



**STRATA TITLES BOARDS
ANNUAL REPORT
2017**

FORGING NEW FRONTIERS

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VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES STATEMENT

Vision:

A world class and respectable tribunal built on **S**ociety's **T**rust and for **B**etterment of community living

Mission:

Serving the community by facilitating and reconciling all disputes effectively & expeditiously **T**hrough our **B**est endeavours

Core Values:

Service to the public

Transparent and impartial

Building trust and upholding cohesiveness in strata living

FOREWORD BY THE PRESIDENT

Another memorable year filled with challenges and milestones has passed. As we look back on our accomplishments in 2017, it is important to bear in mind the fundamental objective of establishing STB to amicably resolve disputes amongst neighbours in a strata development.

This mandate is instrumental to our evolution and growth.

The burgeoning number and complexity of cases serves to highlight the importance of our role in society. We are pleased to announce that most (if not all) of our cases were mediated successfully.



This would not be possible without the dedication of our Board members who set aside time for this public good. In addition, appreciation goes to the STB Registry contributing behind the scenes in supporting the Board members.

At this 30-year mark, we have enshrined our vision, mission and core values statements, which shall serve as STB's duty and pledge to the public. In order to better serve the public, we have launched a new website which is more user-friendly and comprehensible.

It has been a fulfilling journey for STB since its inception. As we continue on this expedition, STB will forge new frontiers and continue to scale greater heights!

Alfonso Ang

President
Strata Titles Boards

MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR



It is a momentous year for STB as we celebrate our 30th anniversary. It is a privilege to work closely with our esteemed Board members and experienced Registry officers. As of 25 December 2017, there are about 3400 Management Corporation Strata Title (MCST) and approximately 354,200 strata lots in Singapore.

STB has stamped a distinctive mark and stayed true to its purpose in facilitating effective dispute resolution between parties in the spirit of community living.

While we celebrate our 30th anniversary, let us keep in mind our vision to become a world class and respectable tribunal. This year, we have achieved the goals that we have set: Launch of STB's new website; Office improvements; and In-house talks.

With a focus on continual growth, we are committed to learning and empowering ourselves. Our Registry officers have undergone a structured training program to equip them with relevant skill sets in order to serve the public better.

In the spirit of camaraderie, we gathered to celebrate our 30th anniversary at our Annual Dinner. More than just work and play, it was a moment for us to forge stronger relationships and deepen existing ties within STB. I look forward to the greater things that we will achieve in the coming years.

Brenda Chua
Registrar
Strata Titles Boards

ABOUT US – THE ORGANISATION

STB was established in 1987 to adjudicate and resolve disputes between subsidiary proprietors vis-à-vis each other, or between the subsidiary proprietors and the management corporation, within a strata development. These milestones show the evolution and growth of STB.



¹ Land Titles (Strata) Act

² Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act

ABOUT US – THE BOARD MEMBERS

STB comprises 50 distinguished professionals appointed by the Minister for National Development.

