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DISTRICT JUDGE TEO GUAN KEE  
30 JANUARY 2026

**IN THE STATE COURTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

**[2026] SGDC 45**

District Court Originating Claim No 430 of 2023

Between

Bian Xiaofan

*... Claimant*

And

1. Changheng  
(Singapore)  
Engineering Pte.  
Ltd.
2. A-Goodmate  
Global Pte. Ltd.  
(f.k.a. A+Goodmate  
Global Pte Ltd)

*... Defendants*

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## **JUDGMENT**

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*Tort – Negligence*

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**Bian Xiaofan**  
**v**  
**Changheng (Singapore) Engineering Pte Ltd & Anor**

[2026] SGDC 45

District Court Originating Claim No 430 of 2023  
District Judge Teo Guan Kee

19-20 Aug 2024, 24 Mar 2025, 26 May 2025 and 1 Aug 2025

30 January 2026 Judgment reserved.

## District Judge Teo Guan Kee:

## Background

1 The Claimant was, at all material times, employed as a construction  
worker by the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant (the “1D”).<sup>1</sup>

2 The 1D deployed and supplied labour to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant (the “2D”) to carry out assigned tasks at designated premises. The Claimant was assigned to the 2D pursuant to this arrangement.

<sup>1</sup> Agreed Statement of Facts (“ASOF”) at paragraph 1.

3 At all material times, the 2D carried on business in specialised construction and related activities, including works relating to the manufacture of aluminium door and window frames.<sup>2</sup>

4 During the material period, the Claimant was deployed by the 1D to work at the premises located at 17 Tannery Road (the “**Worksite**”), which the parties agree was under the 2D’s care, control and/or management.<sup>3</sup>

5 One of the Claimant’s assigned tasks was to, *inter alia*, lift glass panels together with co-workers and move them to a designated area at the Worksite.

#### ***The Claimant’s case***

6 As pleaded in his Statement of Claim (Amendment No.1, “**SOCA1**”), the Claimant alleges that, on or about 2 June 2022, he and four co-workers were instructed to move glass panels, to be installed on doors which were being manufactured by the 2D.<sup>4</sup>

7 According to the Claimant, he had bent down to lift one set of glass panels when his co-workers, without informing him or giving him prior warning, released their hold on the glass panels, leaving him to bear the entire weight of the same, and that this caused him to fall backwards and suffer injuries to his back (the “**Accident**”).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ASOF at paragraph 3.

<sup>3</sup> ASOF at paragraph 4.

<sup>4</sup> SOCA1 at paragraph 6.

<sup>5</sup> SOCA1 at paragraph 7.

8 The Claimant averred, in the SOCA1, that the set of glass panels (the “**Accident Glass Panel**”) being lifted when the Accident occurred:

- (a) consisted of three pieces of glass panels joined together;
- (b) weighed a total of approximately 300kg; and
- (c) were approximately 2m wide and 2.8m long.<sup>6</sup>

9 The Claimant has alleged that the Accident was occasioned, *inter alia*, by the negligence of the 1D or 2D, who he says failed, in summary, to:

- (a) provide a safe working environment or take measures for him to work safely;
- (b) provide tools for him to work safely;
- (c) failed to take adequate measures to prevent the Accident from taking place;
- (d) failed to take adequate preventive steps to ensure he was not exposed to danger or hazard whilst working;
- (e) failed to assign him to a safe workplace / environment;
- (f) failed to provide adequate supervision to ensure he could perform his work safely; or
- (g) failed to provide sufficient instructions for him to work safely.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> SOCA1 at paragraph 6.

<sup>7</sup> SOCA1 at paragraph 9.

10 The Claimant has averred that he suffered injuries as a result of the Accident, for which he is seeking damages.

11 Whilst the Claimant commenced these proceedings against both the 1D and the 2D, he has since (on 4 March 2024) discontinued his claim against the 1D in its entirety. Thereafter, these proceedings continued only as against the 2D.

#### ***The 2D's case***

12 The 2D has denied that it is liable to the Claimant for any damages arising out of the Accident.

13 The 2D has averred in its Defence (the “**Defence**”) that the pleaded facts in the SOCA1 pertaining to the Accident are untrue.

14 In particular, in distinction to the case pleaded in the SOCA1, the 2D pleaded that:

- (a) five, not four, co-workers had been assigned to the task of lifting the glass panels;<sup>8</sup>
- (b) the glass panels which the Claimant was lifting when the Accident occurred weighed less than 100kg;<sup>9</sup> and
- (c) the Claimant's co-workers did not suddenly let go of the glass panel as alleged by the Claimant.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Defence at paragraph 9.

