

14 June 2013

Forum Editor
The Straits Times
stforum@sph.com.sg
Fax: 6319 8289

CASE: How to deal with 'lemon' phone

We refer to Mr Yong Chin Kit's letter "What to do about 'lemon' phone" on 7 June 2013.

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) advocated for the Lemon Law in 2007 to protect consumers in response to increasing complaints of defective goods. The law took effect on 1st September 2012 and it protects consumers against defective goods that fail to conform to contract or performance standards at the time of purchase or are of unsatisfactory quality. Such goods are commonly known as "lemons".

The law covers all general consumer products in Singapore. Under the law, consumers can ask retailers to repair or replace defective items. They can also ask for reductions in price or return the defective goods and seek refunds if (i) the retailers are unable to repair or replace the defective goods within a reasonable period of time or without significant inconvenience to the consumer; or (ii) repair or replacement by the retailers is not possible or will incur a very high cost.

Based on Mr Yong's description, it appears that the mobile phone is a lemon. He has two options. He can accept the offer to replace his defective phone with an upgraded model at an extra charge arising from the manufacturer warranty or he can ask the retailer to repair or replace the defective phone with a similar phone model.

Thank you.

Mr. Lim Biow Chuan
President
Consumers Association of Singapore