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By fax and email

CASE investigates firms before naming them as errant companies

We refer to Ms Theresa Lim Siew Leng letter, "Share info on errant companies" on 31 October 2013.

Besides helping consumers with their disputes with businesses, the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) also names errant businesses publicly. We do so by issuing media releases and posting consumer alerts on our website. Recent examples include highlighting the refund policies for double booking for budget airlines in August and the monthly warnings on the shops at Sim Lim Square which draw the most complaints.

We have also asked businesses to sign voluntary agreements to promise that they will comply with consumer laws.

For those who persist in breaking consumer laws, we have gone to court to get court orders to stop their business practices that hurt consumers. Such actions are publicised and the firms named.

That said, we cannot reveal information on whether a business has a poor record to individual requests from members of public because such information is prone to misinterpretation. The fact that CASE has received complaints against a particular business does not mean that the firm is untrustworthy. CASE needs to investigate the complaints before jumping into naming the firms. Such disclosures can hurt those who made genuine mistakes and are serious about fixing them. Businesses value their reputation and they can sue CASE for defamation if they feel that they are unfairly or incorrectly named as having poor records.

Ms Theresa Lim may wish to approach the Council for Private Education (CPE) for more details about the school which she wishes to enroll in as CPE is the regulatory body for private schools.

Meanwhile, we would also like to remind all consumers to do thorough research on the school before signing up for any educational courses.

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