

ANCHORING JUSTICE

“The Subordinate Courts have initiated fundamental judicial and administrative reforms over the past twelve years. The challenge now is to anchor these reforms and initiatives. It is only with a firm anchor in justice, and the due process of justice, that we can uphold the rule of law in the land as our nation traverses these troubled times.”

The Honourable the Chief Justice Yong Pung How, Keynote Address at the Subordinate Courts 12th Annual Workplan 2003/2004 on 17 May 2003.

The Subordinate Courts pursue the objectives of dispensing justice fairly, justly and efficiently, to the public and nation. In times of turbulence and uncertainty, such fundamentals are all the more critical. As The Honourable the Chief Justice said, the vision for the Judiciary should not be separated from that of the society and the nation which it serves. His vision for the Subordinate Courts is that of a first class Judiciary, no matter how the environment changes.

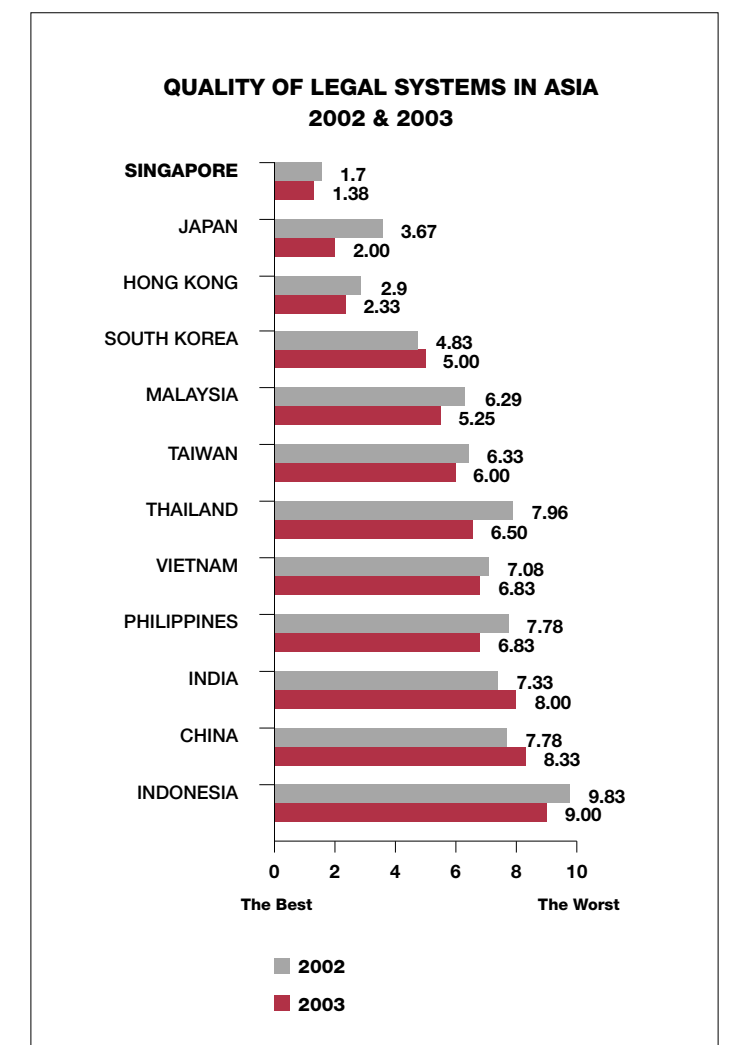
In pursuing these objectives to achieve this vision, the Subordinate Courts will relentlessly continue with reforms and initiatives, to enhance public trust and confidence in the Singapore judicial system, protect public interests and promote greater accessibility to justice. The Subordinate Courts have started institutionalising best practices and entrenching core values in order to ensure the long term sustainability of our judicial system which will weather the storms of uncertainty and change, and stand the test of time. We will continue to remain a firm anchor for justice.

1. MEASURING OURSELVES AGAINST INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

The Singapore Legal System and Judiciary continued to lead the world in 2003, excelling in various regional and international rankings and studies conducted by different eminent organisations. The Subordinate Courts have played their part in ensuring that the Singapore Judiciary is primus inter pares.

