



IN THE SUBORDINATE COURTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

REGISTRAR'S CIRCULAR NO. 3 OF 2008

ENHANCEMENT OF THE PRE-TRIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF NON-COMMUNITY COURT CRIMINAL CASES

1 The Subordinate Courts are reforming the pre-trial management process of non-community court criminal cases in order to further enhance the quality of the administration of criminal justice. To this end, we have consulted the Attorney-General's Chambers ("AGC"), the Law Society of Singapore ("the Law Society") and the Association of Criminal Lawyers of Singapore ("ACLS"), and are encouraged by the degree of consensus on the key changes.

2 The key changes that will be implemented are set out in this brief notification. More detailed guidelines will be issued by end January 2009.

3 With effect from Monday, 2 February 2009, the Subordinate Courts will have a Centralised Pre-Trial Conference Court at Court 17, which will conduct all Pre-Trial Conferences ("PTCs") presently conducted in Courts 2, 4, 5 and 24. Court 17 will conduct PTCs throughout the day from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm and from 2.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

4 All fresh PTCs (for both represented and unrepresented accused persons) will be fixed in the afternoons at 2.15 pm, followed by the adjourned or further PTCs ("FPTCs") of unrepresented accused persons. The FPTCs of represented accused persons will be fixed in the mornings in four time belts – beginning at 9.00 am, 10.00 am, 11.00 am and 12.00 pm. Prosecutors/counsel will be allowed to choose the time belt in order to avoid a clash with other court fixtures. Prosecutors/counsel will be expected to arrive punctually for their PTCs.

5 Prosecutors/counsel may apply to change the date and / or timing of a FPTC with agreement of the other party if there is a subsequent clash with another court fixture. Such an application must be made immediately upon there being such a clash.

6 Communication and correspondence between the Centralised Pre-Trial Conference Court at Court 17 and prosecutors/counsel should primarily be by way of email. A dedicated email account, *Subcourt_Centralised_PTC@subct.gov.sg*, has been set up for this purpose. All notifications and applications by parties for matters such as changes in PTC dates or timings will be *via* email. However, applications for permission to leave jurisdiction should still be made by letter.

7 Court 17 will also fix cases in which the accused persons wish to plead guilty (“PG”) for mentions. The PG cases will be heard in two courts which will be assigned on a weekly basis.

8 It is to be noted that under this new system, the personal attendance of represented accused persons (both on bail and in remand) will be dispensed with for both fresh PTCs and FPTCs. Counsel, however, should inform their clients on bail of the fresh PTC or FPTC date and contact their clients a day prior to the fresh PTC or FPTC date in order to confirm that the accused persons are contactable.

9 The migration of PTCs to Court 17 will proceed in two phases. In the first phase, with effect 5 January 2009, all fresh PTCs will cease to be fixed in Courts 2, 4, 5 and 24, and will be fixed in Court 17. All FPTCs of cases originally dealt with in Courts 5 and 24 will be conducted in Court 17 instead. The second phase will involve the migration of the FPTCs of Courts 2 and 4 such that the two Courts shall cease to conduct PTCs by 30 January 2009.

10 A provisional weekly listing of the scheduled fresh PTCs/FPTCs will be made available on the Subordinate Courts website at *www.subcourts.gov.sg* by 5.00 pm of the preceding Wednesday. The final list will be uploaded by 3.00 pm of the preceding Friday.

11 In respect of bail-related applications or applications to leave jurisdiction that are made during the PTC stage, Court 17 will only deal with uncontested applications. The contested applications will be transferred, where appropriate, to the Bail Court or a trial court.

12 We will continue to consult representatives of the AGC, the Law Society and ACLS. Any feedback on the proposed changes is welcomed and may be forwarded to any of the following:

Registrar
Subordinate Courts
1 Havelock Square
Singapore 059724
Email: SUBCT_Registrar@subct.gov.sg

The Law Society of Singapore
39 South Bridge Road
Singapore 058673
Attention: Mr Wendell Wong

The Association of Criminal Lawyers
132A Changi Road
Singapore 419719
Attention: Mr Amolat Singh

Dated this 31st day of December 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hoo Sheau Peng', written in a cursive style.

HOO SHEAU PENG
REGISTRAR
SUBORDINATE COURTS