Mr Alfonso Ang
President

Mr Remedios F.G
Deputy President

Mr Seng Kwang Boon
Deputy President

Ms Lee Lay See
Deputy President

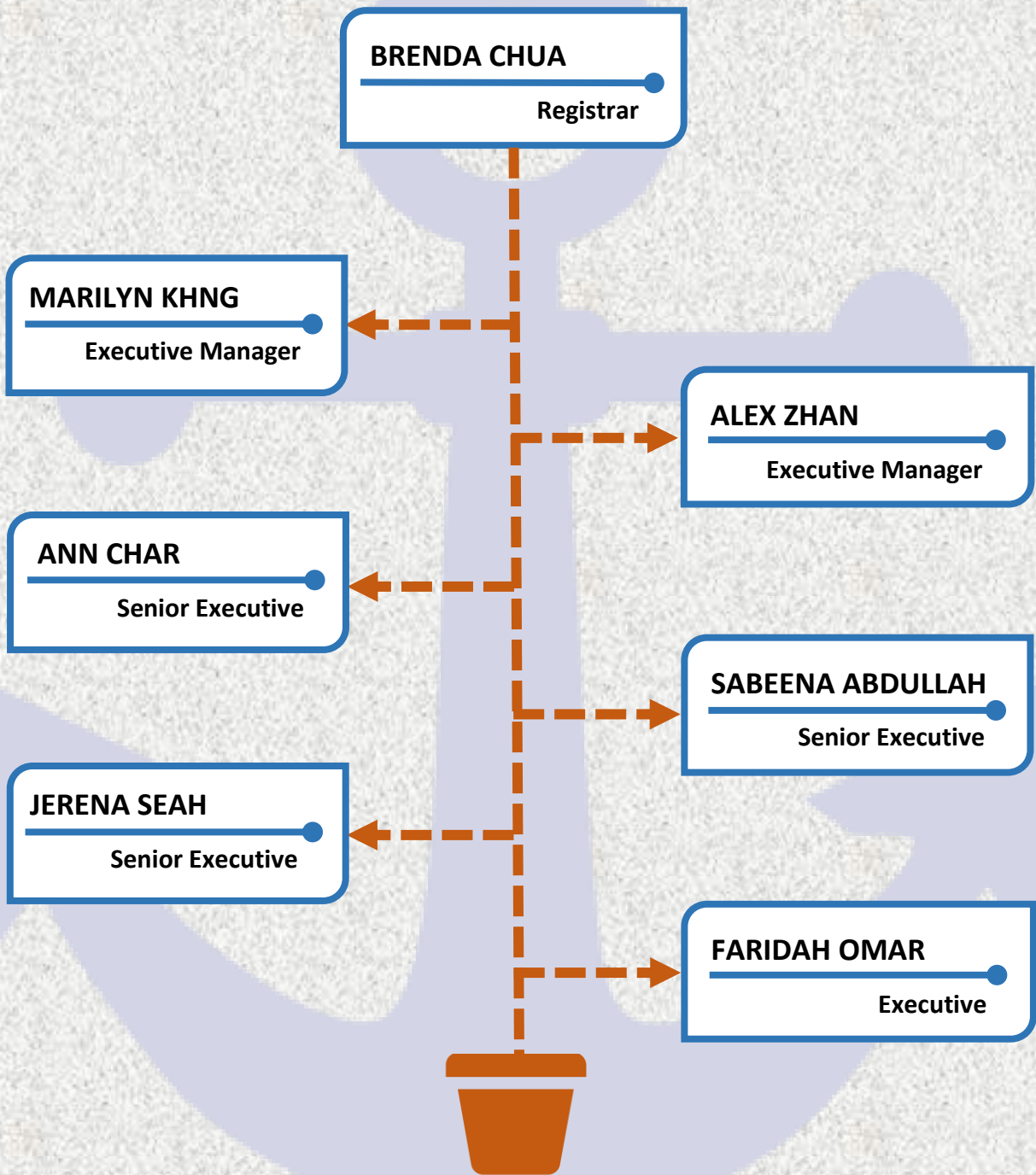
- Mr Ashvinkumar
- Mr Chan Ewe Jin
- Mr Chan Kim Mun
- Mr Chan Kok Way
- Mr Chng Beng Guan
- Mr Chua Koon Hoe
- Mr Colin Kin
- Mr Cyril Seah
- Mr Edward D’Silva
- Mr Edwin Choo
- Ms Elaine Chew
- Mr Frankie Chia
- Dr Goh Bee Hua
- Mr Goh Tiam Lock
- Mr Kelvin Low
- Mr Kong Mun Kwong

- Mr Lai Huen Poh
- Mr Lawrence Ang
- Mr Lee Coo
- Mr Lee Keh Sai
- Mr Leo Cheng Suan
- Mr Lim Boon Cheng
- Mr Lim Gnee Kiang
- Dr Lim Lan Yuan
- Mr Lim Peng Hong
- Mr Loh Kwi Leong
- Prof Lye Lin Heng
- Mr Oommen Mathew
- Mr PO Ram
- Mr Raymond Lye
- Dr Richard Tan
- Mr Richard Tan

- Mr Seah Choo Meng
- Mr Tan Ee Ping
- Mr Tan Kian Hoon
- Dr Tan Teng Hooi
- Mrs Tan Sook Yee
- Dr Tang Hang Wu
- Mr Tang Tuck Kim
- Prof Teo Keang Sood
- Mr Ter Kim Cheu
- Mr Tony Tan
- Mr Tony Tay
- Ms Vicki Loh
- Mr Winston Hauw
- Mr Zahidi Bin A.R

ABOUT US – THE REGISTRY

The Registry, which comprises a team of seven officers, is an anchor that is integral in ensuring the smooth operations and running of STB.



