childhood games

such as “Captain’s Ball”, three-legged race and “Memory Squares”. The highlight of the day was a mass display of the scale of justice which required all the participants to come together to form a picture of the emblem of justice. This was a feat that required everyone’s coordination and cooperation, once again calling upon the united spirit of the organisation. With only a few minutes of practice, the participants rose to the challenge with an impressive display of the scale of justice.





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ **Staff Event Highlights**

- National Day Celebrations
- National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- Public Service Week Activities
- Organisational Cohesion Day
- ▶ **Sports and Welfare Activities**

Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Sports and Welfare Activities

It is not all work and no play at the State Courts. The Staff Welfare Committee (SWC) is dedicated to developing programmes that enhance staff welfare, to ensure that staff lead a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

Health Promotion Activities



In 2013, an array of events and activities was organised to promote healthy lifestyles for a healthier workplace. These activities included monthly fruit and health snack treats, a gelato buffet, a talk on the importance of good nutrition, the "Lose-to-Win" challenge which sought to encourage staff to maintain a reasonable weight, health screenings, foot reflexology sessions, weekly morning exercise sessions, and an evening walk to Gardens by the Bay.

In addition, weighing scales and blood pressure monitor machines were made available for staff to use so that they can ensure that they are always in the pink of health.

Sports Activities



2013 was an eventful year for the organisation's sports calendar. The annual Chief District Judge's (CDJ's) Cup tournament kicked off with "Captain's Ball", followed by badminton, five-kilometre cross-country run, futsal, and rounded off with the popular bowling. Each game was keenly contested, with those not competing giving vociferous support to their playing colleagues.

The Civil Justice Division successfully defended their title for the CDJ's Cup while the Registrar's Shield, which is given to the division with the most number of supporters present during the events, was won by the Corporate and Court Services Division (CCSD) for the second year running. The "Sportsman of the Year"



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye
Welcomes and Farewells

▶ Staff Event Highlights

- National Day Celebrations
- National Day and Subordinate Courts Awards
- Public Service Week Activities
- Organisational Cohesion Day

▶ • Sports and Welfare Activities

Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Award went to District Judge Eddy Tham from the Criminal Justice Division. Ms Leong Pui Kwan from CCSD won the "Sportswoman of the Year" Award.

Besides the CDJ's Cup, staff also actively participated and performed well in external sporting events. Ms Karen Lin from the Civil Justice Division did the organisation proud by winning the "Ladies' Bowler of the Year" Award for the Civil Service in the Law Society's Annual 9-Pin Bowling Tournament. So did a bowling team led by District Judge John Ng, which was the Champion Team for the same event.

Besides the tournaments, other activities including *Yoga*, *Zumba*, nature walks and farm visits were organised for staff. In addition to encouraging a sporty lifestyle, the games and activities brought together staff of all levels to forge stronger bonds and team spirit.

Encouraging Social Responsibility

In 2013, the organisation welcomed their new adopted charity, the Autistic Association (Singapore) (AAS). In keeping with tradition, the sales proceeds from the annual National Day carnival were donated to the AAS. This is one of the ways to encourage staff to support worthy causes. Other initiatives in 2013 included participation in the Yellow Ribbon Prison Run which is part of the Yellow Ribbon Project that seeks to encourage acceptance of ex-offenders and give them a second chance at life, as well as donation for the Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts.



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

▶ **Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements**

OUR JUDGES AND STAFF

The Chief Justice with Judges and Staff





ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Presiding Judge, Deputy Presiding Judge & Senior District Judges



L ► R

Former Senior District Judge (Civil Justice Division) Leslie Chew (retired in March 2014)

Senior District Judge (Civil Justice Division) Foo Tuat Yien (formerly Senior District Judge,
Family and Juvenile Justice Division)

Judicial Commissioner See Kee Oon, Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Deputy Presiding Judge of the State Courts Jennifer Marie

Senior District Judge (Criminal Justice Division) Ong Hian Sun

Senior District Judge (Family and Juvenile Justice Division) Valerie Thean (appointed in March 2014)



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Judiciary Recreation Club Committee



Seated (L ► R)

Han Nguyen, Joseph Wee, District Judge Christopher Goh

Standing (L ► R)

