

Publication: Channel NewsAsia

Date: 2 April 2015

Headline: Number of corruption complaints in 2014, lowest in three decades: CPIB

Number of corruption complaints in 2014, lowest in three decades: CPIB

April 2, 2015

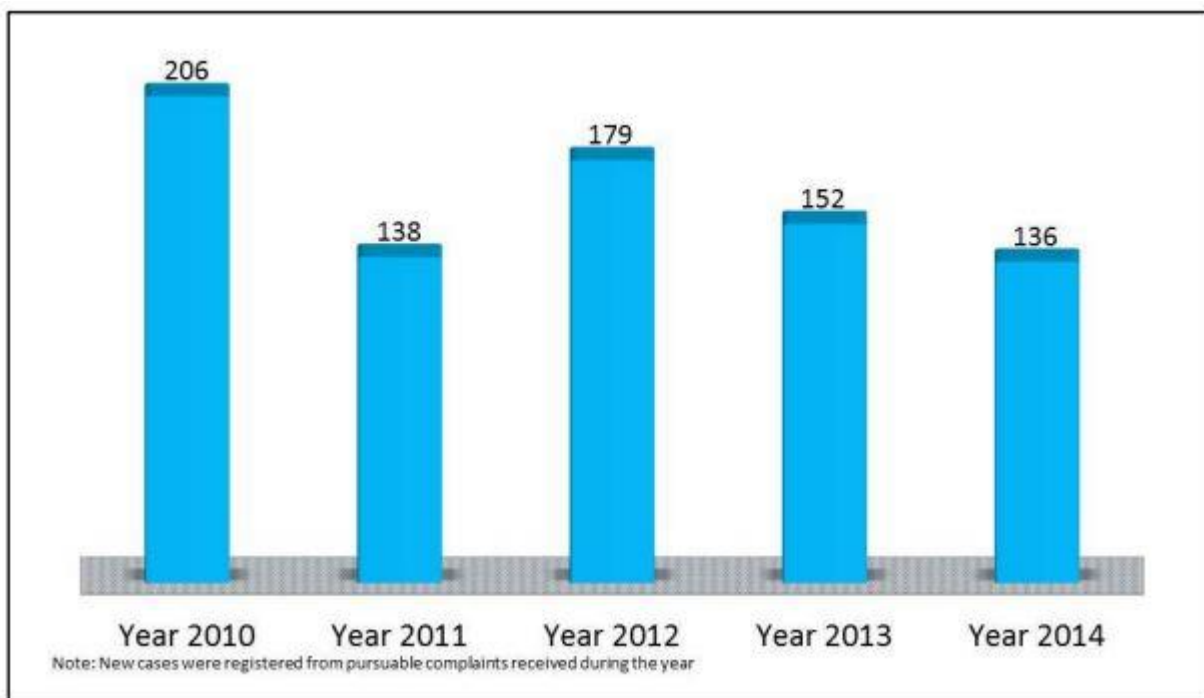
The number of cases registered for investigation also reached a 30-year low in 2014, CPIB says, detailing trends from 2010 to 2014 in an inaugural report.



File picture of the Singapore skyline. (Photo: AFP/Roslan Rahman)

SINGAPORE: The number of complaints received by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) in 2014 was the lowest in the past three decades, CPIB announced in a media release on Thursday (Apr 2).