ACHIEVEMENTS

NEW STB'S WEBSITE

As part of the overall review to improve STB's work system, we have launched a new website. Not only is the new website more user-friendly, it also provides members of the public with more comprehensive and up-to-date information. The implementation of a one-click "Start Here" button, will guide users through the various stages of their case, from start to end. Our new website also boasts of clear and simplified workflows that illustrate the general proceedings of STB.

BEFORE

The screenshot shows the old website layout. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links: Home, About Us, Guide Booklet, Applications, Panel Members, Legislation, FAQ, and Judgments. Below the menu is a main content area with a large image of a handshake and a woman in a suit. To the right of the image is a text box stating: "The Strata Titles Boards are tribunals established under the Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act to mediate and hear applications relating to: (a) orders for collective sales of property under the Land Titles (Strata) Act and; (b) certain disputes arising in respect of strata titled property." Below this is a "What's New" section with a list of updates, including "General Information | 20 Sep 2016 10:06 AM" and "Updated Form 21 - Application for Collective Sale Order with effect from 12 November 2012." To the right is an "Agency Logos" section featuring logos for the Ministry of Law, SLA (Singapore Land Authority), and MND (Building and Construction Authority).

AFTER

The screenshot shows the new website layout. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links: Home, Contact Us, Feedback, and Sitemap. Below the menu is a search bar and a set of icons for navigation: About Us, Our Panel Members, Resources, Useful Links, Careers, and FAQ. A prominent yellow "START HERE" button is located in the center, with the text "Click here to find out about the general proceedings at the Strata Titles Boards." Below the button is a "Recent Judgments" section with a list of cases, including "22 Nov 2017 - STB 52 of 2017 - Soh Kah Wah @ Vincent Leow and Another v Lee Cheng Hong and Another ('Eastvale')." To the right is a "Latest News" section with a "New Revamped Website | 1 Jan 2016" announcement and an "Annual Report 2017 | 29 Dec 2017" link. The footer contains "Privacy Statement | Terms of Use | Rate this Website | Supported Browsers" and "Last updated: 29 Dec 2017 © 2017 Government of Singapore".

ACHIEVEMENTS

OFFICE IMPROVEMENTS

RECEPTION COUNTER – This is our customers' first port of call and where impressions of STB are formed. We have given our reception counter a facelift. The buildings represent the nature of the work at STB and the pillars of support represent our members.



HEARING ROOM - To avoid clutter at the Board's working area during hearings, we have provided wooden racks for the Board to place their bundles of documents.

BOOKSHELF – A bookshelf was introduced in the office which serves as a mini-library for the Board members' easy access to reference materials and/or law text books.



ACHIEVEMENTS

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR REGISTRY OFFICERS

Our Registry officers regularly attend courses as part of their career development journey, to upgrade their skills and personal development for work efficiency and to provide better public service.

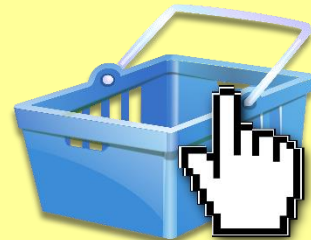


Handling Difficult People

Encounters with demanding individuals, whether at work or casual settings, are inevitable. This course trains and equips our Registry Officers with the skills to manage and interact with a wide range of individuals to achieve better results both at work and in their social lives.

GEBIZ: Catalogue Buy/GeBiz Mall/ Work Re-assignment

GeBiz Enterprise is a one-stop internet application centre where public can interact with government officers for procurement activities and revenue tenders. Officers who have attended this course are trained how to effectively use GeBiz to make small value purchases, perform goods acceptance and reassign GeBiz documents.



Mediation Process and Techniques

Mediation is a problem-solving process aimed to address differences, reduce tension and resolve disputes. This talk, conducted in-house at STB, deepens our knowledge and understanding on mediation process and the techniques that can be applied to resolve disputes and potentially prevent issues from being escalated.

Say It in Five Minutes

Officers are, at times, required to give brief oral reports, explanations and presentations within a limited time. It is important to use such occasions purposefully for productive outcomes and this course teaches officers the techniques to accomplish it.



