



Access to
**Quality
Justice**
ANNUAL REPORT 2010



SUBORDINATE
COURTS

SINGAPORE

MISSION

To provide an effective and accessible system of justice,
inspiring public trust and confidence.

SHARED VISION

A leading subordinate court serving society:

With

- quality judgments
- excellent court services
- a variety of processes for timely resolution of disputes
- our people as the most valuable asset
- the innovative use of technology

CORE VALUES

Fairness

Accessibility

Independence, Integrity, Impartiality

Responsiveness

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the Chief Justice

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Judges and Staff of
the Subordinate Courts

Foreword by The Honourable the Chief Justice

The year 2010 marked the end of a significant decade for Singapore, a decade characterised by both tumultuous times, as well as greater economic prosperity. Amidst both trying and pleasant times, the society has always looked up to the courts for the fair administration of justice. The Subordinate Courts, in particular, are associated with many litigants' hopes and fears.

Accessibility to quality justice is thus a perennial goal for the Subordinate Courts.

In this connection, it is encouraging to observe how the Subordinate Courts have been making many improvements to the administration of justice in the past decade. In respect of criminal justice, an individualised and offender-specific approach has been adopted, leading to the establishment of specialist courts such as the Community Court and the Bail Court. Sentencing benchmarks have been extensively reviewed and regularly updated by the Sentencing and Bail Review Panel. Similarly, in the Family and Juvenile Courts, creative programmes have been introduced to

provide holistic solutions for families in distress. The Family Resolutions Chambers have been providing legal, relational and therapeutic solutions to couples embroiled in divorce proceedings. In a similar vein, the CHILD Court was set up to move the judicial process away from a confrontational model to one that focuses on the best interest of the child. In addition, the processes for civil justice have been continuously fine-tuned to ensure differentiated treatment of a variety of cases. Claims falling below \$20,000 have been simplified and dealt with under an "Expedited Claims Track", while complex claims exceeding \$200,000 have been specially managed via a "Specially Managed Civil List". Through the use of pre-action protocols and active court referrals for mediation, the Courts have been encouraging a shift towards using Alternative Dispute Resolution as a first stop before resorting to litigation. In sum, the Subordinate Courts' constant goal has been to "provide an effective and accessible system of justice", as aptly encapsulated in the Courts' mission statement.

To meet the increasingly complex and changing needs of the society, the Subordinate Courts have launched a continual education programme for all judges, overseen by the Judicial Education Board. It is also heartening to see the Subordinate Courts partnering with their stakeholders to provide effective programmes catering to the varied needs in criminal, civil and family justice. By collaborating with the society, there have been more opportunities to increase awareness of the Courts' services amongst members of the public. The challenge of ensuring accessibility to justice cannot

be met by the Judiciary alone without engaging and working closely with the community it serves.

The efforts of the Subordinate Courts have contributed in no small way to public confidence in the Singapore Judiciary. In the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report for 2010-2011, Singapore was ranked first out of 139 countries as having the most efficient legal framework in settling disputes. Further, the World Justice Project, which ranks the quality of legal systems in the context of the rule of law, has ranked Singapore as number one for "Access to Civil Justice" among the 35 countries surveyed, and number two (after Japan) in "Effective Criminal Justice". On that note, I would like to commend the work of the Subordinate Courts and encourage the Judges and Court Administrators to continue the excellent work in providing access to quality justice for all.

CHAN SEK KEONG

CHIEF JUSTICE
Republic of Singapore



Message from the Chief District Judge

With this Annual Report, we mark the beginning of a new decade. The challenges that the Courts and our users faced in an uncertain economic climate in 2009 are thankfully behind us. We look forward to the coming years with optimism and confidence.

In our new shared vision, we state that we would like to serve society. This means that people should have easy access to quality justice.

Ignorance and lack of means should not be in the way of those in need of justice.

Most of our initiatives in 2010 were focused on the provision of quality court services to the public.

HELP CENTRES

Over the last few years, the Subordinate Courts have seen an increased number of unrepresented litigants. One-third of the criminal cases involve litigants-in-person. More than 90% of the litigants are not represented in maintenance and family violence cases. To assist this group of court users, we have established two HELP (Helping to Empower Litigants-in-Person) Centres. One HELP Centre at the Subordinate Courts building serves the litigants-in-person in criminal and civil cases. The other is sited at the Family and Juvenile Court building. These are one-stop centres that provide the litigants-in-person with the tools and knowledge to understand and navigate the relevant legal system. The parties are provided with basic information on court processes, procedures and practices. This information empowers them to ultimately make informed decisions about their respective cases.

We have pro bono lawyers in the HELP Centres to assist the litigants-in-person who require legal advice. The volunteer lawyers also run the legal clinics after office hours. We are very grateful and would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Law Society, Legal Aid Bureau, Association of Criminal Lawyers of Singapore, the Singapore Association of Women Lawyers, NUS Criminal Justice Club and 11 law firms for the provision of free legal advice to litigants-in-person. These law firms are Allen & Gledhill LLP, Amolat & Partners, Colin Ng & Partners LLP, De Souza Lim & Goh LLP, KhattarWong, Lee & Lee, M & A Law Corporation, Rajah & Tann LLP, Rodyk & Davidson LLP, TSMP Law Corporation, and WongPartnership LLP. We strongly encourage more law firms to participate in this pro bono programme.

PUBLICATION OF BROCHURES AND VIDEOS

We have also reviewed the content in the brochures of the various justice divisions to ensure that it is easily understood by the laypersons. For better understanding of the processes and procedures, we have produced videos on criminal trials, mediation, the Small Claims Tribunals, matrimonial procedures, etc. They are screened at appropriate strategic locations in the Subordinate Courts for public viewing.

The Civil Justice Division, together with the Singapore Academy of Law, published a quick reference guide entitled "Guidelines for the Assessment of General Damages in Personal Injury Cases". This book contains classification of personal injuries and the amounts of damages awarded for such injuries. The practitioners find these guidelines very useful. A reprint of this book was necessary. These guidelines help to facilitate settlements between parties and reduce the cost and time needed to resolve such disputes.

The public education and outreach materials are produced with the interest of our court users in mind. We shall continue to review and provide more interesting and informative materials.

LEAN MANAGEMENT

Quality court services also mean that our processes and procedures must be simple, efficient and easily understood by laypersons. We ensure that the court system is not bureaucratic and archaic. As an organ of the State and a public institution, we must increase productivity and drive changes to serve the court users better.

ENHANCEMENTS TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

Criminal Case Resolution

In the Criminal Justice Division, we noticed that a very high percentage of cases fixed for trial “cracked” on the first day of hearing. The cases concluded on the first day because the accused persons pleaded guilty and on some occasions, the prosecution did not proceed with the cases. This means that the allocated trial days are wasted and we have to address this wastage to optimise scarce court resources. In this regard, we find court-driven mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) particularly useful and effective in the disposition of cases. We have traditionally used this tool extensively in the settlement of civil and family disputes.

Last year, we initiated a pilot project on court-driven mediation, namely Criminal Case Resolution (CCR) in the criminal courts. In the CCR, a senior District Judge functions as a neutral mediator facilitating the discussion between the prosecution and the defence. The results have been encouraging. 15 out of 26 CCR cases heard until December 2010 have been successfully resolved without requiring trial dates after the CCR. We saved over 60 judge-days and re-allocated our limited court resources more efficiently. The prosecution also benefitted immensely from this process. There are also savings on the part of the defence. We received positive feedback from both the prosecution and the criminal bar on the CCR. We will institutionalise the CCR and extend its application.



Magistrate's Complaints

We focused on the Magistrate's Complaints processes used by members of the public. Very often these are complaints lodged by the public for trivial matters such as minor assault, neighbours' disputes, noise pollution, etc. The number of such cases has been steadily increasing over the past few years, with 4,569 complaints filed in 2009. Many of such complaints were found to be misconceived as no offence was disclosed. It is imperative that we streamline the complaints process to weed out unmeritorious complaints at an early stage. Neighbours' disputes are referred to the Community Mediation Centre for parties to seek a mutual resolution. Trivial disputes should only proceed to Courts as a last resort.

ENHANCEMENTS TO THE CIVIL JUSTICE PROCESSES

Hassle-Free Recording of By-Consent Settlements and Judgments

When parties reach an agreement in their negotiation, they would like to record their terms of agreement. Previously, they were required to write to the Civil Registry for a suitable date and time to record their by-consent settlements and judgments. This used to take days. We have changed this procedure of recording such terms of agreement. Parties can now appear before the duty registrar at any time without having to make an official appointment with the Civil Registry. This change is most welcomed by court users as it is very convenient, efficient, and saves their time and resources.

Better Awareness of Alternative Dispute Resolution

The Subordinate Courts have been proactive in encouraging parties to use ADR, namely negotiation, mediation or arbitration as a first stop to resolve their disputes. This process is inexpensive, fast and enables parties to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement.

In May 2010, we issued a Practice Direction that requires parties to complete an ADR status form at the Summons-for-Directions stage. In this form, the parties are alerted to other modes of dispute resolution other than adjudication. This has resulted in an increase in the number of cases referred to the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre for court mediation.

ENHANCEMENTS TO THE FAMILY JUSTICE PROCESSES

Uncontested Divorces

The initiative in dispensing with attendance of parties and counsel at certain uncontested divorces hearings went into full swing in 2010. This was well-received by lawyers and parties as it reduces legal costs and saves parties' time in having to attend Court. On 1 December 2010, this scheme was extended to all types of uncontested divorces. In 2010, 4,420 out of 5,662 (78%) uncontested divorces were set down to be heard without parties or counsel present. Parties no longer need to produce marriage certificates for a divorce hearing as they affirm the fact of marriage as evidenced by the marriage certificate in their affidavits.

More Efficient System for Enforcement of Maintenance Orders

Hearings for enforcement of maintenance cases have been expedited and the number of court attendances reduced. Instead of having separate dates for mediation and mention, we give a date for mediation-cum-mention when a complaint is filed. Enforcement is further expedited because if the arrears are agreed and if the matter is not resolved at mediation, the Court will proceed to hear the matter, decide and make appropriate orders. Parties do not have to come back to attend Court on another day.

TRAINING OUR PEOPLE FOR A QUALITY BENCH

Continual training, education, reform and investment in innovation have enabled the Subordinate Courts to stay ahead of the curve.

We adapt and meet the challenges and emerging trends in our fast-paced society. It is therefore essential that judicial officers and staff keep abreast of legal, cultural and social developments.

Judicial Education Board

The Judicial Education Board was set up by The Honourable the Chief Justice to oversee the continuing education of the judicial officers of the Supreme Court and the Subordinate Courts. Training programmes are focused along the strategic thrusts of the Subordinate Courts, and include bench skills, effective case management, keeping abreast of developments in substantive and procedural law, strategic planning and leadership skills, and instilling the commitment to the faithful discharge of judicial duties in a timely and effective manner.

Training for Management Team

To maintain a high performing team to drive the Subordinate Courts to greater heights of court excellence, the management team comprising senior judicial officers and court administrators underwent training on leadership, strategy, management and teamwork and other programmes that would improve leadership and managerial quality. Customised workshops, small-group seminars and one-to-one coaching sessions were held on strategic planning, knowledge management, media relations and management, mapping a total value proposition and ecosystem, amongst others.

Enhanced Judicial Performance

To enhance quality justice, the Subordinate Courts launched the Court Craft Excellence Programme for our judicial officers. This is part of our continuous judicial education curriculum to enrich the professional development of our judicial officers in the conduct of judicial proceedings. In the delivery of justice, our judicial officers must conduct the proceedings

impartially and fairly at all times so that justice is seen to be done. We engaged three distinguished, respectable and experienced advisors from members of the legal fraternity, namely a retired senior District Judge, a retired senior prosecutor and a Senior Counsel.

After the Court Craft Excellence Programme, the judicial officers will observe each other's performance. This will be followed by a sharing session. For audit purposes, the supervisors who are senior District Judges will also observe the performance of the judicial officers under their charge.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (KM)

Knowledge is power. There is an abundance of legal materials such as sentencing trends, sentencing benchmarks, case precedents, court procedures, etc. Knowledge management is necessary for a quality bench. KM ensures that judicial knowledge and experiences are properly documented, continuously enriched and easily accessed. KM would encourage a culture of knowledge capturing and sharing. This would also allow for future development of resources such as manuals, guides and case studies to make training and induction of new officers more effective and efficient.

A KM unit has been established under the Strategic Planning and Training Division. It is headed by an experienced District Judge. There is also a Steering KM Committee comprising members of the senior management. This committee will set the overall KM strategy. To better understand KM practices in law firms and to benchmark against and learn from the best in the field, we visited selected law firms and public agencies such as Allen & Gledhill LLP, Rajah & Tann LLP, Clifford Chance, the Supreme Court and the Attorney-General's Chambers. We are very grateful to these law firms and institutions for hosting these visits.

We have also organised a series of workshops on KM and Communities of Practice (CoP). We are privileged

to have a distinguished KM expert, Mr Kan Siew Ning, Director of Police Technology Department of the Singapore Police Force, on board as our advisor on KM matters. He is also currently an adjunct Assistant Professor for the Master of Science in Knowledge Management with Nanyang Technological University.

Our judicial officers and court administrators are also trained on KM. They are encouraged to embrace a culture of knowledge sharing. KM training has also been identified as a core programme under the Subordinate Courts Master Learning Plan so that all our judicial officers and court administrators understand the motivations for and the fundamentals of good knowledge management.

BUILDING A COHESIVE ORGANISATION

A united and cohesive organisation produces one of the best performing teams.

Conscious efforts were made at all levels to ensure that we work together as an integrated team for a common mission to provide an efficient and accessible system of justice, inspiring public trust and confidence.

Team-bonding activities such as the Inaugural Cohesion Day, fund-raising events for charity, etc., were held.

PROMOTING SERVICE STANDARDS

Rewards and Recognition Framework

A rewards and recognition framework introduces new awards to be given to staff in recognition of their consistently strong commitment in providing good service to court users and members of the public. Internally, staff members are encouraged to show compliments and appreciation for good work and services rendered.

Service Mentoring Programme

We have introduced a Service Mentoring Programme for Court Administrators to enhance service excellence.

This is a service improvement programme where experienced supervisors and service mentors observe frontline counter staff deliver services, identify service gaps in the system and suggest means to rectify them.