<sup>9</sup> Defence at paragraph 9.

<sup>10</sup> Defence at paragraph 10.

15 Further, the 2D has also denied that it was negligent in the various ways alleged by the Claimant. The 2D averred, to the contrary, that the Accident had been occasioned by the Claimant's own negligence.<sup>11</sup>

***Relevant procedural background***

16 As mentioned earlier, the Claimant discontinued his claim against the 1D in 2024. As such, the trial before me pertained only to the Claimant's claim against the 2D.

17 In addition, both of the remaining parties agreed that the trial would proceed first for a finding on the parties' responsibility for the Accident, leaving aside issues of causation and damages to be decided subsequently, if necessary.<sup>12</sup>

18 The following persons gave evidence at the trial:

- (a) the Claimant;
- (b) Low Yit Kheong ("Low"), the 2D's manager; and
- (c) Thirupathy Jayakumar ("Thiru"), a factory production supervisor with the 2D.

19 Thiru, a witness for the 2D, was not re-examined by the 2D's counsel as he failed to attend a hearing scheduled for his re-examination. However, upon his failure to attend, the 2D's counsel confirmed that they would not seek to re-

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<sup>11</sup> Defence at paragraph 12.

<sup>12</sup> NE 19 August 2024 23/13-22.

examine him and the Claimant’s counsel had completed their cross-examination of Thiru on a hearing date when he was in attendance.

### **Issues to be decided**

20 As mentioned earlier, the cause of action pleaded by the Claimant against the 2D is that of negligence.

21 As a preliminary point, whilst the 2D did not expressly admit in the Defence that it owed the Claimant a duty of care, it did not, either in its Closing Submissions dated 9 July 2025 (the “DCS”) or Reply Submissions dated 31 July 2025 (“DRS”), pursue an argument that it did not owe the Claimant a duty of care.

22 Given the undisputed fact that at the time of the Accident, the Claimant was carrying out a task assigned to him by the 2D, within the 2D’s premises, for the avoidance of doubt, I am satisfied that the 2D did owe a duty of care to the Claimant.

23 The remaining issues to be decided, for the purposes of this stage of proceedings, are therefore:

- (a) whether the Accident did take place in the manner alleged by the Claimant (the “**Factual Issue**”); and
- (b) if so, whether the Accident had been caused or occasioned by any breach of the 2D’s duty of care owed to the Claimant (the “**Breach Issue**”).

24 I will consider each of these issues in turn.

## Factual Issue

### *The circumstances of the Accident*

25 The nub of the Claimant’s evidence, as set out in his Affidavit of Evidence-in-Chief (“AEIC”), was that the Accident had occurred when his fellow co-workers, with whom he had been lifting a glass panel (the “**Accident Glass Panel**”), had “suddenly and unbeknownst” to him released their hold of the glass panel and left him to “bear the full force and weight of the glass panels”.<sup>13</sup>

26 The Claimant’s evidence was that it was this sudden increase in burden which caused him to “fall backwards onto the floor” and suffer injuries.<sup>14</sup>

27 The Claimant also claimed in his AEIC that he was not aware and had not been informed of any “coordinated lifting/putting down procedures... save for the one self-devised by the co-workers, which was not shared with me.”<sup>15</sup>

28 The 2D’s position is that the Claimant’s co-workers did not release the Accident Glass Panel in the sudden manner alleged by the Claimant.

29 As I explain below, I am not satisfied that the evidence supports the Claimant’s contention that the Accident, as described in the SOCA1, did take place.

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<sup>13</sup> Claimant’s AEIC at paragraph 13.

<sup>14</sup> Claimant’s AEIC at paragraph 13.

<sup>15</sup> Claimant’s AEIC at paragraph 12.

*Evidence*

30 The Claimant was the sole witness to give evidence in support of his own case.

31 In a slight departure from the SOCA1, the Claimant accepted in his AEIC that on 2 June 2022, he had been working with five (instead of four as alleged in the SOCA1) co-workers to carry and move glass panels from a wooden pallet where they had been positioned in a slanted standing fashion to an installation table about 3 metres away.<sup>16</sup> This was part of a process in which the glass panels would be installed into aluminium window or door frames.<sup>17</sup>

(1) Claimant's knowledge of lifting procedure

32 The Claimant maintained, in his AEIC, that he was not aware of any coordinated procedure for lifting or setting down the glass panels, "save for the one self-devised by the co-workers, which was not shared with me"<sup>18</sup> (Emphasis added).