SIGNIFICANT CASES

FROM BASEMENT TO ROOFTOP & EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

MECHANISED CAR PARKING SYSTEM

STB 58 of 2016 – Heritage East

Ker Lee Ping v MCST Plan No. 3822

Date of Judgment: 20 April 2017

The Applicant sought an order that the MCST (Respondent) rectify the Fully Automated Mechanised Car Park (FAMCP) in the subject development which was shut down for 18 months since September 2015. This was due to water from the fire sprinkler which was activated by the smoke and sparks from an unauthorised welding. As a result of the shutdown, no cars could be parked in the FAMCP. Applicant also sought damages for loss of use of the FAMCP.

The Board noted that the Respondent had been in negotiations with Chris-Ray Engineering (Chris-Ray), which was the carpark's sole agent, for the restoration works. However, the negotiations came to a standstill as the two parties failed to agree on maintenance terms. The Board underscored that the Respondent's dispute with Chris-Ray could not justify the "inordinate delay in restoring the FAMCP to working condition". The Board concluded that the Respondent had failed to discharge its statutory duty and had not done enough given that it is obliged to maintain and keep the FAMCP in a state of good and serviceable repair and it is conferred with the power needed to achieve it. The Board ordered that the Respondent rectify and bring to operating condition the FAMCP within three months from its order. The Board dismissed the Applicant's prayer for damages to be awarded as the evidence produced by the Applicant had failed to prove that she had incurred expenses arising from the inconvenience caused by the breakdown of the FAMCP.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

NOISE FROM SWIMMING POOL PUMP SYSTEMS

STB 104 of 2016 – Luma

Lim Yew Loon v MCST Plan No. 3779

Date of Judgment: 5 July 2017

The Applicant sought an order that the MCST (the Respondent) take necessary steps to cause an end to the noise emanating from the rooftop swimming pool pump system, which the Applicant's unit occupiers had found "unbearable". The Applicant's unit is located directly below the rooftop swimming pool. Counsel for the Applicant argued at the hearing that the Respondent did not do "their utmost" to get to the root of the problem and that the noise persisted. The Applicant relied on his expert's report that there was a flaw in the installation of the pumps and pipes such that it caused them to be deficient in isolating vibration which led to low frequency noise to penetrate through to the Applicant's unit.

The Respondent submitted that there were no defects to the pump system and that inspection report had shown that the noise level is within acceptable limits. The Respondent also submitted that all reasonable actions had been taken to address the Applicant's complaints.

The Board concluded, based on the facts available, that the Respondent had acted promptly on receiving the Applicant's complaints and recognized the various steps taken by the Respondent to reduce the impact of the noise on the Applicant's occupiers. The Board is of the view that it was not technically possible to put an end to the noise emanating from the pump systems and it was not conclusive that the Applicant and/or his occupiers would no longer be annoyed by the noise even after installing vibrations isolators. The application was dismissed by the Board.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

COVERING OF TRELLISES

STB 86 of 2016 – Sunglade

Ong Bee Lian & 21 others v MCST Plan No. 2874

Date of Judgment: 23 May 2017

This application was taken up by 22 owners of 12 units (the Applicants) – nine ground floor units and three top floor units, against the MCST (the Respondent), that the Applicants be permitted to install coverings at their private enclosed spaces and roof trellises to prevent killer litter. The Respondent had rejected the Applicants' request on the basis that the trellises are common property. The dispute between owners of the nine ground floor units and the Respondent were resolved following mediation before the Board in February 2017. Parties agreed that the installation of the coverings over the trellises at the ground floor units constituted an *installation of a safety device for the improvement of safety*. Dispute between the three top floor units and the Respondent proceeded for a hearing. As parties are not in dispute that the trellises are common property, the issue left for determination was whether the installation of the coverings of the trellises would amount to an exclusive use of common property.

The Board concluded that there would be exclusive use of common property if the trellises were covered on the three top floor units, and an order granted by the Board would equate to the Board ordering the Respondent to permit the Applicants to have right to exclusive use of the common property for an unlimited period of time. In view of the Board's findings and facts available, the applications were dismissed.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

WATER SEEPAGE

STB 70 of 2016 – Summerdale Condominium

MCST Plan No. 2622 v Yu Di Wei & anor

Date of Judgment: 29 March 2017

The Applicants are the MCST in this case. The Applicants conducted a repainting exercise in 2015 and in the course of the exercise, six top floor units were found to have water seeping from their unit terraces onto the external walls of their respective blocks. At the request of the Applicants, all except the Respondent re-waterproofed their unit terraces.

