



CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

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The Straits Times Forum

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Important for consumers to stand up for their rights

We thank Mr Teo Miang How for his letter ([Beef up consumer protection with fines for errant sellers](#); March 6).

The Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act provides remedies for consumers when they buy goods that are of unsatisfactory quality or encounter retailers that make misleading or false claims in relation to a consumer transaction. Under the law, businesses have to repair or replace a defective good within a reasonable period of time; failing which, give a reduction in price or refund for the defective good. The law also states that it is an unfair practice when a consumer is misled by the false claim of a business.

In Mr Teo's case, a case of unfair practice can be made if the business claimed that only 55 per cent of the battery would be used up after eight hours of playing videos on the tablet and this is proven to be false. It is also possible that there is a defect in the battery or tablet resulting in the long charging time and poor battery life, in which case the business needs to uphold its obligation to repair, replace or refund.

Mr Teo can approach Case if he requires assistance in resolving his dispute with the business. It is important for consumers to stand up for their rights when they encounter unfair practices, even if it is time-consuming and, at times, unrewarding. If more do so, it will send a clear message to businesses that they need to improve and cannot take consumer rights lightly.

Lim Biow Chuan

President

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