LEVERAGING ON TECHNOLOGY

The Subordinate Courts leverage on technology to enhance our scarce resources. Recording of court proceedings is a laborious and slow process. We introduced the Digital Audio Recording and Transcription (DART) pilot programme so that court proceedings can progress faster and judicial officers can better focus on the legal arguments and observe the demeanour of the parties before them. The feedback has been encouraging and soon all trial courts will be DART-enabled.

Other major IT projects undertaken or completed in 2010 include the Enterprise Asset Management, a web-based system that allows for increased convenience and accessibility in maintaining the Fixed Asset Register. This solution incorporates a mobile tracking module in the form of a handheld PDA barcode scanner, which allows for greater efficiency in checking and verifying the asset inventory.

Similarly, the e-Calendar system, which does away with cumbersome paper-based court diaries, will allow the Courts to fix trials and hearings more efficiently. This also enables real-time updates on court availability. This leads to a more optimal utilisation of limited judge-days.

Another major project undertaken last year was the Finance Management System (FMS). The FMS aims to bring about an improved process management of the Subordinate Courts' finances. It also enables easier collaboration across divisions and units through streamlined and more seamless processes.

We launched an off-the-shelf pilot system to optimise the use of scarce interpreting services through leveraging on video-conferencing technology. The interpreters are

able to log on to the video-conferencing system without the need for personal attendance in the courtroom when there is a request for their services. This allows them to attend to such requests from multiple venues whereas previously, they had to be at one venue.

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Partnerships with our justice stakeholders are necessary so that we do not lose touch with the ground. This will help us serve the needs of court users better. Therefore, we regularly and continuously engage relevant stakeholders such as the legal practitioners, Attorney-General's Chambers, enforcement agencies, the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), etc., to solicit feedback to improve our services and to understand their concerns, if any. We also keep them informed of changes and new initiatives. In September 2010, we published the inaugural issue of the bi-annual newsletter "SubCourts News". This keeps our stakeholders updated on the latest happenings and our current programmes and initiatives.

ASIA-PACIFIC COURTS CONFERENCE 2010

With a committed team of dedicated colleagues, the Subordinate Courts successfully hosted the Asia-Pacific Courts Conference 2010. The theme was on court excellence. This was a major event organised on a cost recovery basis. It took us about a year to organise this. It was attended by 220 participants from 56 countries which included many Chief Justices. It served as a platform for judiciaries to learn and share best practices on legal and judicial developments in their jurisdictions. The conference also saw the launch of the inaugural International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE). The Subordinate Courts played an important role in coming up with the IFCE. It was adapted from the Singapore Quality Award (SQA) framework in which we were the winners in 2006. IFCE is a framework of values, concepts and tools by which courts worldwide may adopt to benchmark, assess and improve the quality of justice and court administration.

We received positive feedback from the participants. They found the conference useful, 'thought-provoking' and inspirational. Many participating judiciaries were very enthusiastic and inspired by the experiences gained at this conference. These gave them ideas to improve their respective judicial systems.

INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

It is heartening to note that the Singapore Judiciary has scored well in various international surveys conducted by several international and reputable organisations. Specifically, in the World Bank Doing Business Report 2010, Singapore was ranked the third most efficient judicial system in Asia in enforcing contracts, including taking the shortest time amongst all the rated economies to process a case. In the World Economic Forum Global Competiveness Report 2010-2011, Singapore had the most efficient legal framework in settling disputes amongst the 139 countries which were ranked.

CONCLUSION

As a custodian of justice and the rule of law, the Subordinate Courts will continue to forge ahead with renewed commitment. The success of our Judiciary would ultimately depend on regular monitoring of its progress, alertness to changing situations, needs and provision for refinement and improvement. We have to constantly innovate, be on guard against bureaucracy and leverage on advanced technology to serve our court users well. I am confident that with the earnest efforts of my colleagues, we will continue to deliver quality justice with compassion to the people of Singapore.

TAN SIONG THYE

CHIEF DISTRICT JUDGE

Organisation Chart





Our Divisions

- Criminal Justice Division
- Civil Justice Division
- Family & Juvenile Justice Division
- Corporate & Court Services Division
- Strategic Planning & Training Division

Criminal Justice Division

The Criminal Justice Division is the largest division in the Subordinate Courts. The division comprises Criminal Trial Courts, Mentions Courts, Specialised Courts, and a centralised Pre-Trial Conference Court. These courts collectively deal with more than 99% of all criminal cases in Singapore. For the efficient disposal of the myriad of cases that come before the Criminal Courts, the division is organised into seven specialised functional groups, each headed by a group manager. The entire division is headed by a Senior District Judge.



Specialised function	Courts*
Centralised Pre-Trial Conference (PTC) Court, which centrally manages and assigns cases for trial in the various trial courts.	Court 17
Trial Courts specialising in criminal cases relating to commercial crimes, corruption, immigration, special drugs and intellectual property.	Courts 2, 7, 9, 10, 19, 20, 24, 35, 39
Community Courts specialising in community-related cases and cases relating to public order.	Courts 3, 11
Trial Courts specialising in criminal cases relating to property offences, housebreaking, gaming and gambling offences, and employment-related offences.	Courts 4, 12, 13, 34, 37, 38, 40
Trial Courts specialising in criminal cases relating to crimes against persons.	Courts 5, 8, 15, 16, 18, 25 [#]
Mentions Courts for criminal cases and Specialised Courts such as the Bail Court (Court 26), Traffic Court (Court 21) and Coroner's Court (Court 22).	Courts 7, 14, 21, 22, 23, 26 [#]
Crime Registry providing administrative support to the other courts in the division and also attending to Magistrate's Complaints and criminal case mediation.	Courts 12, 33 and Crime Registry

* Correct as at time of printing. The Courts may be allocated to different groups from time to time.

[#] Courts 25 and 26 operate as Night Courts (Courts 25N and 26N) from 6pm every working day.

In continuing efforts to enhance access to justice, a HELP (Helping to Empower Litigants-in-Person) Centre was established in February 2010.

The aim of the HELP Centre is to provide court users with basic information on court processes, procedures and practices, as well as additional avenues through which legal advice and assistance could be sought.

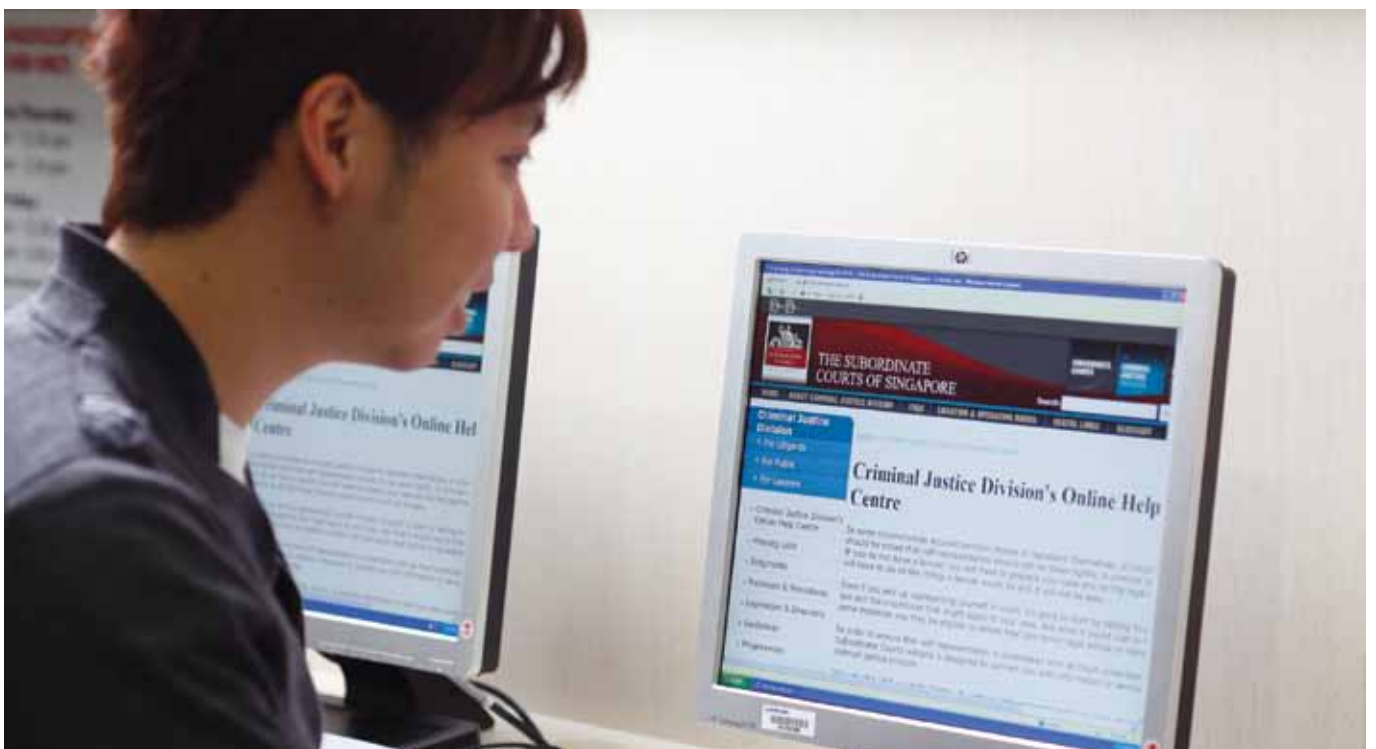
Important court-related information, including frequently-asked-questions (FAQs), is accessible online at the Criminal Justice Division's Online Help Centre. Where appropriate, unrepresented accused persons are referred to the Law Society's Criminal Legal Clinic or to the Association of Criminal Lawyers of Singapore's Remand Legal Clinics for free legal advice.

INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE SERVICE LEVEL

Various initiatives have been introduced to improve the service level of the Criminal Justice Division, and to ensure that persons accused of crime

are dealt with fairly, justly and without undue delay. These initiatives include:

- A **Sentencing Steering Committee** that oversees all matters relating to sentencing, in order to enhance consistency in sentencing practice. The committee oversees the regular updating of the division's internal sentencing benchmarks. This assists the Courts to arrive at fair sentences, taking into account sentencing precedents, and the relevant facts and circumstances of each case.
- The **Sentencing Advisory Forum**, a formal platform for judicial officers to consult their colleagues on matters relating to sentencing, was re-constituted with a wider ambit and renamed the Sentencing and Criminal Practice Advisory (SCPA) Forum. The SCPA Forum provides a formal platform for consultation on matters relating to criminal procedure and practice, in addition to sentencing.
- The **Criminal Practice and Policy Group** conducts research and renders advice to the division on matters relating to judicial policy and practice, and on relevant issues of criminal law, practice, evidence, procedure and other legal issues faced by the criminal courts.



- Lunch-time **refreshers** are conducted frequently to keep judicial officers updated about judicial and legal developments; and **LO (learning organisation) sessions and retreats** are held regularly to brainstorm ideas to improve the services of the Courts.

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

Review of centralised Pre-Trial Conference system

The centralised Pre-Trial Conference (PTC) system, which was introduced in January 2009, has been key to the optimal management and deployment of judicial resources. Under the system, a central diary is maintained, and criminal cases are centrally assigned by the PTC judge to the other judges in the division for trial or guilty pleas to be taken. A comprehensive review of the system was undertaken in 2010 to further enhance the efficiency of the system for the convenience and benefit of prosecutors, defence counsel, accused persons, their sureties and other court users.

Criminal Case Resolution

In late 2009, the division embarked on a pilot Criminal Case Resolution (CCR) initiative to provide a neutral forum for the prosecution and defence to discuss criminal cases on a without prejudice basis. The discussions are facilitated by a senior District Judge. The results of the pilot have been encouraging.

15 of 26 cases heard up till end 2010 were resolved after CCR. For cases that underwent CCR and led to pleas of guilt, there have been no appeals thus far. CCR has therefore been effective in reducing the number of 'cracked' trials (either the accused persons plead guilty or the charges are withdrawn at the trial itself) and the attendant wastage of trial dates, and saved time and expense for all parties involved.

A comprehensive review of the CCR was done in 2010 to establish CCR as a formal process in the management of criminal cases.

Streamlining Magistrate's Complaints

The number of Magistrate's Complaints (complaints of alleged offences filed by members of the public before Magistrates) have been increasing steadily over the past few years. In 2009, 4,569 complaints were filed. Only a very small number of such complaints had summonses, which eventually led to private prosecution by the complainants, issued. The majority of the complaints were found to be misconceived as no offence which a Magistrate would take cognisance of was disclosed. A study was undertaken to streamline the complaints process to weed out unmeritorious complaints at an early stage, so that court resources employed in attending to such complaints could be deployed more constructively elsewhere.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

PP v Oliver Fricker

On a quiet night in May 2010, Oliver Fricker, a Swiss IT consultant working in Singapore, and his accomplice entered the SMRT depot at Changi North by cutting the fence with a wire cutter. Armed with spray paints, they sprayed words on the sides of two trains. One of the trains was used and their act of vandalism was spotted by alert members of the public. Fricker was arrested in Singapore on 25 May 2010 whilst his accomplice remained at large.

A Senior District Judge found the offences committed by Fricker to be plain and blatant acts of vandalism in wilful defiance of the law, which created palpable tension and unease in the community over the adequacy of security at protected places and key installations. Fricker was sentenced to a total of 5 months' imprisonment and 3 strokes of the cane. On appeal, the High Court subsequently enhanced the imprisonment term to 7 months.

PP v Sunshine Empire

Between August 2006 and November 2007, over 17,000 lifestyle packages ranging from \$240 to \$12,000 were sold to thousands of people in Singapore in the multi-level marketing business of Sunshine Empire. These investors were enticed by high returns. They were given points to buy goods from an online portal and were later given talktime. More than \$180 million was amassed from them.

However, the business proved to be nothing more than a large-scale money-circulating scheme. Returns were paid out by recycling funds from new participants. The trio behind the company were James Phang Wah, Jackie Hoo Choon Cheat and Neo Kuon Huay. Phang took more than \$5 million in “consultancy fees” and allowances. Phang’s wife, Neo, was paid \$950,000 under an arbitrary appointment of group sales director of the company. Only about \$21 million out of \$180 million collected from the investors was recovered by the authorities.

Phang was sentenced to 9 years’ imprisonment and fined \$60,000, Hoo was sentenced to 7 years’ imprisonment, whilst Neo was fined \$60,000.