Leong Pui Kwan, Siti Ellyna Ali, Tay Kai Boon, Faridah Abu Bakar, Phoo Meng Teck, Janna Goh,
Unikrishnan Jayanthi



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Staff Welfare Special Events Sub-Committee



Seated (L ► R)

Ye Peishi, Zubeda Khanam, District Judge Christopher Goh

Standing (L ► R)

District Judge Janet Wang, Huang Caiwei, Low Meng Huat, Juliet Fenendeas, Mok Chuang Lee, Patrick Chin, Vivian Koh, Unikrishnan Jayanthi



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Staff Welfare Sports Sub-Committee



Seated (L ► R)

District Judge Lorraine Ho, District Judge Christopher Goh

Standing (L ► R)

Mas Helmy Ali, Mohammed Rezal Mohd Yasar, Siti Nabilah Bte Mohammed, Yong Khai Ling, Zainah Sabtu, Kamissah Mahmud



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Staff Welfare Health Sub-Committee



Seated (L ► R)

District Judge Crystal Ong, District Judge Christopher Goh

Standing (L ► R)

Xu Pei Jie, District Judge Michelle Elias Solomon, Siti Nadiah Binte Rashid, Saira Banu d/o Abdul Kader,
Lucy Goh, Kori Lin, Janna Goh, R Thamayanthi



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

Internship Committee



1st row (L ► R)

Magistrate Michelle Yap, Janna Goh, Geoffrey Lim, District Judge Mathew Joseph, District Judge Shaiffudin Saruwan, District Judge Lim Choi Ming, District Judge Angelina Hing

2nd row (L ► R)

District Judge Sarah Tan, District Judge Lynette Yap, Magistrate Olivia Low, District Judge Ronald Gwee, District Judge Colin Tan, Tay Zhonghao

3rd row (L ► R)

District Judge Michelle Elias Solomon, Sakthi d/o Manogran, District Judge Carrie Chan, District Judge David Lim, District Judge Wong Sheng Kwai, District Judge Kenneth Choo

4th row (L ► R)

Dean Yeo, Shalinny Deavy Elan Sozan, Tamilmaran Rukmani, Santha Devi Sivanathan

5th row (L ► R)

Tasmin Begum Shumsudin, Muhammad Haikal Bin Mohamed Harun



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff

Acknowledgements

Court Volunteers Committee



L ► R

Lee-See Fong Pheng, District Judge Ow Yong Tuck Leong, District Judge May Mesenas,
Supaletchumi Suppiah



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Organisational Cohesion 2013 Committee



1st row (L ► R)

Raymond Chong, Daniel Chiah, Yeo Seow Aik, Grace Leong, Michael Leong

2nd row (L ► R)

Patrick Chin, Mahani Adam, Sharon Chua, Shifaa Mohamed Amin

3rd row (L ► R)

Aziziyah Bte Mohamad Hambali, Aston Chow, Dean Yeo



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice

Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

► Our Judges and Staff
Acknowledgements

Workplace Safety and Health Committee



1st row (L ► R)

Unikrishnan Jayanthi, Nadia Bte Mohammed Salim, Janna Goh, Mark Khng, Nur Izzah Bte Amir,
Angeline Kwah, Lyon Oh

2nd row (L ► R)

Supaetchumi Suppiah, Tamilmaran Rukmani, Yong Khai Ling, Nezam Zakaria

3rd row (L ► R)

Lew Wen Long, Daniel Chiah, Adrian Lai



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

**Foreword by The Honourable
the Chief Justice**

**Message from the Presiding Judge
of the State Courts**

Organisation Chart

From Subordinate Courts to State Courts

Our Divisions

Our Commitment to Justice

Awards and Accolades

Our People

A Tribute to Judicial Commissioner Tan Siong Thye

Welcomes and Farewells

Staff Event Highlights

Our Judges and Staff

► Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editorial Committee

Lim Lay Kim

Michelle Chiang

Cheryl Ho

Advisors

District Judge Shawn Ho

District Judge Kimberly Scully

District Judge Josephine Kang

In Consultation with

Judicial Commissioner See Kee Oon, Presiding Judge of the State Courts

Deputy Presiding Judge Jennifer Marie

and the Senior District Judges

With Warmest Appreciation to

All who have contributed to this publication