Political and Economic Risks Consultancy (PERC)
The PERC is an international consulting firm specialising in strategic business information and analysis for companies doing business in East and Southeast Asia. PERC publishes Comparative Country Risk Reports. The Comparative Country Risk Reports, by surveying expatriates working in Asia, rates the

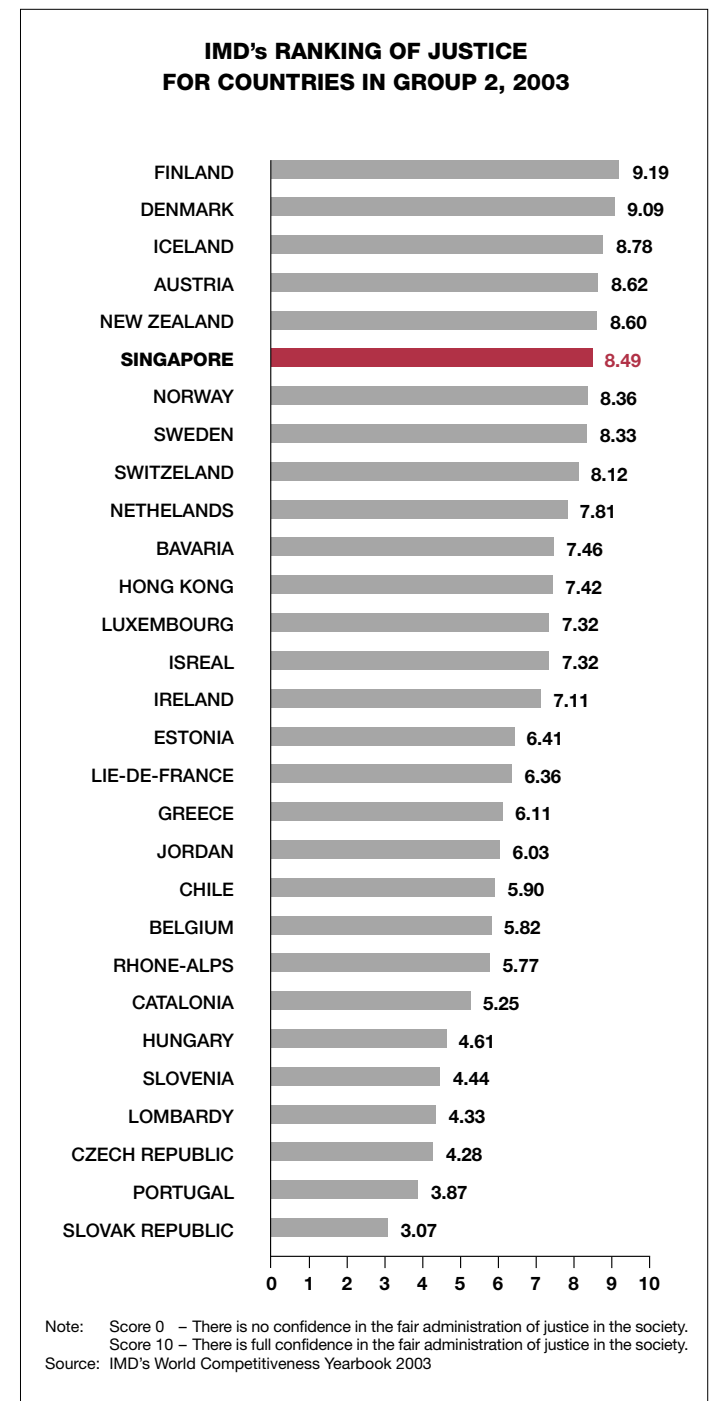
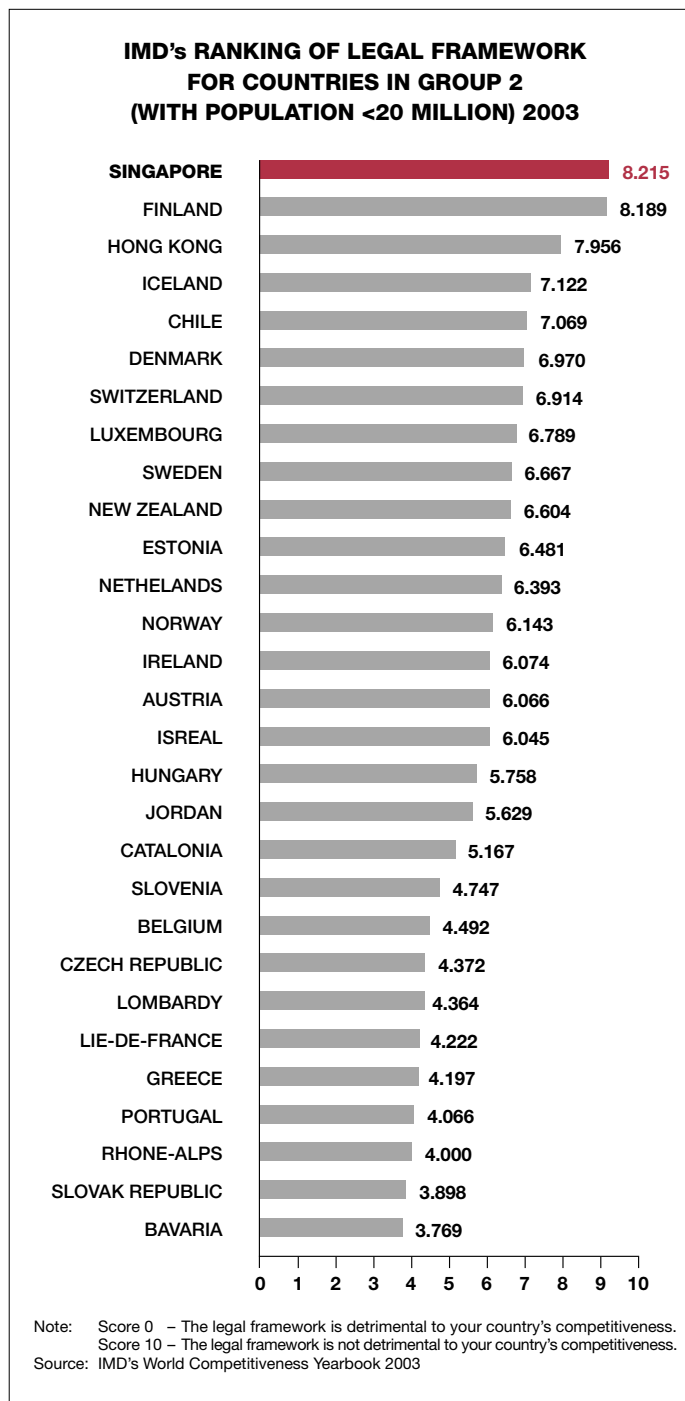
quality of the legal system and the Judiciary in Singapore relative to other countries in the Asia Region, such as Hong Kong, Japan and Malaysia. In 2003, Singapore maintained its top position in Asia for the overall integrity and quality of the legal system and showed a significant improvement from a score of 3.28 in 2001 and 1.7 in 2002 to 1.38 in 2003. Singapore’s score surpassed the score for the United States (1.98) and Australia (1.70). This signified that foreign investors and businesses are confident that the Singapore Judiciary will match if not surpass the standards of the legal systems in their home countries.



