



# CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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#### More consumers and businesses coming forward for mediation

More consumers and businesses came forward for voluntary mediation at CASE last year. The number of mediated cases increased from 125 cases in 2014 to 190 cases in 2015, an increase of 52%. The resolution rate for CASE mediation increased slightly from 75.2% in 2014 to 76.3% in 2015 and the amount recouped from mediation was \$438,121.25.

*Table 1. Comparison of the number of mediated cases and the amount recouped in 2014 and 2015.*

Year	No. of mediated cases	No. of resolved cases	Resolution rate	Amount recouped
2014	125	94	75.2%	\$439,700.57
2015	190	145	76.3%	\$438,121.25

The rise in the number of mediation cases (65 more cases) and a slight increase in the resolution rate is encouraging because it shows that more consumers and businesses are willing to explore alternative dispute resolution as a way to resolve their disputes.

There was a change in the industry that had the highest number of mediated cases in 2015. The contractor industry was ranked as the top industry, followed closely by the beauty industry and the motorcar industry. The industry with the highest jump in the number of mediated cases was the electrical & electronics industry, where there was an increase of 11 cases.

*Table 2. Ranking of the top 10 industries with the highest number of mediated cases in 2014 and 2015.*

No.	2014		2015	
	Industry	No. of cases	Industry	No. of cases
1	Motorcars	23	Contractors	27
2	Beauty	17	Beauty	26
3	Contractors	17	Motorcars	25
4	Real Estate	12	Electrical & Electronics	18
5	Slimming	8	Travel	17
6	Electrical & Electronics	7	Real Estate	16
7	Hair	7	Furniture	8
8	Travel	6	Hair	8
9	Furniture	5	Maid Agencies	6
10	Computers	4	Slimming	6

A brief summary of the nature of complaints for the top three industries can be found below.

1. *Contractor industry*: The complaints were generally about unsatisfactory services arising due to poor workmanship, the need for rectification works and delays in the completion of the promised renovation works.
2. *Beauty industry*: The complaints mainly involved pressure selling tactics and requests for refund due to the unsuitability of the treatment (e.g. skin allergy) or lack of effectiveness of the treatment for the consumer.
3. *Motorcar industry*: The purchase of motorcars that turned out to be defective after a few months (e.g. engine breakdown, gearbox leakage, etc) was the top reason behind most of the complaints.

CASE mediation is a simpler, inexpensive and faster alternative to litigation. It is a more informal process compared to going to court and any settlement reached is binding upon both parties. It also offers a more flexible option for consumers and businesses. Each party is able to have a greater say in the negotiations and more control over the outcome of the mediation. As there is no winner or loser and any settlement arrived through mediation is agreed to voluntarily, parties are typically more satisfied. Furthermore, all mediation cases and settlement will be kept confidential at the end of each session and are out of the public eye.

All CASE mediation sessions are conducted with two professional mediators who help both parties come to an amicable settlement on a win-win basis as far as possible.

CASE strongly encourages consumers and businesses to consider mediation as an alternative form of dispute resolution as it allows disputing parties to settle their differences amicably. In addition, we advise consumers to patronise CaseTrust accredited businesses as far as possible. Such business have committed themselves to go for mediation at the CASE Mediation Centre if requested by the consumer.

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