

## MEDIA RELEASE

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2 JULY 2012

### **FIRST TWO SALESPERSONS DISCIPLINED UNDER CEA's DISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK**

#### **Suspension and financial penalties imposed**

The Disciplinary Committee (DC) of the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) has concluded disciplinary proceedings against two salespersons, Kee Lee Ping and Pun Siew Hong Ronald on 25 June 2012 and 28 March 2012 respectively.

2. Under CEA's disciplinary framework, salespersons who breach the Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care will face disciplinary action. The DC<sup>1</sup> may, upon determination of the breach, reprimand the salesperson, revoke or suspend the registration, impose a financial penalty of up to \$75,000 or attach conditions to the registration.

#### **About the Cases**

##### Kee Lee Ping

3. Kee Lee Ping, age 32, was a registered salesperson of Property Edge International Pte Ltd at the time of complaint. She is currently with HSR International Realtors Pte Ltd. Kee has been practising as a salesperson for about six years.

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<sup>1</sup> A DC comprises members who are nominated from the disciplinary panel which includes practicing solicitors and other professionals or individuals from the real estate industry.

4. Kee was charged for failing to declare her interests which were in conflict with those of the buyers (her clients) as one of the co-sellers was her husband and colleague, and the other two co-sellers were her parents-in-law. For this charge, the DC imposed a suspension of three months and a financial penalty of \$3,000.

5. She was also sentenced by the DC to a suspension of one month for failing to comply with HDB resale procedures. She had facilitated the buyers to enter into a supplemental agreement to extend the sellers' stay beyond completion. She also arranged the sellers to grant the Option to Purchase (OTP) on the same day as the completion of the Sellers' Resale Checklist - which was not allowed within the 7 days of "cooling off period". The sentence of suspension for both charges is to run concurrently with effect from 1 July 2012. In addition, the DC awarded \$1,000 as costs to CEA.

6. Kee pleaded guilty to the above two charges and the remaining two charges were taken in consideration in sentencing. Kee had asked the sellers to sign an undated OTP and she had made a false declaration in her salesperson's Statutory Declaration that the buyers and sellers had not entered into a supplemental or other agreement other than the standard HDB's OTP.

#### Pun Siew Hong Ronald

7. Pun Siew Hong Ronald, age 45, was a registered salesperson of Linkvest Property Pte Ltd at the time of complaint. He is currently with ECG Property Pte Ltd. Pun has been practising as a salesperson for about four years.

8. The complainant saw an advertisement put up by Pun that a property was available for rent. She corresponded with Pun a few times but decided to stop corresponding further with him as she was unhappy with his service. She did not engage Pun to be her salesperson.

9. Over the span of seven days, Pun sent a total of 51 abusive and insulting SMS messages to the complainant at different times of the day. Pun's attack upon the complainant was unprovoked. She felt harassed, aggrieved and insulted by his numerous SMS messages. She then decided to lodge a complaint with CEA.

10. Pun was charged for bringing disrepute to the real estate agency industry by harassing the complainant with numerous abusive SMS messages, in breach of the Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care. He pleaded guilty to the charge and the DC ordered Pun to pay a financial penalty of \$2,500 and costs of \$1,000. He was also asked to give a written apology to the complainant.

11. Commenting on both cases, Ms Purnima Shantilal, Director (Licensing & Investigations) of CEA, said, "The Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care sets the standard of performance required of estate agents and salespersons in their dealings with clients and the public while carrying estate agency work. CEA takes a stern view of breaches of the Code. We will not hesitate to take disciplinary action against offenders. We will be holding several more disciplinary hearings over the next few months."

12. The upcoming disciplinary cases include instances of salespersons who have failed to act in the best interest of clients, convey offers or expressions of interest from potential purchasers to clients, and declare potential conflicts of interest.

### **Advice to Consumers**

13. Consumers are advised to use CEA's Public Register at [www.cea.gov.sg](http://www.cea.gov.sg) to check the registration details of the salesperson before engaging his or her services.

### **About Council for Estate Agencies**

The Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) is a statutory board established under the Estate Agents Act to regulate and promote the development of a professional and trusted real estate agency industry. The key responsibilities of CEA are to license estate agents and register salespersons, promote the integrity and competence of estate agents and salespersons, and equip consumers with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions in property transactions. For more information, please visit: [www.cea.gov.sg](http://www.cea.gov.sg).