**International Institute for Management
Development (IMD)**

The Swiss-based IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook provides a world-wide reference point on the competitiveness and performance of countries. In the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2003, a total of 59

countries were ranked compared to 49 in the last two years. These 59 countries were divided into two groups according to whether they have a population of more or less than 20 million. In the 2003 assessment of the national legal framework and justice, Singapore was ranked 1st and 6th respectively among the countries in its group.



2. SUBORDINATE COURTS CASELOAD

The Subordinate Courts handle more than 95% of all cases entering the judicial system in Singapore. In 2003, a total of 358,740 matters were received by the Subordinate Courts. This includes 219,120 criminal matters, 86,720 civil matters, 19,060 family and juvenile matters and 33,840 Small Claims Tribunals cases.

CASELOAD PROFILE	2002	2003 ^P
CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Criminal Mentions		
- Criminal ⁽¹⁾	66,417	69,710
- Departmental/Statutory Board	142,623	105,620
- Traffic	31,848	28,240
Special Courts		
- Coroner	3,375	4,370
Others		
- Magistrates' Complaints	5,939	9,610
- Police Summons	1,502	1,570
	251,704	219,120
CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Originating Processes		
- Writs of Summons (DC & MC)	44,967	53,180
- Originating Summons	1,025	830
- Probate	2,785	2,970
Interlocutory Applications		
- Summons-in-Chambers ⁽²⁾	22,232	20,840
- Summons for Directions (O.25/37)	4,840	5,950
- Summary Judgment (O.14)	1,699	1,240
Others		
- Taxation	1,041	520
- Assessment of Damages	798	1,190
	79,387	86,720
e@dr Centre		
No. of Cases Mediated	7,329	7,390
SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS		
No. of Claims Filed	36,610	33,840

CASELOAD PROFILE	2002	2003 ^P
FAMILY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION		
Family Justice Division		
Maintenance & Family Violence	10,651	11,130
Divorce Petitions Filed	4,849	4,410
Originating Summons	237	230
Adoption	693	700
Juvenile Justice Division		
No. of Applications	2,461	2,590
	18,891	19,060
ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS		
Writs filed with Bailiff's Section		
- Writs of Seizure & Sale	10,277	11,380
- Writs of Seizure & Sale @ SCT ⁽³⁾	1,600	3,010
- Writs of Possession	252	180
- Writs of Distress	524	360
- Warrant to Levy (Fine)	98	90
- Warrant of Attachment against Surety	450	580
- Warrant of Levy (CPF)	620	810
- Others	7	10
	13,828	16,420
Lodged with Warrant Section		
- Warrant of Arrest (Issued)	56,564	46,640 ⁽⁴⁾
- Notice of Surety	1,249	1,440
- Warrant of Attachment	358	290
- Warrant of Levy	990	980
- Search Warrant	404	460
	59,565	49,810

^P Preliminary: Figures are estimated based on caseload profile from Jan-Sep 2003.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Includes DAC, MAC, DI, OR/OA, MOM, MPA, NPB & NS cases.

⁽²⁾ Excludes O.25/37.

⁽³⁾ Bailiff @ SCT started in July 2002. There is no data prior to July 2002.

⁽⁴⁾ Only includes Warrants of Arrest Issued by the Warrant Section.

CASES DEALT WITH	2002	2003 ^P
CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Criminal Mentions		
- Criminal ⁽¹⁾	61,147	64,150
- Departmental/Statutory Board	130,900	89,900
- Traffic	26,764	25,130
Special Courts		
- Coroner	3,148	3,170
Others		
- Magistrate's Complaints	2,674	2,220
- Police Summons	1,345	1,350
	225,978	185,920
CIVIL JUSTICE DIVISION		
Originating Processes		
- Writs of Summons (DC & MC) ⁽²⁾	37,149	43,650
- Probate	2,630	2,960
Interlocutory Applications		
- Summons-in-Chambers (includes O.25/37 & O.14) ⁽³⁾	28,763	27,760
Others		
- Taxation	1,012	550
- Assessment of Damages	342	400
	69,896	75,320
e@dr Centre		
No. of Cases Disposed	6,543	7,070
SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS		
No. of Claims Disposed of	40,132	36,380

CASES DEALT WITH	2002	2003 ^P
FAMILY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION		
Family Justice Division		
Maintenance & Family Violence	9,015	9,200
Divorce Petitions Filed	4,444	4,430
Originating Summons	191	230
Adoption	811	730
Juvenile Justice Division		
No. of Cases Disposed	1,973	1,990
	16,434	16,580
ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS		
Writs filed with Bailiff's Section		
- Writs of Seizure & Sale	1,846	1,960
- Writs of Seizure & Sale @ SCT ⁽⁴⁾	253	1,750
- Writs of Possession	79	40
- Writs of Distress	131	100
- Others	197	20
Lodged with Warrant Section		
- Warrant of Arrest (Processed)	64,934	60,680
	67,440	64,550

^P Preliminary: Figures are estimated based on Jan-Sep 2003.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Includes DAC, MAC, DI, OR/OA, MOM, MPA, NPB & NS cases.