The Respondents argued that their water proofing membrane was intact before the painting works commenced and that the failure of their water proofing membrane in their roof top terrace that caused the seepage, if any, was caused by the Applicants' painters who attached a rope system to their railing and the combined weights of the painters and rope system on the external walls caused the water proofing membrane at the upturn at the kerb and slab to fail.

Although the Applicants' expert disagreed that the rope system and the weight of the workers could have caused any damage to the waterproof system, he would not rule out the possibility that external weights might cause the membrane to "stretch" and result in a failure at the upturn.

The Board accepted the evidence of the expert and ruled that the Respondents re-do their water proofing membrane on their roof terrace with the Applicants contributing 50% of such costs.

SIGNIFICANT CASES

WATER SEEPAGE

**STB 16 of 2017 – Florence Regency
Poon Meng Jin Dennis v Teo Oh & anor
Date of Judgment: 28 September 2017**

This application is about inter-floor leakage between two units. The Applicant noticed the leaks in October 2016 and whilst the Respondents made some attempts to rectify the leak, the leakage persisted. Mediations before the Board were unsuccessful and matter proceeded for a hearing.

The independent expert, appointed by the Respondents, testified in his report and at the hearing that leak was found from the Respondents' unit during his first investigation in May 2017 but on his second investigation in July 2017, no leak was found. As the expert was unsure if any repair works were carried at that interim, he requested that a water ponding test be done. This was rejected by the Respondents who were of the view that since the leak had stopped, a water ponding test was not necessary.

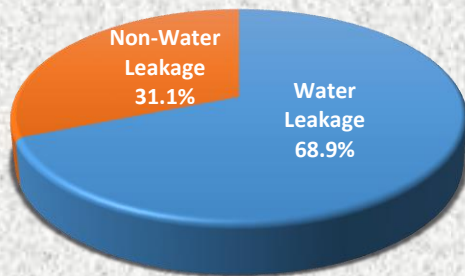
The Respondents admitted that their unit had caused leakage in the form of water droplets but denied responsibility for "gushing" of water streaming from the Applicant's ceiling light.

The Board, basing on the facts and evidence available, determined that the Respondents were responsible of the leak in the Applicant's unit.

CASE STATISTICS

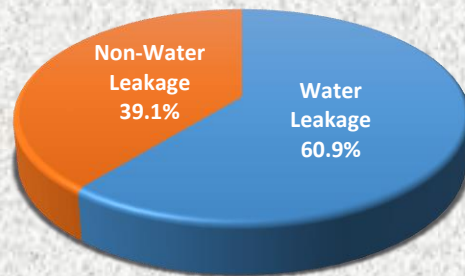
There has been an upward trend of cases filed with STB from 2015 to 2017. With an increase in the number of disputes filed with STB, the Boards' role in facilitating and resolving these disputes within strata developments has become more crucial. Cases filed with STB are broken down into two broad categories, namely – water leakage and non-water leakage cases. Based on our observation, non-water leakage applications have been on the rise.

YEAR 2015



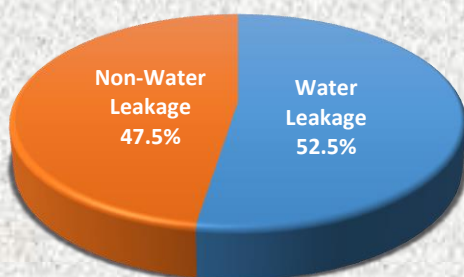
■ Water Leakage ■ Non-Water Leakage

YEAR 2016



■ Water Leakage ■ Non-Water Leakage

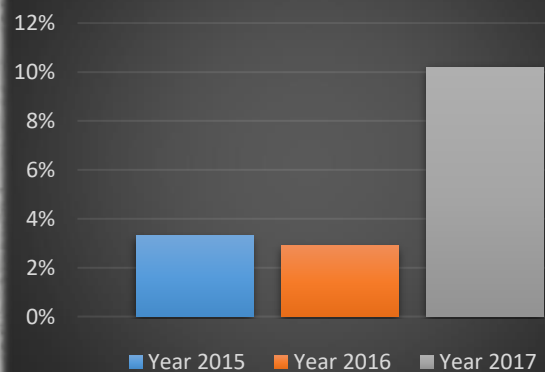
YEAR 2017



■ Water Leakage ■ Non-Water Leakage

This is primarily due to the four-fold increase in the number of en bloc applications filed in 2017 compared to 2015 and 2016.