33 At the outset, I would highlight that this aspect of the Claimant's evidence was confusing, for if the workers' "self-devised" procedure had not been shared with him at all, it is difficult to see how he could have participated in the glass lifting operation at all.

34 Further, there is evidence that on the day of the Accident, the Claimant had already successfully undertaken the lifting operation, the procedure for

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<sup>16</sup> Claimant's AEIC at paragraphs 9 and 10 read with ASOF at paragraph 6.

<sup>17</sup> Claimant's AEIC at paragraph 9.

<sup>18</sup> Claimant's AEIC at paragraph 12.

which he claimed he had neither been aware of nor informed about, for at least one other set of glass panels.

35 This allegation was made in Thiru's AEIC.<sup>19</sup> Thiru also reiterated this under cross-examination.<sup>20</sup> However, despite the obvious inconsistency between this assertion and the Claimant's allegation that the lifting/setting down procedure for glass panels had not been communicated to him, this particular assertion by Thiru has not been challenged by the Claimant's counsel.

36 Thiru was one of the Claimant's five co-workers who had been lifting glass panels together with the Claimant on the day of the Accident.

37 Separately, by the time the Accident took place, the Claimant had been working for the 2D for a period of approximately one year and two months, in the course of which he had spent at least 10 days a month performing the duties of installing glass panels onto aluminium frames (based on evidence he gave under cross-examination).<sup>21</sup> The Claimant also agreed, under cross-examination, that such work would involve lifting glass panels (albeit sometimes with different dimensions to that of the Accident Glass Panel) from the pallet to the installation table,<sup>22</sup> apparently without incident.

38 In the premises, it is hard to accept that the Claimant was as ignorant of the procedures for lifting glass panels as he claimed.

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<sup>19</sup> Thiru's AEIC at paragraph 4.

<sup>20</sup> NE 20 August 2024 75/27-76/3.

<sup>21</sup> NE 19 August 2024 24/21-25/6.

<sup>22</sup> NE 19 August 2024 29/2-7.

(2) Whether the Claimant's co-workers released their hold on the Accident Glass Panel suddenly and without warning

39 As framed in the SOCA1, it is crucial to the Claimant's case that his co-workers released their hold on the Accident Glass Panel suddenly and without warning, for this was the singular act which purportedly left the Claimant bearing the entire weight of the Accident Glass Panel and supposedly caused him to fall and suffer the injuries which he has complained of in these proceedings.

40 Despite its obvious importance, the Claimant's initial evidence on this issue was limited to assertions in his own AEIC that his co-workers had all, without warning him, released their grasp of the Accident Glass Panel.<sup>23</sup>

41 At trial, the Claimant gave more details of how the alleged Accident had taken place. However, his evidence turned out to be inconsistent with the statements in his AEIC, which damaged his case as well as his credibility generally.

42 Specifically, in direct contradiction of the facts asserted in the SOCA1 and his AEIC, the Claimant's evidence at trial varied between asserting that his co-workers "did not let go completely"<sup>24</sup> or that "some of them let go of their hands, but others didn't"<sup>25</sup>, when informed that in his AEIC he had asserted that all of his co-workers had released their hold on the Accident Glass Panel at once.

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<sup>23</sup> Claimant's AEIC at paragraphs 13 and 20.

<sup>24</sup> NE 19 August 2024 69/27-29.

<sup>25</sup> NE 19 August 2024 70/7-13.

43 As for the 2D, Thiru denied in his AEIC that the Accident had taken place as described by the Claimant, and asserted that none of the six workers lifting the Accident Glass Panel (i.e. including the Claimant) had let go of that panel, which had instead been placed on the floor beside the installation table in accordance with the usual practice adopted at the time.<sup>26</sup>

44 I should also note that, in contrast to the Claimant's assertion that he had been the last in the row of workers carrying the Accident Glass Panel, Thiru asserted that it was he (Thiru) who had been at the end of the line of workers, as the supervisor in charge of the operations being carried out.<sup>27</sup>

45 The Claimant has challenged Thiru's account of the Accident. At trial, the Claimant denied altogether that Thiru had been one of the six workers carrying the Accident Glass Panel.<sup>28</sup> However, whilst he asserted that Thiru lied in his AEIC, the Claimant has not adduced evidence to support such an allegation.

46 The legal burden lies on the Claimant to prove his case. As such, it was incumbent upon him to demonstrate, by reference to cogent evidence, why Thiru ought to be disbelieved. For my part, I have no basis for preferring the Claimant's assertions over Thiru's, simply on account of the fact that he was carrying out work for the 2D. Insofar as Thiru ought not to be considered a disinterested party to these proceedings, then the same reasoning would apply, *a fortiori*, to the Claimant himself.

