

SINGAPORE COURT PRACTICE 2014

Volume I
Orders 1 to 43
Commencement of
proceedings to judgment

Jeffrey Pinsler, SC



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Singapore Court Practice 2014

Volume I Orders 1–43 Commencement of proceedings to judgment

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Foreword

This is the 15th anniversary edition of the *Singapore Court Practice*. First published in 1999 by Professor Jeffrey Pinsler, it was a milestone in the development of procedural law in Singapore and has since then been one of the reference texts of choice in this area. As a leading treatise, its importance has only grown over the years as our rules of civil procedure, tailored to fit our own litigation environment, acquire their own unique flavour.

This new edition could hardly have come at a more critical time. In the five years since the publication of the *Singapore Court Practice 2009*, our Rules of Court have undergone many changes and innovations designed to meet the needs of litigants and the legal profession. Notable examples include the amendments to Order 53 empowering the court to grant declarations in judicial review proceedings and to Order 5 concerning the *locus standi* of corporations and unincorporated associations to sue without legal representation. This year has seen another significant milestone with the renaming of our Subordinate Courts as the State Courts and consequential amendments to the Subordinate Courts Act. Moreover, a growing number of cases in the area of civil procedure are being heard by the Court of Appeal, which has resulted in a slew of important additions to a growing corpus of jurisprudence. These include decisions concerning the scope and nature of the court's inherent powers as well as the proper approach to the making and implementation of 'unless' orders.

These developments have been documented, clearly expounded upon, and analysed in a concise but in-depth manner. Professor Pinsler has also sought to provide an overview and understanding of the role of alternative sources of procedure including, practice directions as well as judicial guidelines on professional practice. Volume I of the text covers all proceedings until judgment whereas Volume II is concerned with enforcement, appeals, costs, judicial review, all the specialist proceedings such as arbitration and admiralty as well as other Orders. A practical innovation introduced in this new edition is the inclusion of the Forms referred to by each Order immediately after that Order for the reader's ease of reference. I have little doubt that this compendious work will prove to be an invaluable guide to any lawyer looking to navigate our increasingly complex procedural environment in a quick and efficient manner.

It is appropriate here to sound a note of caution about the proliferation of procedure – it is crucial that we do not lose sight of the fact that our rules are ultimately a means of ensuring that justice is done. As Lord Woolf remarked in his final report to the Lord Chancellor in *Access to Justice* (July 1996), '[a]lthough the rules can offer detailed directions for the technical

Foreword

steps to be taken, the effectiveness of those steps depends upon the spirit in which they are carried out. That in turn depends on an understanding of the fundamental purpose of the rules and the underlying system of procedure.⁷ Professor Pinsler echoes this in his astute observation that civil procedure depends for its efficacy and integrity on a professional and ethical approach to court proceedings. Lawyers would do well to bear this in mind even during the cut and thrust of adversarial litigation.

I am sure that the legal community will join me in extending my warmest congratulations and appreciation to Professor Pinsler for this superb culmination of his tireless efforts. It gives me great pleasure to commend this work.

The Honourable the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon

April 2014

Preface

Civil procedure has continued to develop apace as evidenced by the 20 sets of amendments to the Rules of Court since the 2009 edition of *Singapore Court Practice*. Earlier this year, the new 2014 edition of the Rules of Court came into effect (S 163/2014). Not long after, on 1 May 2014, the latest Rules of Court (Amendment) Rules 2014 (S 299/2014) came into operation. We also have the new State Courts and the governing State Courts Act, which were introduced in March 2014 by the Subordinate Courts (Amendment) Act 2014 (Act No 5 of 2014). These advances have been matched by the role of the courts in enhancing the values of the Singapore legal system. Anyone who has any doubt about judicial responsiveness and vibrancy need only refer to the innovative approaches of the Court of Appeal in recent years, and the manner in which the courts in general have met the demands of the complex landscape of modern civil litigation.

The publication of *Singapore Court Practice 2014* marks the 15th anniversary of this work. Its readers would have noticed that, unlike its predecessors, the 2014 edition takes the form of two volumes. Volume I consists of Orders 1 to 43, which concern proceedings from their outset until judgment. Volume II (which contains the remaining Orders) focuses on post-judgment processes and specific actions, proceedings and procedures. The length of the entire work means that it is no longer possible to publish it in a single volume. Readers will also notice other differences between the new and 2009 edition. Much of the content has been revamped to take into account the new rules (which have resulted from the 20 sets of amendment rules referred to in the preceding paragraph), the plethora of judgments which cover almost the entire spectrum of procedural law, and the incessant development of the practice directions over the last 5 years.

I am deeply grateful to the Honourable Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon for his time in writing the foreword. My thanks to LexisNexis for their continuing support of this work. Again I am indebted to Mr Terence Lim (Associate Director, Publishing) for his dedication and skill in editing this work despite his many other important responsibilities as an associate publishing director. He has been instrumental in putting the thousands of pages of manuscript in such excellent publishable form.

I have endeavoured to state the law as it stood on 1 May 2014.

Jeffrey Pinsler, SC

May 2014

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