Enbloc Applications



MOMENTOUS EVENTS

MND NATIONAL DAY OBSERVANCE CEREMONY

at HDB Auditorium on 8 August 2017



**“Celebrating
National
Day as one
MND Family”**



[From left to right]:

Mr Lee Fook Sun (Chairman of BCA); Mrs Ow Foong Pheng (Permanent Secretary of MND); Mr Desmond Lee (Minister for MSF and 2nd Minister for MND); Minister Lawrence Wong (Minister for MND & 2nd Minister for Finance), Dr Koh Poh Koon (Minister of State for MND & MTI); Mr Bobby Chin (Chairman of HDB); and Mr Alfonso Ang (President of STB)

Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

MND FAMILY DAY

at Universal Studios Singapore on 26 August 2017

MND organised this event as an engagement platform to foster bonding and social interaction amongst the management and staff from the MND Family agencies and their family members.



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

IN-HOUSE MEDIATION TALK

by Dr Lim Lan Yuan on 15 September 2017

STB conducts mediation before an arbitration hearing. Mediation (also known as assisted negotiation) is a process where mediators help to facilitate discussions and assist the disputing parties to arrive at a settlement. This talk outlined the mediation process and discussed the techniques that mediators can adopt to help parties resolve their disputes. Colleagues from our partner agencies (BCA & SLA) also attended the talk.



Dr Lim conducting the talk



President & Registrar with SLA colleagues



President & Registrar with BCA colleagues



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

VISIT BY THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATES

on 3 October 2017

STB hosted our Malaysian counterparts from Commissioner of Building Department, Subang Jaya Municipal Council. The purpose of their visit was to understand strata management in Singapore and the techniques adopted by STB to resolve disputes within a strata development.



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

STB's 30th Anniversary Dinner

on 27 October 2017

STB holds an annual dinner to show appreciation to its Board members and Registry officers for their contributions and work done for the year. This year's dinner is especially meaningful as it marks STB's 30 years of service and excellence since its establishment in 1987.



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

MND HUDDLE 2017

at Gardens by the Bay on 17 November 2017

The MND Huddle is an anchor event for MND show appreciation to its volunteers and partners across the MND Family for their contributions to MND's work. This event is also part of MND's holistic approach to strengthen its network of volunteers and partners, and serves as a networking platform to build camaraderie among MND and its stakeholders. This year, MND presented 15 Dedicated Awards to our members who have, in 2017, served on the STB for a remarkable duration of 10 years and 15 years.



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

VISIT BY THE HONG KONG DELEGATES

on 5 December 2017

STB hosted our Hong Kong counterparts. They were keen to understand the methodologies that STB adopts in handling/ resolving water leakage issues within a strata development.



MOMENTOUS EVENTS

YEAR-END APPRECIATION LUNCH CUM FESTIVE CELEBRATION

on 19 December 2017

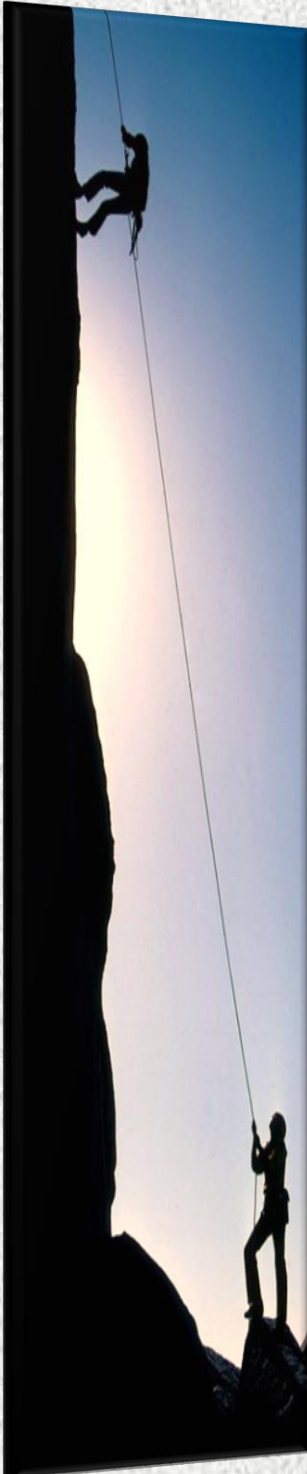
A simple year-end lunch among the President, Deputy Presidents and staff to celebrate the festive holidays as well as to mark the closing of a good year and welcome an exciting Year 2018.