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<sup>26</sup> Thiru's AEIC at paragraph 8.

<sup>27</sup> Thiru's AEIC at paragraph 8.

<sup>28</sup> NE 19 August 2024 80/1-4 and 81/8-24.

47 Separately, I note that there is no contemporaneous documentary record that supports the Claimant's version of what happened at the Worksite on the day of the Accident.

48 Whilst all the witnesses who gave evidence at trial acknowledged that the Claimant had complained of pain that day and arrangements had been made for him to receive medical attention, this is not conclusive of the question as to whether the Accident had occurred *in the manner alleged by the Claimant*.

49 In contrast to the account put forward by the Claimant, a document recording his visit to the Public Free Clinic Society (TCM) on 2 June 2022, adduced by the Claimant, does not record any complaint regarding a fall, but instead makes reference to "a sprain caused by heavy lifting".<sup>29</sup>

50 I have also found the Claimant's description of the manner in which the Accident took place inherently difficult to accept. In particular, the Claimant's case that there was a "coordinated" action by his fellow co-workers in releasing their grip on the Accident Glass Panel without warning to him is unconvincing.<sup>30</sup>

51 Under cross-examination, the Claimant appeared to suggest that his co-workers released their grip on the Accident Glass Panel because they felt it was too heavy for them to carry, even as a group.<sup>31</sup>

52 However, were this the case, then it is hard to understand how, after his supposed fall, the Claimant found the Accident Glass Panel resting on what he called a metal frame, which was not the starting location from which the pane

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<sup>29</sup> Claimant's AEIC at page 35.

<sup>30</sup> CRS at paragraph 24.

<sup>31</sup> NE 19 August 2024 78/15-20.

had been picked up by the workers initially.<sup>32</sup> Whilst the Claimant asserted that the metal frame was close to the wooden pallet from which the Accident Glass Panel had initially been lifted, with respect, its final location is inconsistent with an assertion that his fellow co-workers had simply let go of the Accident Glass Panel.

53 Separately, it is not clear to me how the Claimant's co-workers, who he claims were all ahead of him in the queue of persons carrying the Accident Glass Panel, would have coordinated a release of that panel in a manner which would have been apparent to the co-workers but, at the same time, gave the Claimant no warning or signal. Any language barrier between the Claimant and his co-workers is rendered irrelevant by the fact that there is no allegation by the Claimant that his co-workers had verbally communicated at all prior to allegedly dropping or releasing their collective grasp of the Accident Glass Panel.

54 Having regard to the evidence in the round, on the whole, I am not satisfied that the Claimant has proven that the Accident occurred as pleaded in the SOCA1, that is, that he was injured when his co-workers, without warning to him, released their hold on the Accident Glass Panel.

(3) The weight of the Accident Glass Panel and the significance thereof

55 Significant portions of the DCS were devoted to an examination of the weight of the Accident Glass Panel. Specifically, the 2D's counsel submitted that if I found that the Accident Glass Panel weighed 113.4kg (as alleged by the 2D)<sup>33</sup> instead of 300kg or more (as alleged by the Claimant), this would be dispositive, on its own, of the Claimant's claim herein.

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<sup>32</sup> NE 19 August 2024 76/7-18.

<sup>33</sup> DCS at paragraph 6.

56 The 2D's counsel argued that this was because the Claimant had apparently *accepted*, under cross-examination, that if the Accident Glass Panel had weighed 113.4kg and the 2D had assigned six men to carry out the lifting operation on such a glass panel, the 2D's "system of work" would be "perfectly safe".<sup>34</sup>

57 I do not agree that the success or failure of the Claimant's case turns solely on whether the Accident Glass Panel weighed 113.4kg or 300kg. That being said, the weight of the panel is also not entirely irrelevant to the claim and hence the evidence adduced in relation to this issue still needs to be considered.

58 This is because the Claimant's case, properly understood, was *not* that the system of work he was engaged in was flawed in the sense that it caused him to be injured if the system was *operating as intended*. Instead, the Claimant's case is that the system of work was flawed in that it caused the Claimant to be injured when the persons engaged in it *departed from carrying it out strictly*.