PP v Silviu Ionescu

The Coroner’s inquiry into the two hit-and-run accidents along Bukit Panjang Road on 15 December 2009, involving former Charge d’Affaires A.I. and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of Romania Dr Silviu Ionescu, was held in March 2010. One of the pedestrians, Tong Kok Wai, died 10 days after the fatal road traffic accident. A total of 54 witnesses testified during the six-day hearing before the State Coroner.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, the State Coroner found that Dr Silviu Ionescu was the driver of the car. He had beaten the traffic red light signals and collided into the pedestrians, and fled the scene. He later abandoned the car outside an industrial estate at

Sungei Kadut Avenue. He boarded a taxi home and falsely reported to the police that the car had been stolen. A verdict of “Death due to the Reckless Act of a Known Person” was recorded.

Casino Cases

Loo Siew Wan was charged for dishonestly past-posting (placing a bet after results are posted) at baccarat in a casino in February 2010. When caught, he produced a Singapore driving licence belonging to his brother, as he was an undischarged bankrupt and was prohibited from entering the casino. The case came before the Chief District Judge, who found that the charges indicated a pattern of criminal activity which suggested careful planning or deliberate conduct on the part of Loo, and he was sentenced to a total of 9 months’ imprisonment. The Chief District Judge emphasised that sentence must be calibrated carefully according to the facts and merits of each case.

In a subsequent case, Kipuyo Lemburis Israel pleaded guilty to 4 charges of cheating and attempted cheating by past-posting at roulette tables in a casino. As Kipuyo clearly planned the offences, systematically repeated his pattern of offending and amassed a large six-figure amount in ill-gotten gains, the prosecution urged the Court to impose a deterrent sentence. The Senior District Judge clarified that the mere fact that the offence took place in a casino did not, without more, warrant a deterrent sentence. The appropriate sentence must be carefully calibrated to the individual circumstances of each case. Kipuyo was sentenced to an imprisonment term of 24 months.

Civil Justice Division

The Civil Justice Division handles claims in contract and tort up to the sum of \$250,000. The division comprises the Civil Registry (which includes the Bailiffs Section), Primary Dispute Resolution Centre, Civil Trial Courts and Small Claims Tribunals. Through the HELP Centre, the division also assists litigants-in-person in the civil litigation process.

Civil Registry

A suit is commenced in the Subordinate Courts when a writ is filed at the Civil Registry. The registry facilitates the progress of claims at the Summons-for-Directions stage through directions for discovery of documents and exchange of witnesses' affidavits of evidence-in-chief. The Registry also hears applications for summary judgment which enable claims to be disposed of without trial where there is clearly no defence.

A substantial part of the registry's work relates to the enforcement of judgments. A judgment creditor with an unsatisfied judgment debt may apply at the

registry to garnish the judgment debtor's bank accounts or for the judgment debtor to furnish information on his assets.

The registry's work also includes non-contentious probate applications. This is an essential process to ensure that the executors and administrators of the estate of a deceased are properly appointed.

The bailiffs play a critical role to enforce the judgments of the Subordinate Courts. If a judgment debtor fails to make payment of a judgment against him, the judgment creditor may take out a writ of seizure and sale against the property of the judgment debtor. The bailiffs execute the writ of seizure and sale by seizing the judgment debtor's property and arranging for the auction and sale of such property to satisfy the judgment debt.

Primary Dispute Resolution Centre

The Primary Dispute Resolution Centre (PDRC) plays a key role in the Civil Justice Division. The PDRC facilitates the resolution of cases at an early stage through mediation before a judge, saving time and money for the parties. An amicable settlement also



provides certainty for the parties, helps the parties to maintain a future working relationship and avoids the possible adverse publicity of an open court trial.

All non-injury motor accident cases are referred to the PDRC for mediation. For other cases, parties are encouraged to consider mediation at the Summons-for-Directions stage. This ensures that parties are given every opportunity to consider alternative means of resolving the matter without going to trial.

Civil Trial Courts

Notwithstanding the ample opportunities given to parties to resolve their dispute without going to trial, inevitably there will always be a small percentage of cases where parties are unable to settle their differences and have to proceed for trial.

The judges ensure that the trial proceeds in a fair yet expeditious manner and that justice is not only done but is seen to be done. To help level the playing field for litigants-in-person, efforts are made to help them understand the trial process so that they are better able to conduct their own trials.

Small Claims Tribunals

Certain claims of less than \$10,000 (or \$20,000 if the parties agree in writing) may be filed at the Small Claims Tribunals (SCT). These claims include claims on contracts for the sale of goods or provision of services.

The SCT provides a speedy and cost-effective resolution of low value claims. For a consumer, the lodgement fee for filing a claim at the SCT may be as low as \$10, depending on the value of the claim. An SCT claim may be resolved through mediation before a registrar. If parties are unable to settle the matter, the case will then be fixed for hearing before a referee, whose decision is binding on the parties.

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

In 2010, the division implemented the following three new initiatives to facilitate the early resolution of claims to save time and costs for the parties.

Guide for personal injury cases

The division, together with the Singapore Academy of Law, published a quick reference guide known as "Guidelines for the Assessment of General Damages in Personal Injury Cases". The guide contains a classification of personal injuries and the amount of damages ordinarily awarded for such injuries. The Honourable the Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong stated in his foreword for the guide that he was "*confident that it will facilitate settlement negotiations between parties involved in personal injury claims and reduce the cost and time needed to resolve such disputes*". The guide has been warmly welcomed by practitioners who refer to it regularly as a starting point for settlement negotiations.



Encouraging a shift towards Alternative Dispute Resolution

A Practice Direction (PD) encouraging a shift towards Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as the first stop was implemented in May 2010. The PD requires

parties to complete an ADR status form at the Summons-for-Directions stage. The Courts would then recommend parties to the most appropriate mode of dispute resolution. This may be by way of a court trial, court mediation or arbitration. This encourages parties to consider other modes of dispute resolution that may be more cost effective for their case. The number of cases referred to court mediation from the Civil Registry and Pre-Trial Conferences has increased by more than 100% since the implementation of this PD.

Improving the By-Consent Judgment Process

Lawyers who wished to record by-consent settlements or judgments used to apply in writing to the Civil Registry for a date. This would be followed by an exchange of communication to arrange for a suitable date. The whole process, from the time of application to the date of the hearing used to take days. All these steps have been removed. Lawyers can now attend before the duty registrar at their convenience without writing in beforehand to record by-consent settlements and judgments. This has saved much work and provided speed and tremendous convenience to the users.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

Khek Ching Ching v SBS Transit Ltd

The plaintiff suffered injuries when travelling aboard an SBS Transit bus. She had been thrown forward and sustained a number of injuries when the driver jammed on his brakes. The plaintiff not having confronted the bus driver there and then, the defendant's position was a denial of the accident. Going beyond denial, the defence went on to make the positive allegation that the plaintiff's injuries existed before the accident and that she was trying to "foist upon" the defendant these pre-existing injuries. The plaintiff aligned seven witnesses on her side and the defendant, eleven. Five medical experts were called, including two medical experts on pain. The defendant was found

to be vicariously liable for the negligence of their bus driver. Of note was that the plaintiff recovered general damages for a condition known to the pain specialist as Complex Regional Pain Syndrome and to the orthopaedic specialist as Reflex Sympathetic Disorder, which is a condition where, although an initial physical injury, in this case of the left ankle, may have passed, serious pain continued owing to the initial trauma. Both counsel pointed out that there had only been one Singapore case which dealt with this head of claim. This decision is under appeal by the plaintiff over the issue of the damages that she should obtain.

Orchid Garden Pte Ltd v Law Moi Hwa

The plaintiff sued as the assignee of an agreement whereby the defendant allegedly agreed to transfer leasehold title to a piece of land used as a nursery, and to deliver all existing orchid plants on the nursery and 50 to 60 new species of orchid plants capable of being patented by 1 August 2005. The decision went against the plaintiff. The trial Court disbelieved a principal witness of the plaintiff in regard to the terms of the alleged agreement. The Court found that in fact the plaintiff's assignor was well aware that the leasehold title lay elsewhere and that the defendant only held a licence to operate a nursery on part of the land. It went on to hold that, in any case, the alleged agreement was unenforceable as it failed to comply with the formalities for a sufficient writing required by the Civil Law Act. In respect of the question of patentable species of orchids, the Court reasoned that the agreement was in fact for development by the defendant, in the capacity of an employee of the plaintiff's assignor, of new hybrids of orchids – one discovers new species occurring naturally but one develops by invention new hybrids – but without the deadline the plaintiff alleged. The plaintiff's appeal against this decision has been dismissed.

Kenso Leasing Pte Ltd v Hoo Hui Seng

The defendant contracted with a parallel importer to purchase a new car. He paid a deposit of \$2,000 to the parallel importer. At the request of the parallel importer – as is not uncommon in the business of smaller motor traders – the plaintiff successfully bid for a certificate of entitlement (COE) in the name of the defendant. The bid amount of \$10,000 was paid by the plaintiff, of which the plaintiff received only \$500 from the parallel importer. When the parallel importer subsequently failed to deliver the new car to the defendant, he purchased a similar car from another vendor and used the COE which had been procured in his name. The plaintiff succeeded in its claim for conversion of the COE against the defendant. The trial Court opined that, notwithstanding that the COE was in the name of the defendant, the plaintiff was the true owner of the COE and that the defendant's use of it was an act inconsistent with the plaintiff's rights. The defendant's appeal to the High Court was dismissed.

Family and Juvenile Justice Division

The Family and Juvenile Justice Division deals with four broad categories of cases: divorce-related proceedings, family protection and provision matters, mental capacity cases and matters relating to children and young persons (their offences, their care and guardianship).

The division's primary role is to deal with and adjudicate family-related legal disputes, providing finality and closure to what can be acrimonious legal contests.

A critical role of the division has been to go beyond the legal issues to explore and provide holistic solutions to the parties, using means that, as far as possible, do not intensify the conflict and are solutions-based.



This is based on the recognition that family disputes stand apart from other kinds of disputes. Most family disputes that reach the Courts are likely to have a long and difficult past underlying the legal issues. Furthermore, unlike other disputes, many parties will have to continue to interact in the future, in that they need to co-parent their children for years to come. To effectively handle the issues presented for consideration, the Family Court is keenly aware of the need to be sensitive to the underlying issues and the needs of the parties in the future.

The Court's role as an impartial adjudicator of family disputes encompasses the role of protecting family obligations to ensure that family and marital rights are upheld and responsibilities are fulfilled. To preserve the psychological and physical well-being of all family members, counselling and mediation by a team of highly experienced in-house counsellors and mediators is and always remains a high priority, especially in the case of children and victims of abuse.

Divorce-related proceedings

The divorce-related applications handled by the division include:

- Applications to commence divorce proceedings within the first 3 years of marriage;
- Applications for divorce, nullity or judicial separation;
- Applications for consequential division of matrimonial assets, maintenance and orders concerning the custody and care of children (where the value of the assets falls below \$1.5 million); and
- Applications for subsequent variation of maintenance orders and orders concerning the children where circumstances change over the years.

While some matters may have to be determined through a contested court hearing, every effort is made to provide the opportunity for parties to work towards achieving consensus on what the way forward should be. The emphasis is on the use of collaborative

and less-adversarial processes, such as the CHILD (Children's Best Interest, Less Adversarial) Programme, that do not intensify animosity but instead strengthen the parties' ability to cooperate in co-parenting their children unimpaired by acrimonious litigation.

Family protection and provision matters

The division hears all applications for orders relating to family violence and protection, orders relating to maintenance (not consequent upon divorce), orders relating to children under the Guardianship of Infants Act, as well as orders for enforcement of maintenance. Orders made by the Syariah Court for maintenance and by the Tribunal for Maintenance of Parents can also be enforced at the Family Court.

Mental capacity cases

With effect from 1 March 2010, all proceedings under the Mental Capacity Act have been handled by the division. A Mental Capacity Court has been created to deal with applications under the Act. Orders can be made appointing deputies to act on behalf of persons lacking mental capacity.

Matters relating to children and young persons

The Juvenile Court, one of the courts under the division, handles all criminal charges against juveniles in Singapore. Although it exercises criminal jurisdiction in hearing these matters, it operates differently from other criminal courts. The concern for rehabilitation and restoration assumes greater emphasis relative to deterrence, incapacitation and even sentencing parity. There is a greater need for holism and a sense of family-orientation, which takes into account factors and circumstances from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

The Juvenile Court also handles applications for 'Care and Protection' orders and 'Beyond Parental Control' orders under the Children and Young Persons Act. Possible orders in these cases include placement under a fit person or residence in a juvenile institution.

The Family Court also handles applications under the Guardianship of Infants Act and the Adoption of Children Act. Orders could be made concerning the custody of children and their adoption.

Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

Critical to the work of the division are the partnerships and complementary relationships with stakeholders, who provide support services for parties who appear in the Courts. They include the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, the Panel of Juvenile Court Advisors, governmental and non-governmental family support agencies, family service centres and volunteer mediators, who assist in the mediation of maintenance and divorce cases.

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

Dispensation of parties' attendance at uncontested divorces

The Family Court's 2010 initiative in dispensing with parties' attendance at certain uncontested divorce hearings, to reduce legal cost and save parties from attending the formality of an uncontested divorce hearing, was well received by parties and lawyers. On 1 December 2010, this scheme was extended to all types of uncontested divorces. Parties are no longer required to produce the original marriage certificates for cases set down on or after 1 October 2010, unless the Court otherwise directs, as the forms of affidavit were changed to require parties to confirm the fact of the marriage with reference to a copy of the marriage certificate.