⁽²⁾ Includes cases where no action was taken by the plaintiffs for six months and hence lapsed.

⁽³⁾ Separate figures for Summons-in-Chambers & Summons for Direction & Summary Judgment disposed of are not available.

⁽⁴⁾ Bailiff @ SCT started in July 2002. There is no data prior to July 2002.

3. SUBORDINATE COURTS FINANCIAL PROFILE

The Subordinate Courts is a public institution of excellence which focuses upon the effective use of resources, budgeting prudence, financial transparency and rigorous cost control and management. These practices allow the Subordinate Courts to maximise our resources to support a myriad of services and initiatives to the public. These include investments in our people, facilities and technology to better serve our court users.

ACTIVITY / ACCOUNT	FY2002 BUDGET	FY2002 ACTUAL
Maintenance Expenses (buildings & equipment)	4,069,920	4,028,557.35
	4,069,920	4,028,557.35
Rental of Office Premises & Equipment	791,200	789,315.58
	791,200	789,315.58
Public Utilities	1,270,000	1,265,798.93
	1,270,000	1,265,798.93
Training, Welfare & Public Relations		
Local Training Courses, Workshops & Seminars	160,000	158,308.12
Overseas Training Courses	8,000	7,969.37
Overseas Conferences	17,000	16,647.16
Scholarship	202,000	201,604.00
Staff Recreation & Welfare	20,000	17,389.29
Dental & Medical Subsidy	182,200	180,128.48
Staff Suggestion & Productivity Schemes	5,600	5,596.59
Managing For Excellence Award	49,330	49,325.91
Long Service Awards	21,000	20,583.32
Campaigns & Exhibitions	1,500	1,500.00
Advertising	1,000	918.24
Membership of Overseas Organisations	15,000	8,146.73
	682,630	668,117.21

ACTIVITY / ACCOUNT	FY2002 BUDGET	FY2002 ACTUAL
Support Services		
Office Supplies	387,300	381,363.19
Library Materials	520,000	515,538.08
Transport Claims	13,000	12,842.47
Telecommunications & Postage	376,600	373,860.81
Data Transmission	220,000	210,705.79
Data Centre Charges	775,000	772,692.12
Computer Services	4,510,000	4,508,804.22
Professional & Consultancy Services	326,000	325,055.19
Books, Publications & Brochures	132,000	130,149.00
CISCO & Security Services	212,000	211,041.00
Security Systems	265,000	263,737.00
Administrative Services	2,525,000	2,524,333.61
Purchase of Equipment	20,000	19,716.99
Witness Allowances & Payments to Foreign Language Interpreters	715,000	714,254.98
	10,996,900	10,964,094.45
Expenditure On Manpower		
Legal & Support Services	29,901,200	29,500,328.78
	29,901,200	29,500,328.78
Development Projects	5,058,370	5,051,743.33
	5,058,370	5,051,743.33
Total	52,770,220	52,267,955.63

“I have the faith that the Senior District Judge and each one of you in the Subordinate Courts will serve the ends of justice well in these trying times. Our task is to uphold the rule of law through the fair administration of justice. Our gratitude to our forefathers, duty to posterity, and allegiance to our nation, make it imperative that we perform this task faithfully. Let the rule of law rest upon the anchor of justice.”

The Honourable the Chief Justice Yong Pung How, Keynote Address at the Subordinate Courts 12th Annual Workplan 2003/2004 on 17 May 2003.

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