Celebrating Strata Titles Boards' 30 Years of Service & Excellence

SCALING NEW HEIGHTS IN 2018

WORKPLANS FOR 2018



APPOINTMENT & RE-APPOINTMENT OF BOARD

Year 2018 will be the first year that the entire Board is being considered for re-appointment together. MND's objective for the Board's renewal is premised on diversity. We will also look at the possibility of appointing new members to offer fresh perspectives. In line with our objective to be a world class tribunal, we seek to draw on the expertise of the best in their fields and profession so as to serve the public to the best of our capabilities.

INTERNSHIP

We are launching the STB Internship Programme on 1 January 2018. The internship training will be a 2-week program offered to tertiary students every June & December, starting in 2018. Our target interns are students in the Law & Management/ Real Estate Business faculties. This program is developed as a mutual learning platform for both the interns and STB. Through this tailored program, interns will have practical exposure to mediation and hearing processes in STB, assisting the Board with the drafting of correspondences and case notes, providing administrative support to Registrar as well as undertaking projects assigned by the Registrar. At the end of the program, our interns will submit a report to identify areas of improvement for STB.

SCALING NEW HEIGHTS IN 2018

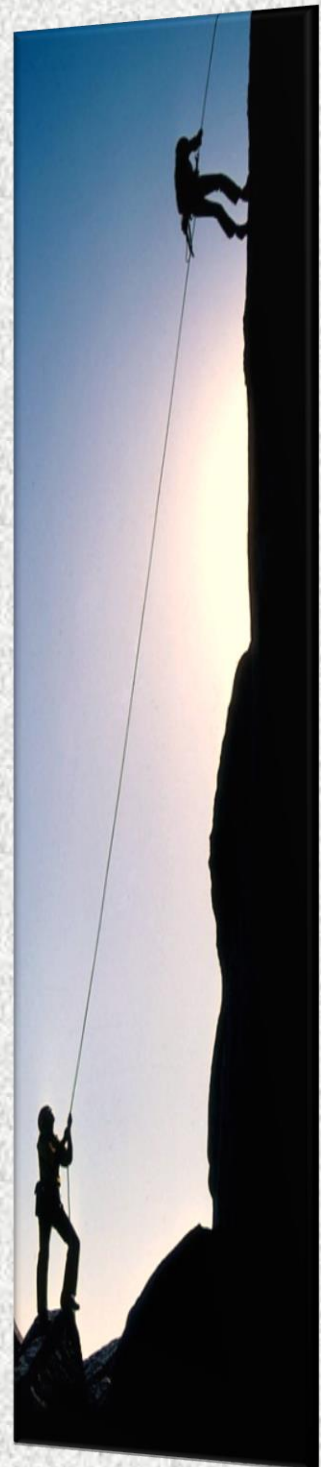
WORKPLANS FOR 2018

LEARNING POINTS FROM SIMILAR TRIBUNALS & ESTABLISHMENTS

STB is constantly learning, evolving and seeking good practices from our counterparts and partner agencies to improve our systems and standards to better serve the public. Some areas which STB will strive to benchmark against similar tribunals include developing strategies for better cost and time management as well as enhancing access to justice by developing a step by step manual to guide parties from start to end: preparing an application, submitting an application, and documents to bring when attending a mediation or hearing.

COLLABORATION WITH BCA – “NO WRONG DOOR” POLICY

In view of the similarities and overlap in issues handled by STB and the Building and Construction Authority (BCA), STB and BCA will be collaborating to come up with a framework to ensure that public queries are addressed by one agency after mutual consultation with each other. This is in line with the Whole of Government approach and aims to provide members of the public with an all-rounded response, instead of being re-directed from one agency to another.



STRATA TITLES BOARDS

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Issued by: Ms Brenda Chua (Registrar)

With Special Thanks to:

- Ms Ann Char for the write-up, illustration and publication of this report;
- Ms Marilyn Khng, Mr Alex Zhan & Ms Jerena Seah for STB events' photographs; and
- MND colleagues for MND events' photographs