

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **CASE achieved higher resolution rate in 2012**

In 2012, CASE attended to a total of 25,733 cases of consumer complaints, up 15.7% from 22,240 cases in 2011. Among the cases in 2012, CASE successfully helped consumers to resolve 74.3% of the cases on average (for both filed and assisted cases<sup>1</sup>) and assisted them to recover \$3.3 million in total.

The unresolved cases included cases whereby consumers have either decided to drop the cases, proceed to Small Claims Tribunal or seek other legal means. For such cases, it is mainly because there was no settlement reached between the consumers and businesses.

Each year, CASE ranks the top 10 industries complained against for the year. For 2012, motorcars are the top industry being complained against, followed by beauty and electrical and electronics.

#### **Table 1(a) and 1(b): Comparison of the ranking of the top 10 industries being complained against in 2011 and 2012**

Table 1(a) – Ranking of industries in 2012

No.	Ranking of Industry in 2012	Number of cases received in 2012
1.	Motorcars	2,255
2.	Beauty	1,984
3.	Electrical and electronics	1,874
4.	Timeshare	1,870
5.	Contractors	1,532
6.	Travel	1,436
7.	Telecommunications	1,435
8.	Maid agencies	1,351
9.	Furniture	1,306
10.	Handphones	1,254

Table 1(b) – Ranking of industries in 2011

No.	Ranking of Industry in 2011	Number of cases received in 2011
1.	Beauty	1,565
2.	Contractors	1,488
3.	Timeshare	1,458
4.	Telecommunications	1,453
5.	Travel	1,396
6.	Maid agencies	1,382
7.	Electrical and electronics	1,305
8.	Furniture	1,289
9.	Motorcars	1,258
10.	Miscellaneous	1,081

<sup>1</sup>Filed cases are cases in which consumers authorise CASE to handle on their behalf. Assisted cases are cases that CASE assists consumers to pursue their own claims through writing a letter on their behalf to the vendor, citing the dispute and ideal resolution.

### **Some notable observations by CASE:**

1. The top four sectors that drew the most cases were the motorcars, beauty, electrical/electronics and timeshare industry. In terms of the industries that drew the most number of complaints, both the motorcars and electrical and electronics industry rose in ranking, to become the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> industry being complained against in 2012.
2. The motorcar industry is the industry which received the most complaints in 2012. This is the first time motorcar-related complaints top the most number of cases. There is a significant increase of 79% in the number of complaints in 2012 over the previous year. Generally there are more purchases of second hand cars because of the high COE of new cars. Second hand cars are also more likely to have defects. It also includes motorcar workshop complaints.
3. The beauty industry is ranked 2nd top industry being complained against in 2012 (1st in 2011). Although its ranking has dropped, beauty-related cases had actually gone up from 1,565 to 1,984. The more common complaints are inappropriate sales tactics (i.e. pressure selling) used on consumers. We notice that there were aggressive marketing carried out by a few large beauty outfits.
4. The electrical and electronics industry ranked 3rd top industry complained against in 2012 (7th in 2011). The number of cases increased by 569 cases (43.6%) over 2011. More consumers could be exercising their rights to seek redress as a result of the lemon laws.
5. The timeshare industry ranked 4th in the number of complaints lodged. Although there was a slight drop in ranking, the number of cases increased by 412 cases (28.3%). This could be due to emergence of more timeshare companies and new sales tactics used by timeshare companies to entice consumers to sign up for packages.

### **CASE achieves better resolution rate**

	Filed cases	Resolution rate of Filed Cases	Assisted cases	Resolution rate of Assisted cases
2012	1,765	75.5%	2,280	73.1%
2011	1,396	70.5%	2,666	69.9%

Taking into account the two schemes of filed and assisted cases, the average resolution rate for Year 2012 is about 74.3%. This is an improvement of about 4% compared with Year 2011.

## Moving forward

- a. CASE will be embarking on mass education programmes to increase awareness regarding the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act, with more focus on the Lemon Law and data protection laws.
- b. CASE intends to increase our educational talks and seminars and target to reach out to more than 15,000 consumers in this way
- c. We plan to tie up with Malls management to set up more complaint kiosks

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CASE