

**Response to “Be fair to property agents”
– ST Forum online, 3 Jul 2014**

10 Jul 2014

Dear Editor

When a complaint against a salesperson is received, the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) will require the estate agent responsible for the salesperson to address the substance of the complaint by stopping any observable misconduct or wrongdoing, and to account for and verify the pertinent facts before submitting a formal report to the CEA.

2 The CEA will then evaluate the report, conduct further checks and investigations to gather evidence and establish facts, before assessing if the case warrants further action. We may then initiate disciplinary action against the salesperson if the complaint is substantiated. Where there are offences under the Estate Agents Act or Regulations committed by salespersons or other persons under the Act, court prosecution may be initiated. Cases where disciplinary actions or court prosecution have been taken against salespersons following complaints lodged with the CEA are made known publicly through various channels, such as the media, the CEA website and the public register for estate agents and salespersons.

3 The involvement of the estate agent in this process is necessary to ensure fairness for both the complainant and the salesperson involved. As the estate agent is responsible for supervision of all its registered salespersons, it has an active role to play in handling complaints. This complaint management process is provided for in the Estate Agents (Estate Agency Work) Regulations. Estate agents, including the estate agent that Ms Koh belongs to, have implemented and worked with the CEA on such a process since the new regulatory system was established at the end of 2010.

4 As the regulatory body for the real estate agency industry, the CEA is committed to upholding professionalism in the industry and safeguarding the interests of consumers. Through this systematic process of involving the stakeholders - estate agents, salespersons, consumers and the CEA - complaints can be handled objectively based on the facts and evidence.

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