

LAUNCH OF THE MOTOR ACCIDENT GUIDE

Wednesday, 23 April 2014

Opening Remarks by

Judicial Commissioner See Kee Oon, Presiding Judge of the State Courts

The Honourable the Chief Justice, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

1. Thank you for taking the time to join us this afternoon for the official book launch of the Motor Accident Guide, as well as the introduction of the State Courts' new e-Library service.
2. Traffic accidents involving motor vehicles are a daily occurrence on our roads. Over the years, as our vehicle population increases, claims arising from such accidents have formed a significant portion of claims filed in our courts. In order to assist the general public and the key players in the motor industry to amicably and expeditiously resolve their traffic accident claims, it was announced at the then Subordinate Courts Workplan 2013 that we would be publishing a quick reference guide on the assessment of liability in motor accident claims.
3. With the publication of the Motor Accident Guide, or MAG, we have made available to the public a reference to the guidelines which the Courts regularly use to assess liability. It is intended for use by road users, insurers, workshops, legal practitioners as well as members of the public involved in traffic accident claims. The MAG describes a variety of commonly encountered road traffic accident scenarios, accompanied by numerous clear illustrations. The authors have attempted to use plain English wherever possible, so its users can easily identify the applicable scenario for reference. More importantly, the MAG sets out the likely 'liability outcomes' for each of the scenarios, with brief reasons to explain the same. The scenarios provided in this Guide include accidents involving motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and passengers. It is hoped that, armed with the MAG, parties involved in traffic accident claims will be able to arrive at an early and amicable settlement privately, and avoid incurring time and expense in litigating such claims in the Courts. We would also encourage parties involved in ongoing proceedings to refer to the MAG.

4. This is the first publication launched under the banner of the State Courts since our official name change from Subordinate Courts on 7 March 2014. It is a valuable complement to our earlier publications which deal mainly with the assessment and quantum of damages for personal injury, another aspect of motor accident claims. We believe that in time, this Motor Accident Guide will likewise be a useful reference tool for all parties involved in traffic accident claims.
5. In the spirit of improving and increasing access to information, I am also happy to formally introduce today the e-Library service at the Atrium. Parties and lawyers having a discussion over coffee or tea or working at this atrium café, which has been transformed today for this launch, can use a digital terminal to access the State Courts Library's services. Informational pamphlets on various services are also provided.
6. I am happy also to welcome representatives from the National Library, who have taken time off from their busy schedules to join us this evening. The eLibs@Atrium is an extension of the Library at Level 7, which has been refurbished and upgraded. New chairs and sofas are provided for the comfort of Library users, and a cosy corner has been created for visitors to browse magazines and newspapers. A digital terminal has also been installed for court users to access the services of the State Courts Library.
7. I would also like to thank the members of the PIPD (Personal Injury/Property Damage) Bar and our stakeholders in the motor and insurance industries for your continued support of the Courts' work.
8. Last but not least, I would also like to take this opportunity to record my thanks to my colleagues with the Civil Justice Division, as well as the former Senior District Judge of the Civil Justice Division, Mr Leslie Chew SC, who brought together their collective experience in dealing with such cases to the table. I am grateful for their diligence and commitment in putting together the Motor Accident Guide and bringing this project to its fruition. Thank you.