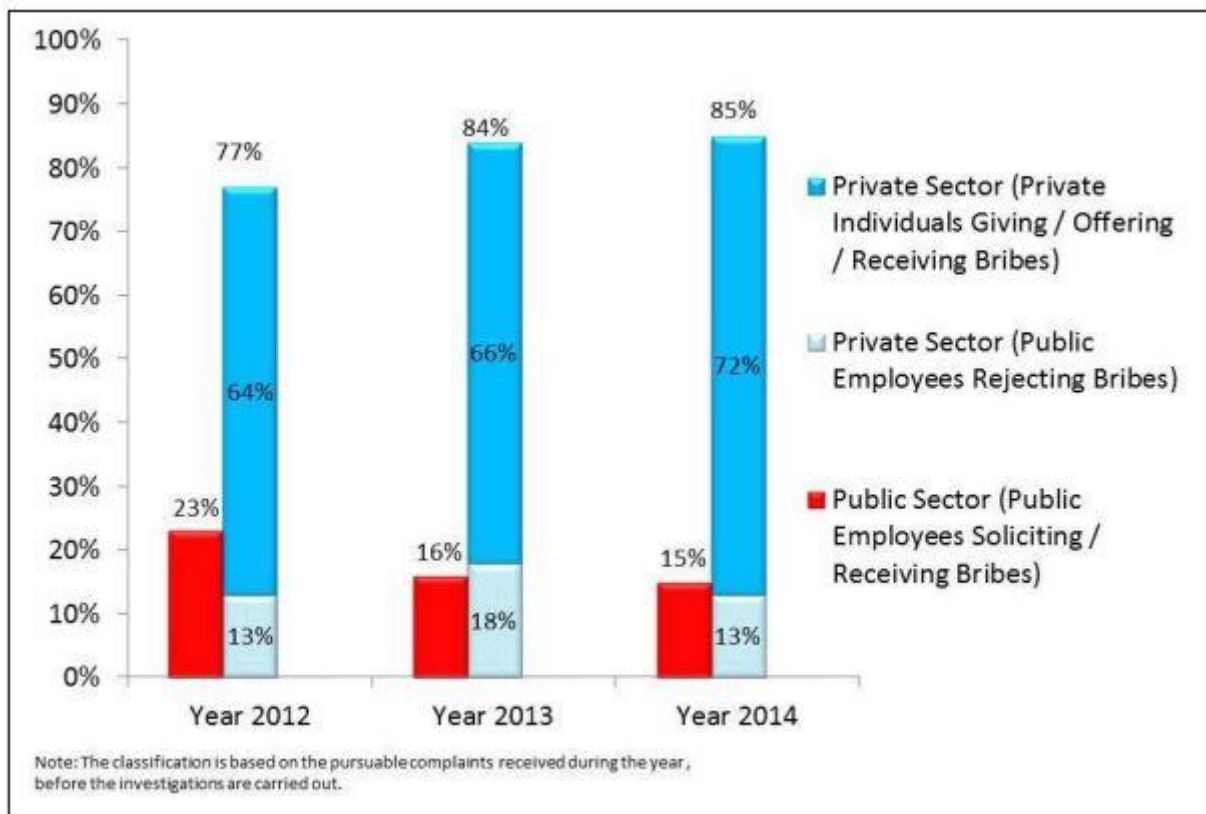
CPIB received 736 complaints in 2014 - a 7 per cent decrease from 792 complaints in 2013.



Total number of cases registered for investigation. (Chart: CPIB)

The number of cases registered for investigation also reached a 30-year low in 2014. Last year, 136 out of the 736 complaints received were registered for investigation. This is an 11 per cent decrease from the 152 cases registered for investigation in 2013, said CPIB.

Private sector cases made up 85 per cent of all registered cases for investigation in 2014, while public sector cases made up 15 per cent.