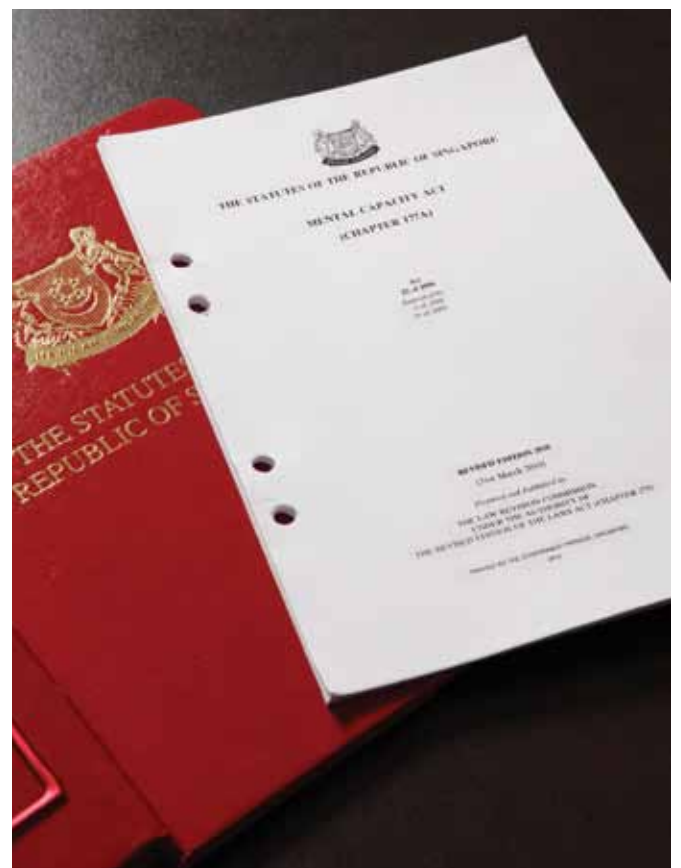
Expedited hearings for enforcement applications

Parties are required to attend at the Family Court when a party files a complaint for the enforcement of maintenance. Since April 2010, the Family Court has reduced the number of court attendances for parties. When the complaint is filed, a date for mediation-cum-mentions is given to the complainant and respondent. If mediation fails and if the arrears

are agreed by the non-paying party, instead of parties returning on another day for the hearing, the Court proceeds to hear the matter, decide and make appropriate orders. This saves parties from having to take time off from work to attend Court on another day and the complainant is able to receive payments for the maintenance arrears expeditiously.

Setting up of Mental Capacity Court

The Mental Capacity Court was set up on 1 March 2010 to deal with applications under the Mental Capacity Act relating to persons who lack mental capacity (P). These include applications for the appointment of deputies who are empowered to make decisions on P's behalf, the Court to make decisions on P's behalf, and determining the validity and operation of a lasting power of attorney registered with the Office of Public Guardian. As at 12 November 2010, 113 applications had been filed for the appointment of deputies.



SIGNIFICANT CASES

Cross-jurisdictional orders on paternity issues

The Family Court recently considered the impact of an annulment, foreign custody orders and the rights of non-biological parents on children's issues. A Singaporean woman married an American, gave birth to twins and the family moved to USA. The mother filed for divorce and the parties were granted joint custody of the twins. Neither party could take the twins out of USA without the other's consent or a court order. Subsequently, instead of a divorce, this marriage was annulled on the father's application, because the mother's earlier divorce in Singapore had not been finalised when she remarried.

The mother then applied, on the basis of her own paternity test, that the father was not the twins' biological parent. Before a hearing on the paternity and other issues, the mother took the twins to Singapore without the father's consent or order. The father then obtained a USA order for sole custody, search and retrieval of the twins. He also applied in Singapore for the twins' custody and their return to USA. The mother, with the support of another man who claimed to be the biological father based on a Health Sciences Authority report, separately applied and was granted sole custody of the twins. The father's application to intervene and set aside the Singapore order was granted as the twins were considered children of the marriage as they had been born during the marriage notwithstanding the annulment and the allegation that he was not their biological father. The Court decided that Singapore was not the appropriate forum and set aside the earlier order. To prevent further disruption to their lives, the twins were to remain in Singapore pending a decision on the relevant issues by the USA court. The Court's view was that the mother, whose act in removing the twins from the USA was an act of contempt, ought to return to the USA to deal with the proceedings there and the warrant for her arrest. The mother appealed against the order for the children's issues to be dealt with in the USA. The order was upheld on appeal.

Relevance of pre-existing characteristics in granting divorces

A divorce is granted if a spouse has behaved in a way that the other cannot reasonably be expected to live with. Parties' characters and emotional make-up are relevant.

A husband had courted the wife since 1957. Two weeks before the wedding in 1968, the husband cancelled the wedding and married another woman. The wife was traumatised as she was literally left stranded at the altar. She remained single from then at the age of 30. After his first wife died, the husband courted the wife with ardent love letters and promises. In March 2004, the husband proposed. By this time, the wife was 66 years old. Because of her fears, the wife elicited 4 important promises from the husband: to cease contact with the first wife's family, that he would convert to Christianity, that he would not gamble, and that he would make up to the wife the 'lost years'. The husband filed for divorce when the parties were in their 70s. The Court held that the husband married the wife knowing the importance of the promises to her, promises that he had willingly made. The events in the past had set a precedent for their marriage life and as such it was not for the husband to now claim that the wife acted unreasonably or that she had emotional baggage. His claim for divorce was dismissed. The wife's counterclaim for divorce on unreasonable behaviour based on the husband's breach of promises was granted as his breach of the promises was such that she could no longer reasonably be expected to live with him.

Mental Capacity Court

The Mental Capacity Court dealt with a case, where a daughter applied for appointment as her mother's deputy with power to complete the sale of an HDB flat owned jointly by her mother, an incapacitated person (P), and her son as joint tenants and use the entire net sale proceeds for P. P's children, including the co-owner son, had consented to the application.

It emerged in the course of hearing, that the option to sell the flat had been given by the co-owner son's lawyer and the co-owner son was alleging that he should receive all the net sale proceeds as he had paid for the flat with his Central Provident Fund monies. The Court appointed the daughter as deputy and ordered that the net sale proceeds be divided by agreement between the deputy and the co-owner son and that any agreement, which gave P less than half of the net sale proceeds, would require the Court's prior approval.

Corporate and Court Services Division

The Corporate and Court Services Division (CCSD) provides essential services to the other divisions of the Subordinate Courts. Led by a Senior District Judge, CCSD is organised into various sections and staffed by a team of subject specialists. It is the administrative backbone of the Subordinate Courts.

Communications Section

The Communications Section comprises the Corporate Communications Unit and the Service Relations Unit.

The Corporate Communications Unit serves as a link between the Subordinate Courts and external parties, particularly the media, local and overseas agencies, and the general public. The unit is responsible for enhancing public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Subordinate Courts' role in the judicial system.

The Service Relations Unit seeks to build a culture of service excellence in the Subordinate Courts through identification of relevant training programmes for service staff and setting service standards for all staff. The unit supervises service-related activities, including managing compliments and complaints from court users, and provides support to the Quality Service Manager.

The Communications Section's key focus in 2010 was to improve services to court users and staff, in support of the Subordinate Courts' quest towards service excellence.

In collaboration with the Civil Justice Division, the Corporate Communications Unit produced an information video on mediation at the Subordinate Courts, and a video on the Small Claims Tribunals (SCT) to provide court users with a better understanding of the processes and procedures at the SCT. The unit also reviewed the design and content of the educational brochures from the various divisions, to ensure that the content is easily understood by the layperson. To enhance the corporate image of the Subordinate Courts, the unit refreshed the design of the Subordinate Courts' name card.

In 2011, one of the unit's main initiatives is to revamp the Subordinate Courts website, starting with a user requirement study. The revamped website will provide better access to the services and initiatives provided by the Subordinate Courts.

In the Subordinate Courts' journey towards service excellence, the Service Relations Unit has implemented the quarterly Service Mentoring Programme for Court Administrators, which allows the unit, supervisors and identified service mentors to understand the service culture on the ground, and close any identified gaps, be it within the division or across divisions.

The unit also introduced a compliments programme to encourage a culture where staff members show appreciation of the efforts put in by their colleagues who had assisted them at work. Compliment cards from appreciative staff members are pinned on boards, which are displayed at prominent areas within the divisions.

To better assess the level of service provided by CCSD officers, the unit conducted a survey to all staff in the Subordinate Courts. With these findings, the various sections under CCSD were able to close the gaps identified to provide better service to all staff in the Subordinate Courts. The next survey will be conducted in December 2011.

Finance Section

The Finance Section ensures that the Subordinate Courts' financial resources are optimised and is responsible for providing accurate finance services promptly and in compliance with prescribed guidelines.

In 2010, the Finance Section streamlined the payment and administration process at the Family Registry to provide a one-stop payment service at the Family Registry, thus providing greater convenience to court users. The section also improved the Fine Instalment Payment System to provide for prompt auto-termination of fine instalment plans that have defaulted.

To enhance the Subordinate Courts' financial management processes, the Finance section will implement a new iBudgeting system and upgrade the Financial Management System.

Human Resource Management Section

The Human Resource Management (HRM) Section aims to position the Subordinate Courts as an employer of choice through its recruitment, retention and staff development, career progression, and employee engagement strategies. The HRM Section spearheads manpower planning policies to identify and groom potential leaders for organisational renewal and leadership succession.

In 2010, the HRM Section focused on the development, retention, benefits and remuneration of our contract

staff. The section reviewed the remuneration and benefits of contract staff to ensure that they were closely aligned to those of permanent staff.

In 2010, for the first time, the Subordinate Courts' 10-year Long Service Award was extended to contract staff, in recognition of their dedicated services to the Subordinate Courts. Contract staff members with good performance were also given the opportunity to be emplaced as permanent staff. This contributed towards improved staff morale and facilitated the building up of institutional knowledge in the long run.

The section also streamlined the human resource-related applications, e.g. application for flexible working hours, for a more efficient processing of such applications. In preparation of the introduction of the AIM model (a competency-based assessment framework) for Division II officers in 2011, the section conducted awareness and training sessions to these officers.

In addition, the HRM Section introduced several initiatives to enhance its employee engagement strategies. Retiring officers who had dedicated their unstinting service to the Subordinate Courts were honoured with a token of appreciation during the inaugural appreciation lunch in May 2010. From November 2010, staff who refer a successful candidate to join the Subordinate Courts under the "Employee Referral Scheme" will receive a referral fee. The section also conducted monthly Fruit Day and introduced the Fruits Buffet to reinforce the importance of healthy eating.

Moving forward, the HRM Section aims to streamline the recruitment process and hence reduce the turnaround time. To establish a more rigorous manpower planning framework to build a sustainable

and effective workforce, the section will review the organisational structure, manpower strength, job grading and designations in the Subordinate Courts, and adopt a more integrated approach towards succession planning and talent management. Lastly, the section will establish a more robust staff welfare and benefit system, in line with the objective of positioning the Subordinate Courts as an employer of choice.

Infrastructure Development Section

The Infrastructure Development Section is responsible for the planning, upgrading, development, management and maintenance of the courts' facilities and security. The section also manages the procurement of all office equipment and supplies to ensure smooth court operations.

In 2010, the section embarked on several infrastructure improvement projects.

One of them was the installation of new and more intuitive directional signs to provide better navigation for court users, complementing the colour-zoning project completed in 2009.

In response to feedback from court users, a self-service photocopying machine was installed on the ground floor of the Subordinate Courts building. The scanning machines at the entrance of the Subordinate Courts building and Family and Juvenile Court building were upgraded to enhance security within these two buildings. In addition, the main conference room (then known as "Judicial Officers Conference Room") was refurbished into a multi-purpose room (now known as "The Conference Room") that offers flexibility in its use. Plans to upgrade the public lifts in the Subordinate Courts building are underway. Restoration works to the facade of the Family and Juvenile Court building will be carried out in 2011.

In the coming year, the security surveillance infrastructure will be enhanced to ensure a comprehensive coverage of the surveillance cameras in the court buildings. A smart digital closed-circuit television (CCTV) intelligence system will be adopted. This state-of-the-art surveillance system will complement the traditional CCTV system, allowing real-time alerts of unusual activities such as trespasses. Leveraging on technology, this system will enhance the overall security at the Subordinate Courts.



Interpreters' Section

The primary duty of the Interpreters' Section is to provide interpretation and translation services to court users. Besides this function, the interpreters serve as bail officers. They assist to process bail applications for potential bailors. The interpreters also provide assistance to litigants lodging a complaint at the Crime Registry or the Protection Order Services. They are also appointed as Commissioners for Oaths to administer the statutory declarations and affidavits of litigants who have cases in the Subordinate Courts. The interpreters' scope of work also extends to paying hospital visits to read out charges to accused persons who are unwell and cannot be in Court. At the Family Court, interpreters also perform mediation and related duties.



The Indian interpreters manage the foreign interpreters engaged by the Subordinate Courts. In May 2010, the Indian interpreters, with the support of the Chinese and Malay interpreters, organised three tea sessions for the foreign interpreters, in appreciation of their contributions. These sessions provided an opportunity for forging greater camaraderie between the resident court interpreters and foreign interpreters.

In September 2010, the Interpreters' Section launched a pilot project using video-link and 3G telephone facilities in selected courts. This project allows a more efficient deployment of interpreters, thereby optimising the section's

manpower resources. The video-link and 3G telephone facilities are expected to be expanded to other courts in 2011.

Records Management Unit

The Records Management Unit (RMU) provides effective safekeeping, retrieval and preservation of court records. In 2010, the RMU earmarked 37 million pages of court records for microfilming.

Digital Recording Unit

The Digital Audio Recording and Transcription (DART) pilot project which aims to replace the manual recording of court proceedings by judges was implemented in 2010. With DART, judges will be able to dedicate themselves to perform their core work more effectively and proficiently, and proceedings will be conducted more efficiently.

Strategic Planning and Training Division

The Strategic Planning and Training Division serves to enable the Subordinate Courts to prepare for the future through effective strategic planning.

This involves the ability to identify the driving forces and global trends relevant to the work of the Subordinate Courts, anticipate their impact, and recommend strategies for responding and adapting to the changes that are expected to occur.

The division aims to do so by engaging in leading research and analysis, empowering staff with the requisite skills through an effective training and development framework, employing and deploying technology innovatively, establishing strategic collaboration with key partners, and

effecting positive change for organisational excellence. It endeavours to achieve these through its units.

Strategic Planning and Training Office

The key purposes of the Strategic Planning and Training Office are to identify the short and long-term strategic challenges of the Subordinate Courts, and chart the strategic plan for meeting these challenges. This includes the development and implementation of the learning and development road map of all Judicial Officers and Court Administrators so that they are equipped with the requisite skills and capabilities to meet the challenges. The office also sets out the strategies for driving effective knowledge management at the Subordinate Courts as part of the efforts to nurture a culture of learning, sharing and continuous improvement in the organisation.

To achieve its objectives, the Strategic Planning and Training Office works and collaborates closely with all the divisions of the Subordinate Courts. In addition, it seeks to drive the division's efforts in establishing greater strategic collaboration and partnership with its judicial and other relevant counterparts in other countries.

Centre for Research and Statistics (CReST)

CReST tracks, monitors and reports on the performance of the Subordinate Courts through the analysis of operational data, results of key performance indicators, and conduct of community and user surveys. Recommendations based on such statistical information are often made to senior management in relation to areas requiring attention or improvement. CReST also conducts research studies that highlight some of the recent trends in the profile of cases and court users of the Subordinate Courts. This is intended to enhance the ability of the Courts to refine court processes and case management, and to improve resource management. In addition, CReST undertakes environmental scans of the rankings of Singapore's legal and judicial system as inputs to the Subordinate Courts' benchmarking efforts.

Information Technology Department (ITD)

ITD manages the development, deployment and use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) platforms at the Subordinate Courts. Its work forms an important component of strategic planning because the innovative and effective use of suitable and up-to-date ICT platforms can help to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Courts.

ITD systematically recommends improvements to be made to existing ICT platforms, and offers appropriate ICT solutions for the business and operational needs of all the divisions. It also manages the Subordinate Courts' ICT Master Planning and Governance, and aligns them with the overall ICT directions, policies and standards of the public service in Singapore through the Subordinate Courts ICT Steering Committee.

Research and Resource Centre (RRC)

RRC has two core functions, one of which is its traditional role as the library and legal resource centre. In 2010, RRC extended its facilities to the general public, in addition to the legal profession and *pro se* litigants who have cases before the Courts. Its second function is to provide research and analytical support for various research-based programmes and initiatives at the Subordinate Courts, in the form of horizon scanning of the international legal landscape and judicial developments, benchmarking, and comparative research.

Organisational Excellence Unit (OEU)

OEU was set up to develop and institutionalise initiatives in organisational development and excellence at the Subordinate Courts. Its focus is in establishing international standards for developing and strengthening the Subordinate Courts' management systems and processes with a view to enhance the organisation's ability to deliver towards its strategic goals and objectives.

Knowledge Management Unit

Delivering quality judgments and rendering excellent court services are two key planks to fulfilling the Subordinate Courts' mission and achieving their vision to be a leading subordinate court. The role of Knowledge Management (KM) is to gather, organise, share and update the knowledge and expertise of the Judicial Officers and Court Administrators to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of every officer in his day-to-day work, from judgment writing and meting out an appropriate sentence to case and trial management; from dealing with court users to the maintenance and tracking of court performance indicators.

Towards this end, and to underscore the message of KM as an organisational priority, a dedicated Knowledge Management Unit within the Strategic Planning and Training Division was set up in 2010 to plan, develop and coordinate KM initiatives in the Subordinate Courts.

In 2010, the KM Unit embarked on a series of study visits to learn from the KM best practices of leading local and international law firms, and foreign jurisdictions, and drew up the KM Strategy Roadmap for the Subordinate Courts. In implementing the KM Strategy Roadmap, the unit has since commenced on an organisation-wide KM audit, re-developed the Intranet, enhanced KM awareness through workshops and established the Communities of Practice.

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

In 2010, the division was involved in many programmes and initiatives spanning across divisions and at the organisational level. These included the launch of the HELP Centre, establishment of the Judicial Education Board, roll-out of the Court Craft Excellence Programme, development of the Subordinate Courts' knowledge management strategy and planning of the Subordinate Courts' corporate retreat and annual workplan. Other key initiatives include the following:

Public Perception and Court Users Surveys 2010

The Public Perception Survey 2010 was conducted by CReST to ascertain the level of public trust and confidence of the Singapore population in the Subordinate Courts through door-to-door household surveys across the island. The Court Users Survey 2010, on the other hand, was carried out to obtain feedback from court users to further improve the Subordinate Courts' services. The results of these surveys provided relevant performance benchmarks for the Subordinate Courts' strategic planning and policy development initiatives.



Master Learning Plan 2010 for Court Administrators

The Strategic Planning and Training Office conducted a learning needs analysis for Court Administrators in 2010 and revamped their training and development plans through the Master Learning Plan 2010. The plan identifies the core and foundation programmes essential for Court Administrators, and highlights specific programmes which are relevant to the specialised areas of their work.

Central Queue Management System

Amidst ongoing efforts to improve the flow of court cases and enhance the convenience of prosecutors, lawyers and court users, ITD kick-started a study to explore options available to do so. For example, an option being explored involves the dissemination of real-time case-flow information to court users through platforms such as mobile phone text messages to manage case waiting periods, court attendance and queues at the Courts. The enhancement plans are expected to be finalised in 2011.



SUBORDINATE COURTS

Awards and Accolades

Our International Profile

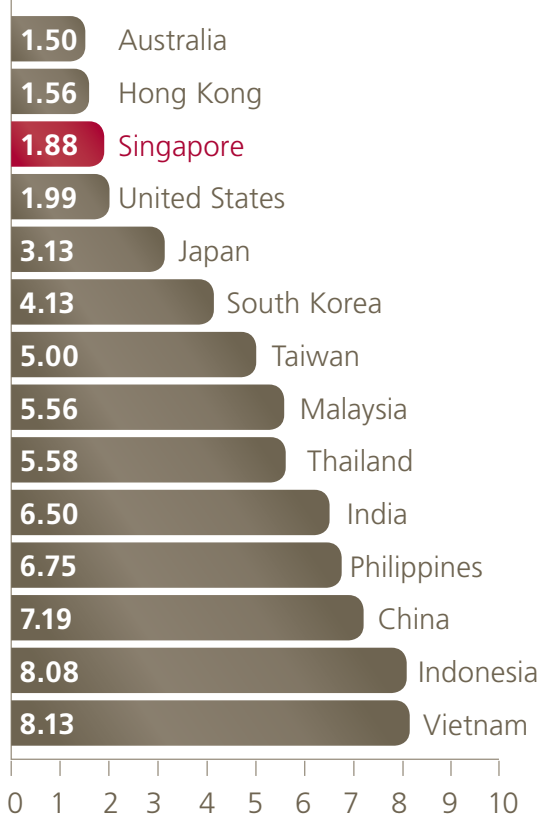
In eight major independent reports on the ratings and rankings accorded to the Singapore Judiciary by established international agencies in 2010, Singapore continues to attain high scores, which is a testament to the Singapore Judiciary's efforts at ensuring access to quality justice for all.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RISK CONSULTANCY (PERC) ASIAN INTELLIGENCE REPORT¹

The PERC Asian Intelligence survey was conducted with 1,375 expatriates living in Asia. Two components were rated, one on judicial independence, and the other on the efficiency of the legal framework in settling disputes.

In the survey report released in December 2010, Singapore was rated second in Asia for the quality of judicial systems (Figure 1).

Figure 1: PERC Asian Intelligence Report - Expatriate Perceptions on Judicial Systems



INSTITUTE FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT (IMD) WORLD COMPETITIVENESS YEARBOOK²

The results of this report were based on the views of 4,460 top and middle management executives in the 58 nations polled. The Singapore Judiciary regained its pole position for how its legal framework encourages the competitiveness of enterprise (Figure 2). As for whether justice was administered fairly, Singapore ranked seventh worldwide (Figure 3). Within Asian economies, Singapore was in top position ahead of Japan and Hong Kong, which were ranked 13th and 14th, in respect of the legal framework in the country and the way justice was being administered in the country.

Figure 2: IMD - Ranking of Legal and Regulatory Framework

Asian Countries & USA & Australia	Score	Rank
Singapore	7.67	1
Hong Kong	6.94	2
Malaysia	6.93	3
Taiwan	5.37	15
China Mainland	4.68	21
Indonesia	4.56	22
India	4.44	25
Thailand	4.09	32
Japan	4.02	35
Philippines	3.18	43
Korea	2.95	48
USA	4.69	20
Australia	5.84	9

¹ Based on rankings in the PERC Asian Intelligence Report published on 1 Dec 2010.

² Based on rankings in the IMD World Competitiveness Report 2010.

Figure 3: IMD - Ranking of Administration of Justice

Asian Countries & USA & Australia	Score	Rank
Singapore	8.35	7
Japan	7.61	13
Hong Kong	7.58	14
Malaysia	6.56	23
Thailand	6.21	25
Taiwan	5.65	28
India	5.44	30
Korea	4.77	33
China Mainland	3.89	41
Indonesia	3.75	42
Philippines	2.36	50
USA	7.00	21
Australia	8.13	9

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF) GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS REPORT 2010-2011

In the September 2010 report, a total of 139 countries were ranked for competitiveness through the assessment of 12 pillars of competitiveness. Singapore was in third place in the overall competitiveness ranking among the 139 countries. Under the "Institution" pillar, five pillars were measured to determine the soundness and quality of the judiciary and legal framework (Figure 4). The pillars were:

- Efficiency of legal framework in settling disputes
- Efficiency of legal framework in challenging regulations
- Judicial independence
- Property rights; and
- Intellectual property protection.

Figure 4: WEF – Ranking of Singapore's Judiciary, 2002–2010³

Institution Pillar - Ranking of Singapore (On a scale of 1-worst to 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

³ Compiled from the rankings in the WEF Global Competitiveness Report for the relevant years.

FRASER INSTITUTE ECONOMIC FREEDOM OF THE WORLD REPORT

This report presented the Economic Freedom of the World Index 2008 (derived from 2008 data). The Economic Freedom Index measures the degree to which policies and institutions of the ranked countries are supportive of economic freedom. One assessment indicator was “legal structure and security of property rights”. The seven subcomponents of this indicator are:

- Judicial Independence
- Impartial Courts
- Protection of Property Rights
- Military Influence in Rule of Law and the Political Process
- Integrity of the Legal System
- Legal Enforcement of Contracts
- Regulatory Restrictions on Sale of Real Property

Singapore has consistently been ranked in the top 10% band among the 141 countries rated and has been in the top 20% indicator banding for this indicator since 2000 ⁴.

WORLD BANK DOING BUSINESS REPORT ⁵

In November 2010, the World Bank released the Doing Business Report, which conducts benchmarking of regulations that encourage and fuel business activities, through evaluating nine key areas that a typical business will undergo in its life-cycle. One of the areas is “Enforcing Contracts”, where a judicial system is assessed based on its efficiency in resolving commercial disputes between two local companies for a breach of a sales contract with a value which is twice the per capita income of the economy.

A total of 183 economies were evaluated. Singapore was seen to be effective in enforcing a contract, securing 13th place in the 2010 rankings, and was also one of the top 3 economies in the Asian region, after Hong Kong and South Korea. It was recorded that Singapore required the shortest time to complete the contract enforcement process among all the economies, with just 150 days, way ahead of the next shortest time of 195 days for Uzbekistan. Singapore also had one of the least number of procedures, at 21. Ireland is the only economy with lesser number of procedures, at 20.

WORLD BANK GOVERNANCE INDICATORS REPORT

This report measures a country’s governance in six broad dimensions:

- Voice and Accountability
- Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism
- Government Effectiveness
- Regulatory Quality
- Rule of Law; and
- Control of Corruption

In 2010, Singapore was in the top 10% of the 213 countries ranked, a position that Singapore had been holding since 2003. The majority of the countries that were ahead of Singapore were mainly from Europe, with exception of New Zealand, Canada and Australia. Singapore remained the top-rated Asian country (Figure 5).

⁴ Based on rankings published in the Frasers Institute Economic Freedom of the World Report, 2000 (2002 edition) - 2008 (2010 edition).

⁵ Based on the rankings in the World Bank Doing Business Report 2010.

Figure 5: World Bank - Governance Indicator: Rule of Law ⁶

Rank	Top 20 Countries	2009 Indicator
1	Finland	1.94
2	Sweden	1.93
3	New Zealand	1.91
4	Norway	1.88
5	Denmark	1.87
6	Luxembourg	1.83
7	Netherlands	1.78
8	Canada	1.78
9	Austria	1.76
10	Switzerland	1.75
11	Australia	1.73
12	Iceland	1.72
13	Ireland	1.71
14	United Kingdom	1.71
15	Greenland	1.70
16	Germany	1.63
17	Singapore	1.61
18	Liechtenstein	1.61
19	United States	1.53
20	Malta	1.51

WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT RULE OF LAW INDEX 2010 REPORT

The World Justice Project (WJP) is a New York-based project, with financial backing from major philanthropic organisations, including the Neukom Family Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, GE Foundation and Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. The WJP represents a multinational and multidisciplinary effort to strengthen the rule

of law throughout the world. It is based on two complementary premises: first, the rule of law is the foundation for communities of opportunity and equity; and second, multidisciplinary collaboration is the most effective way to advance the rule of law. The Rule of Law Index is an assessment tool that evaluates the extent the countries adhere to the rule of law in practice, from the perspective of an ordinary person.

The first annual report on the Rule of Law Index in 2010 ranked 35 countries, obtaining data from two sources. The first was a general population poll (GPP), designed by the WJP and conducted by local polling companies, with 1,000 respondents. Another source came from a qualified respondents' questionnaire (QRQ), and respondents included in-country practitioners and academics with expertise in civil and commercial law, criminal justice, labour law, and public health.

The Rule of Law Index covers nine dimensions (there is one other dimension on 'Informal Justice' but which was not included in the scores for 2010) and the 35 countries are grouped into regions and income levels. Singapore is in the East Asia & Pacific region (together with Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, South Korea and Thailand) and falls within the High Income Group (with Austria, Japan, Sweden, Netherlands, France, United States, Australia, Canada, Spain, and South Korea).

The nine dimensions and sub-indicators (only the sub-indicators of the last two dimensions which are directly related to judiciary are listed) are:

- Limited Government Powers
- Absence of Corruption
- Clear, Publicised and Stable Laws
- Order and Security
- Fundamental Rights
- Open Government

⁶ Based on the rankings for Rule of Law published in the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators Report.

- Regulatory Enforcement
- Access to Civil Justice
 - People can access and afford legal counsel in civil disputes
 - People can access and afford civil courts
 - Civil justice is impartial
 - Civil justice is free of improper influence
 - Civil justice is free of unreasonable delays
 - Civil justice is effectively enforced
 - ADR systems are accessible, impartial, and effective
- Effective Criminal Justice
 - The criminal investigation system is effective
 - The criminal adjudication system is timely and effective
 - The criminal justice system is impartial
 - The criminal justice system is free of improper influence

- Due process of law and rights of the accused are effectively protected

Singapore was rated well in “Access to Civil Justice” (Figure 6A) and “Effective Criminal Justice” (Figure 6B), taking the first and fifth global positions respectively. It was observed that all the top 10 countries rated for “Access to Civil Justice” and “Effective Criminal Justice” were in the High Income Group and came from either the East Asia & Pacific or Western Europe & North America regions. Singapore attained the same ratings (0.83) for both components. However, the same score enabled Singapore to clinch the top position in “Access to Civil Justice” but not in “Effective Criminal Justice”.