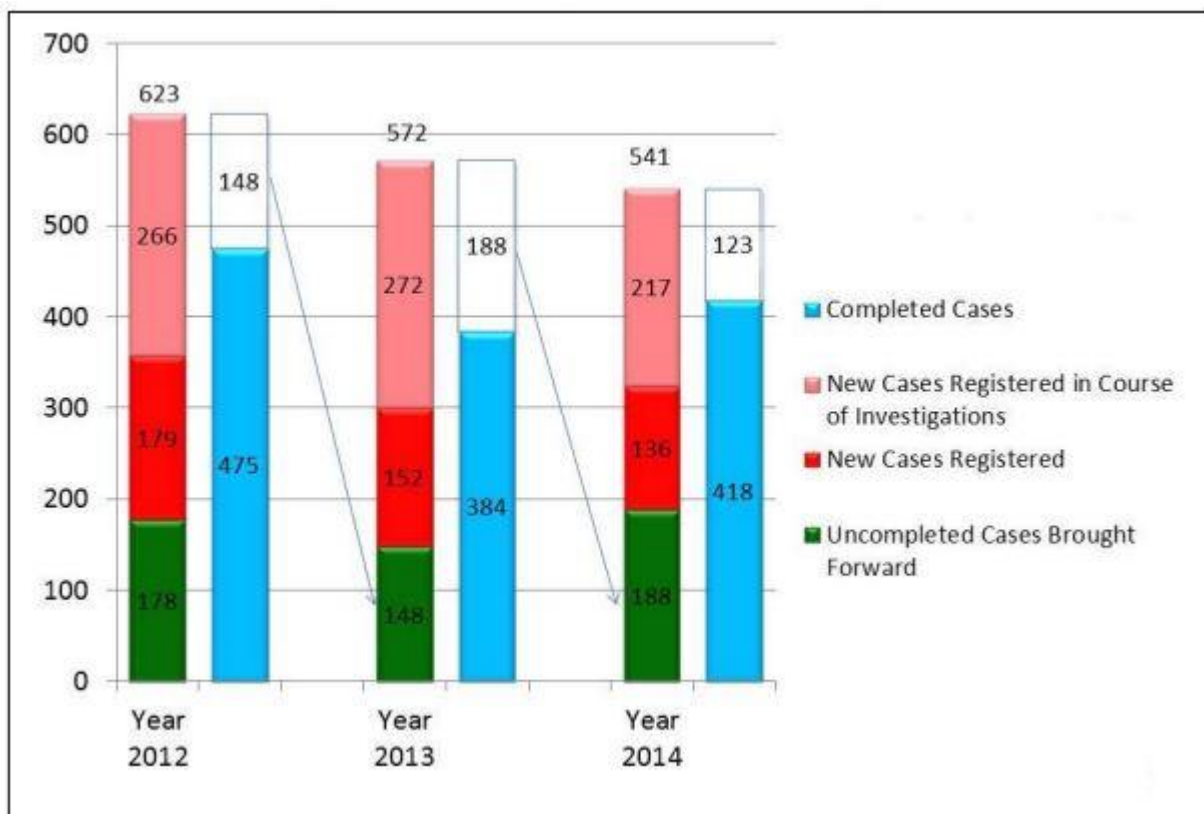


Breakdown of cases registered by Public vs Private sector (Chart: CPIB)

Cases within the private sector formed the majority of corruption in Singapore, CPIB said. In 2014, 85 per cent of the 136 cases received for investigation involved private individuals giving, offering or receiving bribes. From this pool of private sector cases, 13 per cent involved public officers rejecting bribes offered by private individuals.

15 per cent of the cases registered for investigation in 2014 involved public officers.

In 2014, CPIB handled a total of 541 cases. The bureau said the total number of cases it handled each year has not deviated much over the last three years.

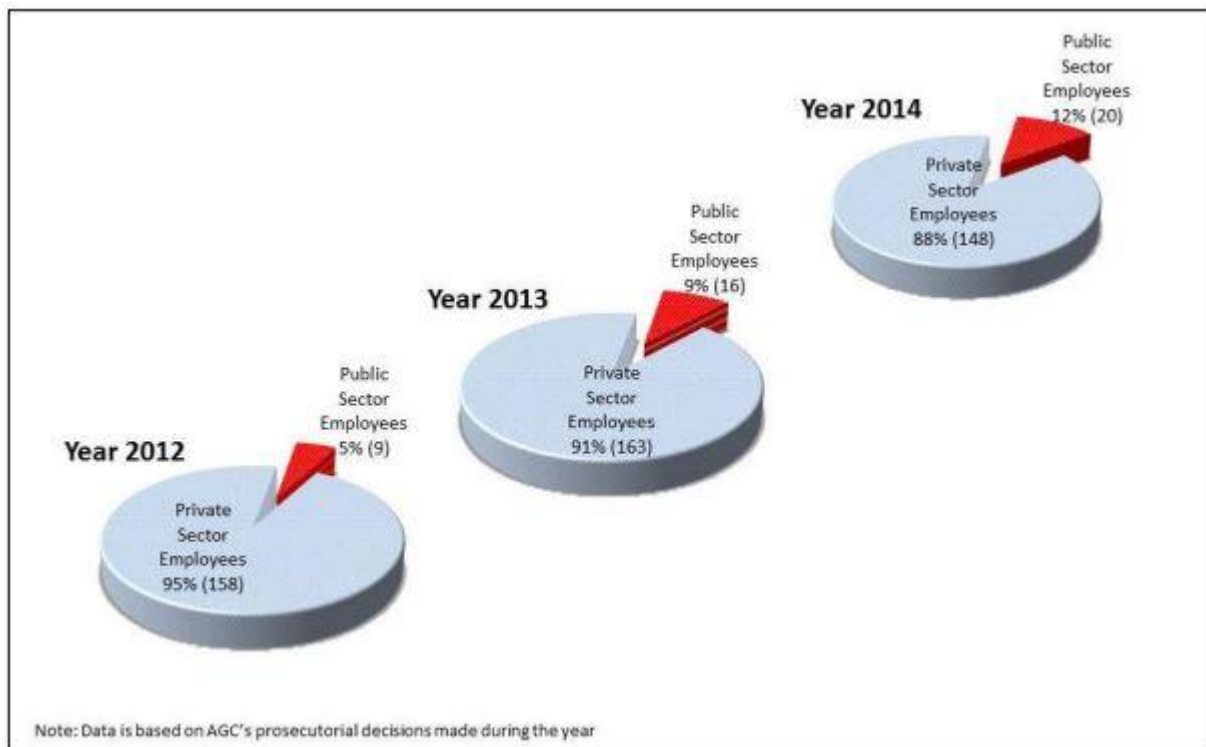


Total number of cases handled in a year. (Chart: CPIB)

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS FORM MAJORITY OF THOSE PROSECUTED IN COURT

The average number of people prosecuted as a result of investigations conducted by CPIB over the last three years was 170, CPIB said. In 2014, 88 per cent of those prosecuted in court by the CPIB were individuals from the private sector, while 12 per cent of those were public sector employees.

In the last three years, an average of 9 per cent of those prosecuted in court were public officers, CPIB said.



Public and private sector employees prosecuted in court. (Chart: CPIB)

CPIB also identified three main areas of concern - the construction industry, sales of household goods in department stores, and warehouse and logistic services.

Within the construction industry, CPIB found cases where individuals had showed leniency during work inspections, and corrupt practices when bidding for contracts. With the sales of household goods in departmental stores, CPIB said it saw cases of bribery of front-line employees. In warehouse and logistic services, CPIB said there were cases of individuals giving bribes to obtain contracts.

For example in January 2014, Lee Kian Hwa, a project manager of Integrated Building Construction Pte Ltd, was fined S\$10,000 after being found guilty of three charges of corruptly obtaining bribes totalling S\$10,000 from Chong Tet Foh, a director of De Fong Builder, in return for awarding a contract for the construction of a terrace house.

The conviction rate also remains high, being above 95 per cent. Associate Professor Eugene Tan, who is with the School of Law at Singapore Management University, said: "The use of technology will definitely make the fight against corruption a lot more complex because it is now easier to hide shady transactions.