Figure 6A: WJP Rule of Law Index 2010 – Access to Civil Justice

Country	Income	Region	Ranking	Ratings
Singapore	High	East Asia & Pacific	1	0.83
Sweden	High	Western Europe & North America	2	0.83
Netherlands	High	Western Europe & North America	3	0.81
Austria	High	Western Europe & North America	4	0.81
South Korea	High	East Asia & Pacific	5	0.75
Australia	High	East Asia & Pacific	6	0.73
Spain	High	Western Europe & North America	7	0.72
Canada	High	Western Europe & North America	8	0.71
France	High	Western Europe & North America	9	0.68
Japan	High	East Asia & Pacific	10	0.68

Figure 6B: WJP Rule of Law Index 2010 – Effective Criminal Justice

Country	Income	Region	Ranking	Ratings
Austria	High	Western Europe & North America	1	0.9
Japan	High	East Asia & Pacific	2	0.86
Sweden	High	Western Europe & North America	3	0.84
Netherlands	High	Western Europe & North America	4	0.83
Singapore	High	East Asia & Pacific	5	0.83
France	High	Western Europe & North America	6	0.78
United States	High	Western Europe & North America	7	0.78
Australia	High	East Asia & Pacific	8	0.76
Canada	High	Western Europe & North America	9	0.75
Spain	High	Western Europe & North America	10	0.75

Note : The rating ranged from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies higher compliance to the Rule of Law.

HERITAGE FOUNDATION REPORT ⁷

The findings of the Heritage Foundation was published in the 2010 Index of Economic Freedom Report. This report covered 183 countries out of 179 that were ranked. It measured the economic openness

and competitiveness based on 10 measures. Overall, Singapore was rated to have the second freest economy in the world behind Hong Kong. Singapore scored a high of 90 points out of a maximum score of 100 for the Property Rights Index (Figure 7).

⁷ Based on the rankings published for the Heritage Foundation.

Figure 7: Index of Economic Freedom Report – Scores of the 10 measures for the top 20 countries

Country	2010 Score	Business Freedom	Trade Freedom	Fiscal Freedom	Govt Spending	Monetary Freedom	Investment Freedom	Financial Freedom	Property Rights	Freedom from Corruption	Labour Freedom
Hong Kong	89.7	98.7	90.0	93.0	93.7	83.1	90	90	90	81	87.4
Singapore	86.1	98.2	90.0	90.7	95.3	80.9	75	50	90	92	98.9
Australia	82.6	90.3	85.1	61.4	64.9	82.7	80	90	90	87	94.9
New Zealand	82.1	99.9	86.0	63.6	51.3	83.1	80	80	95	93	88.8
Ireland	81.3	92.8	87.5	71.1	61.8	79.0	95	80	90	77	79.0
Switzerland	81.1	81.2	90.0	68.2	68.9	81.3	80	80	90	90	81.8
Canada	80.4	96.5	88.1	76.7	54.1	75.4	75	80	90	87	81.5
United States	78.0	91.3	86.9	67.5	58.0	78.1	75	70	85	73	94.8
Denmark	77.9	97.9	87.5	35.9	22.0	79.3	90	90	90	93	93.7
Chile	77.2	64.8	88.0	77.5	89.6	73.0	80	70	85	69	75.4
United Kingdom	76.5	94.9	87.5	61.8	41.9	73.7	90	80	85	77	72.8
Mauritius	76.3	82.2	85.6	92.5	83.4	71.2	85	70	60	55	78.5
Bahrain	76.3	77.8	82.9	99.9	80.8	73.4	65	80	60	54	89.4
Luxembourg	75.4	75.1	87.5	65.9	58.5	78.9	95	80	90	83	40.4
Netherlands	75.0	82.6	87.5	52.0	38.4	81.0	90	80	90	89	59.1
Estonia	74.7	83.1	87.5	80.2	62.2	71.1	90	80	80	66	47.0
Finland	73.8	95.0	87.5	65.4	32.9	78.9	75	80	90	90	43.8
Iceland	73.7	93.0	87.9	75.4	45.8	69.9	65	60	90	89	60.8
Japan	72.9	84.5	82.4	67.2	61.1	88.8	60	50	80	73	82.4
Macau	72.5	60.0	90.0	77.8	95.2	77.5	80	70	60	54	60.0

Participation in International Conferences and Exchanges

Date	Name of Judge/Court Administrator	Name of Event	Organiser
1 - 4 Feb 10	Judge Regina Ow Judge Amy Tung	Study visit to the UK Court of Protection and the Office of Public Guardian	Subordinate Courts Singapore
6 - 7 Feb 10	Judge Eddy Tham Judge Toh Yung Cheong	Sentencing 2010 Conference	National Judicial College of Australia
8 Feb 10	Judge Eddy Tham Judge Toh Yung Cheong	Study visit to the Magistrates Court of the Australian Capital Territory	Subordinate Courts Singapore
18 - 20 Feb 10	Judge Soh Tze Bian	Mental Health Issues and the Administration of Justice Conference	Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration
2 - 7 May 10	Judge John Ng	2010 Magistrates' Orientation Programme	Judicial Commission of New South Wales, Australia
4 - 7 May 10	Judge Kessler Soh Judge Earnest Lau	Non-Adversarial Justice: Implications for the Legal System and Society Conference	Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration
2 - 5 Jun 10	Judge Jocelyn Ong Judge Masayu Norashikin	AFCC 47 th Annual Conference - Traversing the Trail of Alienation: Rocky Relationships, Mountains of Emotion, Mile High Conflict	Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC)
21 - 22 Jun 10	Judge Constance Tay	APEC Workshop on Enforcing Contracts	Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade and Ministry of Justice, Korea
30 Jun - 2 Jul 10	Judge Tan Peck Cheng Judge Edgar Foo	Conference on International Child Abduction, Relocation and Forced Marriage and Relocation	The Centre for Family Law and Practice, London Metropolitan University
5 - 7 Jul 10	Judge Tan Peck Cheng Judge Edgar Foo	Study visits to the Principal Registry of the Family Division, UK and the Royal Courts of Justice, UK	Subordinate Courts Singapore

Date	Name of Judge/Court Administrator	Name of Event	Organiser
5 - 6 Jul 10	Judge Thian Yee Sze Judge Jasbendar Kaur	Study visit to the Royal Courts of Justice, UK and Her Majesty's Court Service	Subordinate Courts Singapore
7 - 9 Jul 10	Judge Thian Yee Sze Judge Jasbendar Kaur	The Craft of Judging	Judicial Studies Board
19 - 21 Jul 10	Judge Miranda Yeo	Civil Law Seminar for Specialist Jurisdictions	Judicial Studies Board
20 - 23 Jul 10	Judge Marvin Bay (as speaker)	Advanced Colloquium for the Judiciary on Civil Adjudication of Intellectual Property Rights and International Trade Cases	ASEAN/United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
23 - 24 July 10	Ms Sarinah Mohamed	Child Custody Evaluation Training by Philip Stahl	Steve Frankel Group, USA
24 - 28 Jul 10	Judge Hoo Sheau Peng (as opening keynote address speaker)	Conference on Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators on "Reengineering the Courts"	National Center for State Courts
29 - 31 Jul 10	Judge Jocelyn Ong (as speaker)	15 th Malaysian Law Conference	The Malaysian Bar
7 - 8 Aug 10	Judge Kathryn Low	Flagship Mediation Processes 2010	Bond University, Australia
28 - 30 Oct 10	Ms Nur Izzah Amir	AFCC 9 th Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations	Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC)
22 - 25 Nov 10	Judge Victor Yeo	Asia-Pacific Coroners Society Conference	Asia-Pacific Coroners Society and the Coronial Services Unit, New Zealand

Internship Programmes for Overseas Students

Date	Title of Programme
19 Jul - 31 Aug 10	Senior Officers' Law Clerks Programme with participants from the University of Liverpool, University College London and University of Manchester
10 - 20 Aug 10	Public Service Commission Scholars Mid-Course Programme with participants from Cambridge University, University College London and Oxford University
30 Aug - 3 Sep 10	Judicial Internship Programme with participants from King's College London, University of Leicester, University of Manchester and University of Oxford
20 - 24 Sep 10	National University of Singapore International Business Law Programme with participants from China, Germany, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Thailand

Local Awards

PUBLIC SERVICE

DISTINGUISHED AWARD 2010

The Public Service Distinguished Award was established in June 2000 as the premier organisational excellence award for public service organisations which have met specified national and international benchmarks for excellence. This annual award, which is given out to public organisations which have attained the Singapore Quality Award and two other class-level standards in organisational excellence, is in recognition of the efforts of the public organisations in achieving organisational excellence and for their dedication to public service excellence. The Subordinate Courts were conferred the Public Service Distinguished Award 2010 for having attained the Singapore Quality Award, the People Developer Standard and the ISO:9001.



This award will motivate the Subordinate Courts to continue their pursuit towards excellent public service.

TOTAL DEFENCE AWARDS 2010

The Total Defence Awards were introduced by the Ministry of Defence in 1986 in recognition of employers who have shown strong support for national defence. The awards comprise the Minister for Defence Awards, and the Distinguished and Meritorious Defence Partner Awards.

In 2010, the Subordinate Courts were awarded the Minister for Defence Award, the highest accolade for employers' contribution towards Total Defence. Recipients of the Minister for Defence Awards will be inducted into the Minister for Defence Awards (MiDAs) League over five years, serving as advocates of national defence for others to emulate.



The award, which was received by Chief District Judge Tan Siong Thye on behalf of the Subordinate Courts, was presented by Mr Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, at a gala ceremony held on 28 July 2010.

Caseload and Statistics

CASELOAD PROFILE	2009	2010^(P)
CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Criminal Mentions		
Criminal Mentions Courts ¹	68,524	65,668
Departmental/Statutory Board Mentions Courts	139,732	154,625
Traffic Court	48,716	48,836
Specialist Courts		
Coroner's Court	3,850	3,935
Magistrates' Complaints	4,569	4,157
	<u>265,391</u>	<u>277,221</u>
CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Originating Processes		
Writs of Summons (DC & MC)	43,342	39,136
Originating Summonses	619	593
Probate	3,504	3,800
Interlocutory Applications		
Summons ²	10,352	10,998
Summons for Directions (O.25/37)	6,529	6,145
Summary Judgment (O.14)	636	514
Others		
Taxation	153	153
Assessment of Damages	1,860	2,222
Small Claims Tribunals		
No. of Claims Filed	17,819	16,287
	<u>84,814</u>	<u>79,848</u>

Notes

(P) : Preliminary Figures

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

2 : Excludes O.25/37

CASELOAD PROFILE	2009	2010^(P)
FAMILY & JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION		
Maintenance		
Fresh Applications	1,840	1,828
Enforcement of Orders	3,585	3,279
Variation/Rescission/Suspension of Orders	1,261	1,176
Enforcement of the Tribunal for the Maintenance of Parents Orders	60	82
Enforcement of Syariah Court Orders ³	178	455
Family Violence		
Fresh Applications for Personal Protection Order (PPO)	2,971	3,058
Variation/Rescission of PPO	123	133
Breach of PPO	115	119
Breach of Counselling Orders	46	27
Divorce		
Divorce Writ	6,254	6,572
Ancillary Matters	2,181	1,469
Others		
Adoption	423	331
Originating Summons	132	312
Breach of Syariah Court Orders	539	280
Juvenile Court		
Juvenile Arrest ⁴	1,860	1,710
Beyond Parental Control	94	66
Child Protection Orders	73	37
Police Summonses/Summonses & Tickets/Others	126	125
	<u>21,861</u>	<u>21,059</u>
	372,066	378,128

Notes

(P) : Preliminary Figures

3 : Filings w.e.f April 2009

4 : Refers to charges

Notes of Appreciation

"I have been highly impressed by the range of services provided by the Subordinate Courts to the people of Singapore, especially the Small Claims Tribunals and the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre. The success rate by the Primary Dispute Resolution Centre is quite outstanding.

Our visit to the Subordinate Courts has inspired us in the path of reform of the judiciary of Seychelles."

Fredrick M S Egonda-Ntende

Chief Justice of Seychelles

10 March 2010

"I found the briefing session very informative and inspiring. We congratulate your organisation for its endeavours in pursuing its mandate of providing expanded services to all your clients. Particularly of great interest to my delegation is your greater application of IT to serve more people at times that is suitable to them and thus reduce travelling time and costs of doing business. Congratulations. Well done."

Steve Katjuanja

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Namibia

31 August 2010

"My officers and I have learnt a lot from Singapore's experience in dealing with juvenile cases and the Small Claims Tribunals. We find the sessions in open court and the chambers discussions between Juvenile Court Judges and their advisors and probation officers, the question-and-answers with the Judges interesting and useful. We look forward to implementing our new juvenile law that recently came into force, with the knowledge we just got from Singapore."

Dato Seri Paduka Haji Kifrawi bin Dato Paduka Hj Kifli

Chief Justice of Brunei

9 July 2010

"The two days we spend studying your system of justice have been extremely rewarding and thought-provoking. It is heartening to see how the efficiency of the system has helped in disposing cases expeditiously. Long delay is a perennial problem in many jurisdictions and your pre-trial process, which is a novel idea for us is worthy of emulating."

Suhada Kalyana Gamalath, P.C.

Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Sri Lanka

22 September 2010

"I would like to thank you and all colleagues at the Subordinate Courts for the hospitality provided to us during our Singapore visit. It is worth mentioning once again that the Asia-Pacific Courts Conference was highly successful and all of us were deeply impressed by the teamwork and professionalism demonstrated by your judges and staff involved. Needless to say, it was a valuable experience to all of us and we have learnt a lot from it especially in the area of court management."

Tony Poon

Acting Chief District Judge, The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
22 October 2010

"In my respectful opinion, the conference (APCC 2010) was an outstanding success. Not only did it provide an important occasion for stimulating discussion upon issues of great importance, but it also provided an opportunity to showcase the very significant achievements made by the courts of Singapore in relation to the calibre of judicial services provided to the community of Singapore. There is much that we can learn in Australia from those achievements."

Wayne Stewart Martin

Chief Justice of Western Australia
3 November 2010

Appreciation for Mr Stephen Sami Pillay, Family Registry Officer, Family and Juvenile Justice Division

"He showed empathy and concern of people's family who needed some advice, even though it was at 12 noon when I approached him on some dates."

Tan Hock Heng

4 February 2010

Appreciation for the Small Claims Tribunals, Civil Justice Division

"I am extremely pleased with the help rendered to me. Very prompt services provided by all at the Subordinate Courts Small Claims Tribunals! Good work!"

Kavaree MTL

29 July 2010

Appreciation for Mr Raymond Loh, Bail Administrator, Bail Centre, Criminal Justice Division

"Mr Loh went out of his way to assist me in getting the information I asked for. Very professional and patient."