Publication: Channel NewsAsia

Date: 2 April 2015

Headline: Number of corruption complaints in 2014, lowest in three decades: CPIB

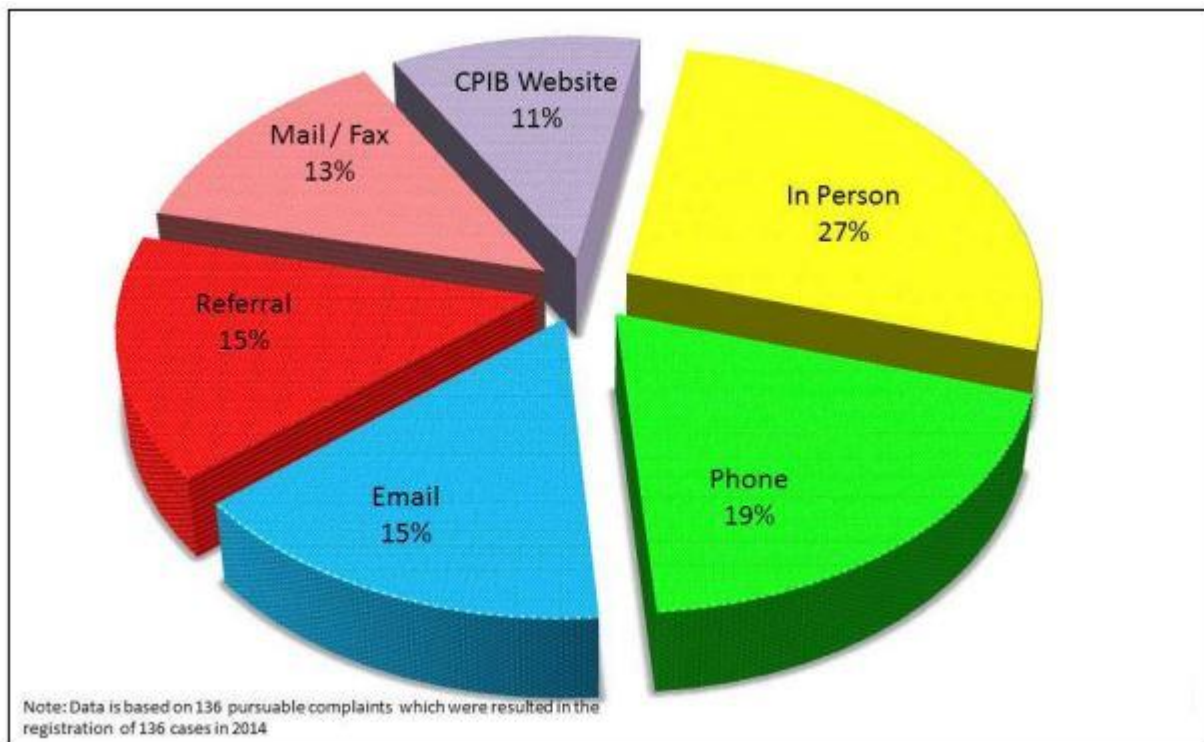
"Corruption essentially preys on human weaknesses and there will be many different ways of trying to tempt a person to engage in a corrupt activity. The key thing going forward is for Singapore and for Singaporeans to develop and imbibe such that we take the view that corruption is a no-no and it is something which will not be tolerated."

IN-PERSON COMPLAINTS MOST EFFECTIVE

While only 8 per cent of complaints were made in person last year, CPIB found that complaints lodged that way were three times more likely to result in investigation compared with sending it in via email or fax. As such, CPIB will set up a corruption reporting centre where members of the public can walk in and lodge complaints discreetly.

"In-person complaints are more likely to result in further investigation because it enables the investigating officer to follow-up where further information may be required," added Assoc Prof Tan.

"It enables better information to be obtained from the complainant. If we have an anonymous complaint, if a vital piece of information is lacking, then follow-up action will become difficult."



Modes of complaints which resulted in investigations in 2014. (Chart: CPIB)

CPIB said the corruption situation in Singapore is "under control", and noted that the international measures such as Transparency International (TI) and Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) "attest to Singapore remaining as one of the world's least corrupt countries".

"These achievements would not be possible without the formidable political will of our founding father, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew," said CPIB Director Wong Hong Kuan. "Mr Lee was a tireless champion against corruption. His personal tenacity and deep sense of mission to rid corruption allowed the CPIB to discharge its duties fearlessly, and transformed a corruption-ridden society into a citizenry which now abhors corruption."