Gabriel Chen

8 September 2010

Appreciation for Ms Samirah Sehabdeen, Information Counter Officer, Corporate and Court Services Division, and Mr Louis Kang, HELP Centre Officer, Criminal Justice Division

"Ms Samirah and Mr Louis Kang deserve high commendation for their invaluable assistance and information rendered and for their outstanding services to (members of) the public like myself, who are grateful."

Anonymous

2 November 2010

Visits by Distinguished Guests in 2010

Date	Name of Visit
27 Jan 10	Visit of Mrs Hajah Zainab binti Haji Tuah, Acting Director of the State Judiciary Department, Prime Minister's Office, Negara Brunei Darussalam, and delegation
2 Mar 10	Visit of Mr Vyacheslav Lebedev, Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, and delegation
10 Mar 10	Visit of Mr Fredrick Egonda-Ntende, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Seychelles, and delegation
19 Mar 10	Visit of Professor Fredric I. Lederer, Chancellor Professor of Law & Director of The Center for Legal and Court Technology, William & Mary School of Law, United States of America
22 Mar 10	Visit of Dr Saeed Al Alfy, Chairman of Consumer Protection Agency, Egypt
13 May 10	Visit of The Honourable Mr Justice Petrus Damaseb, Judge President, High Court of Namibia, and delegation
6 Jun 10	Visit of PG Hajah Zabaidah binti PG Hj Kamaludin, Assistant Solicitor General, Attorney General's Chambers, Prime Minister Office, Negara Brunei Darussalam, and delegation
11 Jun 10	Visit of Y A Datin Yeok Wee Sian, Judicial Commissioner, Family Court, High Court, Malaysia
6 - 9 Jul 10	Attachment at the Juvenile Court and the Small Claims Tribunals by a delegation led by The Honourable Dato Seri Paduka Haji Kifrawi bin Dato Paduka Hj Kifli, Chief Justice of Negara Brunei Darussalam
15 Jul 10	Visit of Mr Meng Xiangzhi, Deputy Chief Justice of the People's Court of Dalian Municipal Economic and Technological Development Zone, People's Republic of China, and delegation
26 Jul 10	Visit of Sheikh Dr Ahmed Abdulaziz Al-Sagiah, Judge at the Board of Grievances, Ministry of Justice, Saudi Arabia, and delegation
3 Aug 10	Visit of Justice Lawal Hassan Gummi, Chief Judge of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria, and delegation
31 Aug 10	Visit of Mr Steve Katjjuanjo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Namibia, and delegation
1 - 2 Sep 10	Visit of Mr Chris Campbell-Holt, Assistant Registrar, Qatar Financial Centre Civil and Commercial Court and Tribunal
21 Sep 10	Visit of Mr Chen Chang-Yu, Deputy Director, Department of Civil Service Ethics, Judicial Yuan of Taiwan, and delegation
22 Sep 10	Visit of Mr Suhada Kalyana Gamalath, P.C., Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Sri Lanka, and delegation

Date	Name of Visit
7 Oct 10	Visit of Mr Tony Poon, Acting Chief District Judge, District Court of Hong Kong, and delegation
7 Oct 10	Visit of Mr Petrus Ephafroditus Unengu, Chief Magistrate, Namibia Magistrates Commission, and delegation
11 Oct 10	Visit of Justice Mark Sevua, Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea, and delegation
12 Oct 10	Visit of Mr Shamlan Al Sawalehi, Judicial Officer, Dubai International Financial Centre Courts
22 Oct 10	Visit of the judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago
28 Oct 10	Visit of the Federal High Courts of Nigeria
23 Nov 10	Visit of Bapak Widayatno Sastrohardjono, SH., Junior Chief Justice of the Supreme Court for Development, Indonesia, and delegation
25 Nov 10	Visit of Mr Huo Min, Deputy Chief Justice of the High Court of Guangdong, People's Republic of China
26 Nov 10	Visit of Mr Bian Fuxue, President, Shenyang Intermediate People's Court, Liaoning, People's Republic of China, and delegation
14 Dec 10	Visit of His Excellency Dr Hadeef Bin Ju'an Al Dhaheri, Minister of Justice, United Arab Emirates, and delegation
15 Dec 10	Visit of Mr Pham Quy Ty, Vice Chairman, Justice Committee, National Assembly of Vietnam, and delegation
17 Dec 10	Visit of Mr Vo Van Tuyen, Deputy General Director, Department of General Affairs in Legal Development, Ministry of Justice, Vietnam, and delegation

HELP Centre

HELP
Centre

Engaging
the Community

HELP Centres



The HELP Centres were formally launched by the Chief Justice on 26 February 2010.

The name, HELP Centre, is an acronym for Helping to Empower Litigants-in-Person. The HELP Centres are intended to assist the litigant-in-person who is typically bewildered by the complex procedural rules governing the judicial process.

Over the last few years, all three justice divisions of the Subordinate Courts have seen a rising trend in unrepresented litigants. Many are unrepresented because they fall within the sandwiched class as they are financially unable to afford a counsel. At the same time, they do not qualify for the State's legal aid. In addition to this sandwiched class, an increasing number choose to represent themselves. Although many in the latter group are articulate and capable of self-representation, they are typically confused by the procedural requirements of the legal process.

Independently of each other, the justice divisions proposed different measures to avoid a situation where a claim or defence with merit was not heard due to procedural errors arising out of a layperson's ignorance of technical procedural requirements.

Recognising this as a trend of the future and mindful of access to justice, the Subordinate Courts combined all the various measures proposed and, with the approval of The Honourable the Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong, set up the HELP Centres, one in the Subordinate Courts building dealing with criminal and civil cases, and one in the Family and Juvenile Court building to deal with family matters.

Manned by experienced staff drawn from the three justice divisions, the HELP Centres provide procedural assistance to litigants-in-person at no cost. To further assist the litigant-in-person, free legal clinics are held

with the assistance of the following:

- Law Society
- Legal Aid Bureau
- Association of Criminal Lawyers of Singapore
- Singapore Association of Women Lawyers
- Allen & Gledhill LLP
- Amolat & Partners
- Colin Ng & Partners LLP
- De Souza Lim & Goh LLP
- KhattarWong
- Lee & Lee
- M & A Law Corporation
- Rajah & Tann LLP
- Rodyk & Davidson LLP
- TSMP Law Corporation
- WongPartnership LLP
- NUS Criminal Justice Club

Since their launch, the two HELP Centres have dealt with 3,705 enquiries. Surveys taken of litigants-in-person who sought assistance at the HELP Centres have shown that satisfaction levels were high, typically at 99% - 100%.

The Subordinate Courts are justifiably proud of the HELP Centres. Providing excellent court services and enabling access to justice, the HELP Centres can truly be said to be serving society.

University Court Friends

The University Court Friends (UCF) Scheme is a partnership between the Subordinate Courts, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Singapore Management University (SMU).

This scheme provides opportunities for university students from the NUS and SMU law faculties to serve court users who are unrepresented.

Litigants-in-person benefit from the scheme, with an additional avenue for them to better understand the Court's processes and to prepare for their cases. The student volunteers also benefit. Many of them have given their feedback that their work with UCF is an eye-opener to real-life legal problems. Training is provided to the UCF volunteers before they carry out their work. The UCF volunteers assist litigants-in-person at the Family Court, the Small Claims Tribunals and the Crime Registry.

FAMILY COURT

The UCF volunteers at the Family Court explain to litigants-in-person who are in divorce proceedings the procedure for ancillary matters relating to custody of children, division of matrimonial assets and maintenance. The UCF volunteers also assist in certain applications for maintenance. Such applications for maintenance typically require mediation and the UCF volunteers will help the parties prepare for their mediation session.

SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS

At the Small Claims Tribunal (SCT), the UCF volunteers assist prospective claimants to prepare their claim forms and provide useful information about the SCT process and jurisdiction. They assist the claimants to understand the practical options they have with respect to their claim. The UCF volunteers also help parties to prepare for their consultation (or mediation) session before a registrar.

CRIME REGISTRY

At the Crime Registry, the UCF volunteers assist litigants-in-person who wish to make a Magistrate's Complaint. The volunteers will assist complainants in the lodging of their complaints and explain to complainants that the complaint must involve a criminal offence, the types of offences that fall under Magistrate's Complaints and the related procedure. The volunteers will also share with complainants the benefits of resolving the complaint through criminal case mediation.

Court Volunteers' Appreciation Dinner 2010

The annual Court Volunteers' Appreciation Dinner was held on 12 November 2010 at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel. The dinner was organised to recognise the sterling contributions of the Subordinate Courts' volunteers and partner organisations, and as a gesture of appreciation for their continued and dedicated service to the Subordinate Courts. About 200 volunteers, representatives from partner organisations, and staff of the Subordinate Courts attended the event.

Themed "Court Volunteers • Connecting Community" this year, the dinner also served as a platform to facilitate interaction amongst the volunteers and court staff, and to strengthen the ties between them as they work together to better serve society.

At the dinner, the guest-of-honour, the Honourable Judge of Appeal, Justice Chao Hick Tin, presented the Outstanding Volunteer Awards to volunteers who had demonstrated outstanding commitment and dedication as volunteers with the Subordinate Courts. The 2010 Outstanding Volunteer Award recipients were (photos on top right: clockwise from top left):

- Mrs Lim-Chan Pek Lin – Outstanding Volunteer: Open Category
- Mr Noor Marican and Mr Sunil Sudheesan – Outstanding Volunteer: Advocate and Solicitor Category
- Mr Loo Chuan Shen Don – Outstanding Volunteer: Student Category

The volunteers and guests at the dinner were also treated to performance items presented by staff members of the Subordinate Courts.



SubCourts News

To provide updates on the latest happenings in the Subordinate Courts and to introduce the new programmes and initiatives to stakeholders and partners, the publication of a regular newsletter was conceptualised. Aptly named "SubCourts News", the inaugural issue of the bi-annual newsletter was published in September 2010.



Feedback on the newsletter had been very encouraging. One reader commented "... it is very helpful and readable..."

The SubCourts News is available online from the Subordinate Courts website.



**Enhancing
the Quality
of the Bench**

Judicial Education Board

The Judicial Education Board (JEB) in Singapore was established in April 2010. Chaired by the Honourable Judge of Appeal, Justice V K Rajah, the members of the JEB include a senior Judge of Appeal, Senior Counsel (equivalent to the Queen's Counsel), leading law academics, the Chief District Judge and Senior District Judges. The JEB is responsible for the judicial education and training of district judges and magistrates in Singapore, who preside over more than 95% of the court caseload in Singapore.

The Honourable the Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong spoke of the need to have a more structured judicial education in his keynote address at the Subordinate Courts Workplan in February 2010 and announced the setting up of the JEB. Chief Justice Chan explained the *raison d'être* of the establishment of the JEB:

"It is essential that judges keep abreast of legal, cultural and social developments. The Subordinate Courts will build on the current judicial education programmes, with a focus on the core competencies of our judicial officers. The Judicial Education Board, to be set up, will oversee the continuing education of the district judges, magistrates and registrars of the Subordinate Courts. It will be chaired by a High Court Judge to be appointed by the Chief Justice. The board will develop strategies and chart relevant training for District Judges and Magistrates so that the Judiciary is ready to meet any future challenges."

Training programmes focus along the strategic thrusts of the Courts in delivering quality judgments, delivering excellent court services, providing a variety of processes for timely resolution of disputes and in promoting a service-centric culture.

The JEB is the highest body responsible for the strategy and planning of the judicial education framework



for district judges and magistrates. It sets the overall direction for the training and development programmes of the judicial officers, aligned with the strategic thrusts of the Subordinate Courts.

Towards this end, the JEB's objectives are two-fold. First, it ensures that all district judges and magistrates in the Subordinate Courts are inculcated with the necessary skills and tools to carry out their core responsibilities proficiently in the adjudication of cases and administration of justice. Second, the judicial education framework laid down by the JEB seeks to build a forward-looking Bench which keeps abreast of the developments in the social, political and economic landscape in which it operates.

Court Craft Excellence Programme

To continue to deliver quality justice to all, the Subordinate Courts launched the Court Craft Excellence Programme, which was planned to run over four to five months, on 6 September 2010. The programme was developed as part of efforts to enhance the professional development of district judges and magistrates, and designed to facilitate the provision of constructive feedback to judges on the way they conducted themselves in the courtroom, in particular, how they managed their cases and the parties.

Three experienced and distinguished members of the legal fraternity were appointed as the first Advisors for the programme, in order to provide different perspectives on court craft. They were retired District Judge Khoo Oon Soo, a fellow senior Judicial Officer; Mr Lawrence Ang Boon Kong, who retired from the Singapore Legal Service as Principal Senior State Counsel, Criminal Justice Division, Attorney-General's Chambers; and Mr Michael Khoo Kah Lip, SC, a senior member of the Bar.

Under the programme, the Advisors observed proceedings in both courtrooms and chambers, and shared their observations directly and confidentially with the judge concerned in one-to-one feedback sessions. The Advisors also offered general comments and insights to the Subordinate Courts Bench as a whole.

The observations and feedback received were invaluable, especially since each judge works independently in his or her courtroom and chambers, and in his or her own specialised area, and previously had no opportunity to receive and benefit from advice on their bench skills. The programme therefore allowed judges to receive invaluable objective feedback on their court craft.

Asia-Pacific Courts Conference 2010

The Subordinate Courts hosted the Asia-Pacific Courts Conference (APCC) 2010 at the Raffles City Convention Centre from 4 to 6 October 2010. The APCC 2010 served as a platform for judiciaries to learn and share best practices on legal and judicial developments in their jurisdictions.

The highlight of the APCC 2010 was the launch of the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE). The IFCE is a framework of values, concepts and tools by which courts worldwide may adopt to assess and improve the quality of justice and court administration. The IFCE was developed in 2008 by an International Consortium for Court Excellence where Singapore is a founder member. Other members of the consortium include the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration, the United States Federal Judicial Center and the National Center for State Courts.

The conference saw very lively discussions on the IFCE. Speakers from jurisdictions that had implemented the



IFCE shared their courts' experiences in implementing the framework and how the framework had assisted their courts' journey towards excellence in judicial administration. Other topics that were discussed at the APCC 2010 included judicial training and developing court policies for the 21st century.

Besides the meetings, tours to the Attorney-General's Chambers, the Law Society of Singapore, the Singapore Academy of Law, the Subordinate Courts, and the Supreme Court were also organised to provide delegates with a better understanding of the legal framework in Singapore.

About 220 participants from 56 countries, spanning the Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Europe and North America attended the APCC 2010. Among the participants were five National Chief Justices of Brunei, Malaysia, Micronesia, Seychelles (President, Court of Appeal) and Vanuatu, and five territorial Chief Justices from Kazakhstan, Guam, Western Australia, Victoria and Oregon. The APCC 2010 was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP).

Lawyers from Singapore were also present at this conference. Lawyers are not merely frequent court users; they are inextricably linked to and play an important role in the administration of justice. It is therefore important to seek their collaboration as judicial reform is aimed at serving the people with efficient and quality justice.





Staff Event Highlights

Inaugural Cohesion Day

An organisation that is united and works as one is better able to perform well and achieve its goals. The Subordinate Courts organised the inaugural Cohesion Day on 6 March 2010 at The Legends@Fort Canning Park (now known as The Fort Canning Hotel) to bring all staff together, for a day of bonding and strengthening of camaraderie. From building a tower of balloons to combing the Fort Canning Park in search of a pirate ship, the exciting line-up of indoor and outdoor activities brought out the strengths of each staff member and created opportunities for everyone to work as a team towards a common goal. By the end of the day, the morale of staff was at an all-time high, with the bond amongst staff strengthened and deeper friendships forged.



Besides the corporate-wide Cohesion Day, the various divisions also organised regular cohesion activities for their teams. Be it a simple tea party or an evening of food and games, staff looked forward to these cohesion sessions and actively played a part in them, either as organisers or participants. Indeed, the key to organisational success is a united people.



Public Service Week Observance Ceremony

The annual Public Service Week organised by the Public Service Division seeks to remind all public officers of the importance of delivering excellent service. In the days leading to the Public Service Week, the Subordinate Courts' Service Relations Unit organised a series of service campaign quizzes to reinforce service excellence in the Subordinate Courts. The run-up of activities culminated in the Public Service Week Observance Ceremony which was held on 17 May 2010. During the ceremony, staff took the Public Service Pledge to reaffirm the commitment and dedication to serve Singapore and Singaporeans.



The PS21 Star Service Award is traditionally presented during the Public Service Week to recognise public officers who had consistently exhibited strong commitment to providing good service. In 2010, the recipients of this prestigious award from the Subordinate Courts went to Ms Rosalind Tan Chye Eng, Ms Nornahar Bte Abdul Rahman and Ms Sarah Lim Chow Yeh.

National Day Celebrations

FUND RAISING

As part of National Day celebrations, the Subordinate Courts organised an annual in-house National Day Carnival to raise funds for their adopted charity, the Children's Cancer Foundation. In 2010, through the creative and resourceful efforts of staff, the Subordinate Courts out-performed the donations from the previous years by raising a record high of \$24,549.59 for the Children's Cancer Foundation.



COURT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Court Administrator of the Year Award is the highest accolade given to court administrators in recognition of their excellent performance and outstanding contributions to the Subordinate Courts. The candidates for the award are evaluated

based on their personal and inter-personal qualities, track records, dedication and commitment to work, and contributions to the Subordinate Courts, amongst others.

At the National Day Observance Ceremony on 6 August 2010, the Court Administrator of the Year 2010 Award was presented to Mrs Teng-Soh Siew Foong Sally, Ms Arfah Bte Omar, and Ms Padma Vengadasalam. These Court Administrators of the Year play an important role as mentors to new officers and in enhancing and encouraging good practices among other court administrators.

At the Observance Ceremony, the Chief District Judge also presented the Subordinate Courts Long Service Awards to staff members who had served for 10 years, in recognition of their dedication to the Subordinate Courts.

NATIONAL DAY AWARDS

- **Public Administration Medal (Silver) -**
District Judge Ng Peng Hong
- **Public Administration Medal (Bronze) -**
District Judge Kevin Ng Choong Yeong
- **Efficiency Medal -** Mrs Catherine Hia-Sim Peh Hoon

Long Service Medal (25 years of service)

- Mr Abdul Rashid Bin Sued
- Ms Azizah Binte Ibrahim
- Ms Hawa Binte Harun
- Mdm Rokiah Binti Harun

Subordinate Courts Long Service Award

- District Judge Earnest Lau Chee Chong
- District Judge Ling Feng Yong Carol
- District Judge May Lucia Mesenas
- District Judge Victor Yeo Khee Eng
- Ms Aisah Binte Mohd Salim
- Ms Anita Sandra
- Mr Benjamin Arulendran Joseph
- Ms Goh Li Khim Agnes

- Ms Kamaliah d/o Chinthamathar
- Ms Latifah Binte Hassan
- Ms Low Peck Lan
- Ms Nazeini Parveen Bte Rahman Shariff
- Ms Ng Geok Meng
- Ms Norzirafida Bte Zakaria
- Mr Phoon Wing Oon
- Ms Rossianna Bte Abdullah Sani
- Mr Ruthreshwaran s/o Letchmanan
- Ms Seetha d/o Ranga Nathan
- Ms Vythilingam Kamalathevy
- Ms Zarena Begum d/o Anwar

Subordinate Courts Long Service Award (Contract Staff)

- Mr Abdul Salam Mohd Tawal
- Ms Aisoomah d/o Perambil Mohideen
- Ms Ang Chian Wei
- Ms Asnah bte Sedik
- Ms Halija Kurdi
- Ms Hamidah bte Yusoff
- Ms Herawati bte Said
- Ms Jaliah bte Mohd Arif
- Ms Kesuma Bt Mohd Selamat
- Mr Koh Teow Peng
- Ms Masnah bte Sebeni
- Ms Patricia Padmini Rajalu
- Ms Rosalind Yap
- Ms Roziana bte Selamat
- Ms Sekrah bte Idris
- Mr Stephen s/o Sami Pillay
- Ms Thilagavathy d/o Subramaniam
- Ms Valliammah d/o Alagapan
- Ms Warni bte Puteh
- Ms Zalina bte Mohd Hanifah
- Ms Zarinah bte Muhamad

Other Social Events

To enrich the welfare and well-being of staff, the Judiciary Recreation Club organised a series of activities which included the fun-filled Dinner and Dance themed “Madhatter’s Night” in October 2010.

The Subordinate Courts believe that “Health is wealth”. All staff were treated to fruits during the monthly Fruit Day, and at the first-ever fruit buffet held in October 2010, staff were presented with an array of fruits for their picking. Besides maintaining a healthy diet, staff are also encouraged to exercise regularly. The Sports Committee continued to organise weekly jogging and brisk-walking sessions in the evenings to promote healthy living.



Judges and Staff of the Subordinate Courts



CHIEF DISTRICT JUDGE & SENIOR DISTRICT JUDGES

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Senior District Judge, Family and Juvenile Justice Division, Foo Tuat Yien;
Chief District Judge, Tan Siong Thye

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Senior District Judge-Consultant, Criminal Justice Division, Liew Thiam Leng;
Senior District Judge, Civil Justice Division, Leslie Chew; Senior District Judge, Criminal Justice Division,
See Kee Oon; Senior District Judge, Corporate and Court Services Division, and Registrar, Hoo Sheau Peng

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION



District Judges of the Criminal Justice Division

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Ng Peng Hong, Soh Tze Bian,
May Mesenas

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Roy Neighbour, Hamidah
Ibrahim, Chia Wee Kiat, Ch'ng Lye Beng



District Judges of the Criminal Justice Division

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Kamala Ponnampalam, Low Wee Ping, Kessler Soh, Eddy Tham

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Jill Tan, Eugene Teo, Salina Ishak, Wong Choon Ning, Ronald Gwee, John Ng,
Paul Quan, Lim Tse Haw, Victor Yeo, Shaiffudin Saruwan, Wong Peck



Crime Registry

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Sandhya Gopinathn, Shawn Teo, Kamissah Mahmud, Supaletchumi d/o Suppiah, Raymond Loh, Zainah Bte Sabtu
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Belinda Chng, Leow Xian Zhao, Rokiah Bte Harun, Wendy Lim, Jasmine Richard Thomas, Nisa Rajasekaran, Kasmah Wati Bte Wari, Kerin Seet , Doris Lee, Mok-Goh Kit Soon, Vivian Koh, Mark Wang, Noran Farhana Bte Mohammed, Erliana Bte Idrus, Elaine Lim



Criminal Court Officers

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Cai Songde, Saira Banu Abdul Kader, Pang Junyuan, Asmahan Amir, Zubeda Khanam
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Goh Hui Ee, Norliah Manijan, Muhammad Hafiz, Hetty Elvirna Samuri, Doris Loghambal, Zainab Bte Abdul Karim, Sarina Lim, Valli Alagapan, Ian Chong, Nicole Marianne Naidu, K Shanmugapriya, Noor Israni Ibrahim, Lee Peiling, Arah Mohamed



Community Court Secretariat and Chief District Judge's Secretariat

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Samuel Chua, Nurhafidzah Bte Mohamed Kamal, Dr Joseph Ozawa
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Chew Chuee Seng, Yasmin Isma Bte Hamzah

CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION



District Judges of the Civil Justice Division

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Joyce Low, Earnest Lau, James Leong, Miranda Yeo
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Laura Lau, Constance Tay, Loo Ngan Chor, Kathryn Low, Lim Wee Ming, Marvin Bay, Karolyn Gin, Carolyn Woo, Lynette Yap



Civil Registry

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) B. Sayeeswari, Glenfield de Souza, Nuzaliyah Taib, Nurhidayah Tumani, Kesuma Mohd Selamat

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Mohd Rezal, Chong Liwen, Amnah Ali, Ismawati Ismail, Norjahan Amoo, Salmiyah Sullam, Nornahar Rahman, Uma Mageswari



Civil Registry

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Michael Chua, Noraini Hj Omar, Faridah Abu Bakar, Rozita Mahmud

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Wahidah Somo, Sarinam Johari, Hatimah Nawati, V Kamalathevy, Yasmin Abdullah, Azizah Ibrahim, Jannie Low

Primary Dispute Resolution Centre and Civil Court Officers

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Wilson Ong, Lee Guek Khim

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Nicole Chua, Mas Helmy Ali,
Ng Kah Ern, Nur Artiqah Jainal, Nozirafida Zakaria.



Small Claims Tribunals

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Lashman Singh, Sadila Bte Ali, Anne Durray, Krishna R Sharma

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Masnah Bte Sebeni, Joseph John, Yvonne Ng, Albert Lim,
Abdul Rashid Bin Sued, Tan Swan Liang, Rita Anthony, Tan Hui Ying, Tan Par Cun, James
Chuah, Ginnette Choy



Bailiffs Section

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Fauziah Hasanbasri, Mohd Hatta Abdul Razak, Shawaluddin Zainal Abidin, Ruthreshwaran Letchmanan
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Kamaruzaman Kassim, Mohd Tayib Ismail, Helmi Osman, Helen Low, Sapuan Sanadi, Johari Satiman, Lamri Shahnan, Koh Teow Peng, Tan Kim An, Chua Hong Siang, Eswaran Balasubrahianiam, Bakhit Mohamed Ridwan, Ismail Mat

FAMILY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION



District Judges of the Family and Juvenile Justice Division

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Brenda Tan, Regina Ow, Tan Peck Cheng, Jocelyn Ong, Wong Keen Onn, Amy Tung
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Sowaran Singh, Edgar Foo, Nicole Loh



Family Registry and Family Court Officers

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Aminah Kader, Norlita Sono, Aw Theng Theng, Mahani Adam, Fazil Bin Abdul Razak, Arfah Omar, Joey Giok, Shahidah Bte Saaban

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Aziziyah Mohd Hambali, Norleha Binte Mohamed Hassan, Lisa Chan, Norhayati Sidek, Warni Bte Puteh, Tay Ai Ling, Norita Nasibuddin, Tan Rui Rong, Toh Xue Li, Kristy Liew



Counselling and Psychological Services and Maintenance Mediation Chambers

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Audrey Lum, Samuel Chua, Vidya d/o Vijaian, Ho Yew Wai, Sandra J Pereira, Cynthia Teo

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Goh Soo Cheng, Mohd Abdullah Bin Rahim, Lynette Yeo, Azhar Bin Mohd Nasir, Sarinah Mohamed, Jasmine Ng, Tamilmaran Rukmani, Saiful Hisham Bin Sidek, Nur Izzah Bte Amir

CORPORATE AND COURT SERVICES DIVISION



Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Siew Chin Yiew, District Judge and Senior Deputy Registrar Tan Boon Heng, Lim May Leng, Papinder Kaur
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) John Lee, Lim Lay Kim, Samsiah M Mizah, Daniel Ang, Lee Chun Yip



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Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Josephine Tan, Iskandar Bin Abbas, Padma Vengadasalam, Balasubramaniam s/o Tharmalinggam
Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Gary Chiang, Leong Pui Kwan, Shariza Bte Mohamed Shariff, Winnie Thong, Choo Oi Peng



Communications Section and Human Resource Management Section

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Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Kally Tan, Mikaela Oh, Wahidah Banu d/o Abu Bakar, Yeow-Mak Yuek Ling, Samirah Bte Sehabdeen, Shernice Tee, Eunice Soh



Infrastructure Development Section and Records Management Unit

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Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Saini bin Hj Siraj, Bhawani d/o Krishnasamy, Teo Khwa Chwee, Mark Khng, G Tamilselvi, Lucy Goh



Chinese interpreters

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Yap Pui Ling, Phoon Wing Oon, Chia Yew Tuck, Goh Chai Hoon, Yeo Keng Heng

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Zhou Zihui, Teo Chor Hoon, Tan Cheng Siong, Chang May Fung, Lucia Cheng, Wong Li Li, Tay Kuan Kuan, Lee Lay Hong, Low Meng Huat, Ong Khian Guan, Loh Mee Ling, Yeo Ai Fern



Indian and Malay interpreters

Seated (LEFT to RIGHT) Nor Artiyangseh Jibani, Zaini Sojah, Mary Doris Gnanaraj, Rokiah Mahdi, Syed Syaiful Amir Syed Salleh

Standing (LEFT to RIGHT) Faridah Atan, Muhammad Rijal Khailani, Jayanthi Jaganathan, Ra'idah Marwan, Siti Khalidah M. Jamil, Meera Jhogasundram, Rahman Beevi, Sulastri Slemat, Vijaya Thavamary Abraham, Tasmin Begum Shumsudin, Suseela Devi Ramesh

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRAINING DIVISION



Standing (LEFT to RIGHT)

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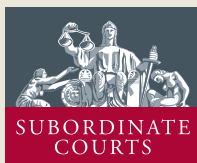
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