59 In both the SOCA1<sup>35</sup> and the Claimant's Closing Submissions (the "CCS"), the Claimant clearly stated that his injuries were caused when his co-workers suddenly released their hold on the Accident Glass Panel without warning, and leaving the Claimant to bear the entire weight of the Accident Glass Panel *alone*. There is no alternative pleaded case that, even if his co-workers had not suddenly released their grip on the Accident Glass Panel, the Claimant would still have been injured. Consideration of the merits of the Claimant's claim must therefore be confined to the case which was pleaded.

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<sup>34</sup> DCS at paragraph 3 citing NE 19 August 2024 34/21-29.

<sup>35</sup> See paragraph 7 of the SOCA1.

60 In a situation where the Claimant was the only person bearing the weight of the Accident Glass Panel, the distribution of the weight of that panel amongst each worker assigned to lift it becomes *largely* irrelevant, for in the scenario alleged by the Claimant to have resulted in his injuries, there was simply no other worker with whom the Claimant “shared” the weight of the Accident Glass Panel, and not even the 2D itself has suggested that it would have been reasonable for one worker alone to bear a 113.4kg weight.

61 That being said, the total weight of the Accident Glass Panel is not wholly irrelevant to this claim. Given that the Claimant has alleged that the 2D did not implement a safe system of work or maintain a safe working environment, an ancillary issue arises as to whether the Accident Glass Panel was so excessively heavy that it caused the Claimant’s co-workers to release the Accident Glass Panel and, consequently, the Accident.

62 In this regard, having considered the available evidence, I find, on a balance of probabilities, that the Accident Glass Panel weighed 113.4kg, as alleged by the 2D, and not 300kg as alleged by the Claimant.

63 The amount of objective evidence adduced by the Claimant as to the weight of the Accident Glass Panel was limited.

64 In his AEIC, the Claimant asserted that the Accident Glass Panel consisted of three separate panels which were attached “as one” weighing, in aggregate, “about 300kg”.<sup>36</sup> Under cross-examination, the Claimant further indicated that the three panels were “stick together” and “cannot be separated”.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Claimant’s AEIC at paragraph 11.

<sup>37</sup> NE 19 August 2024 40/5-16.

65 The Claimant did not, however, in his AEIC exhibit any evidence to substantiate these assertions.

66 Whilst he did exhibit a photograph showing four persons lifting a glass panel, he acknowledged in his AEIC that this showed a “similar scenario” to what had happened on the day of the Accident and that the glass panel shown in the photograph was a single pane weighing 100kg.<sup>38</sup>

67 Indeed, the primary piece of evidence relied upon by the Claimant to support his assertion that the Accident Glass Panel was a composite of three separate panels was a photograph (the “**AB107 photograph**”) which was not found in his AEIC but which had been included in the Agreed Bundle of Documents.<sup>39</sup>

68 However, it transpired, under cross-examination of the Claimant, that the AB107 photograph did not show the Accident Glass Panel either.<sup>40</sup>

69 Indeed, the Claimant himself acknowledged that he did not have evidence of the actual Accident Glass Panel, and claimed that the AB107 photograph had been taken by a “friend” who had been asked by the Claimant to take a photo.<sup>41</sup> He also admitted that he did not know when this photograph was taken.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Claimant’s AEIC at paragraph 19.

<sup>39</sup> AB107.

<sup>40</sup> NE 24 March 2025 8/6-13.

<sup>41</sup> NE 24 March 2025 8/28-9-7.

<sup>42</sup> NE 24 March 2025 10/24-31.

70 The Claimant was the only witness to give evidence in support of his case. The Claimant’s “friend” who took the AB107 photograph was not called to give evidence of that photograph or be cross-examined. He was not even identified by the Claimant.

71 As such, there is no basis for this Court to find that the AB107 photograph was an accurate representation of the Accident Glass Panel.

72 Set against this, the 2D has adduced a drawing (the “**Shop Drawing**”) of the pane which it asserts reflects the Accident Glass Panel. The salient feature of the Shop Drawing is that it indicated that the panel weighed 113.4kg.

73 Significantly, in both the CCS and the Claimant’s Reply Submissions (“**CRS**”) filed post-trial, counsel for the Claimant has not seriously challenged the probative value of this document.

74 As such, on a balance of probabilities, I am satisfied that the weight of the evidence favours a finding that the Accident Glass Panel weighed only 113.4kg.

75 A corollary finding that accompanies the one made in the preceding paragraph is that the Claimant has not demonstrated that the weight of the Accident Glass Panel contributed to the alleged actions of his co-workers in releasing the said panel, assuming it was part of his case that his being assigned to lift the Accident Glass Panel made for an unsafe system of work or work environment.

76 This is because the Claimant has not adduced evidence that if the Accident Glass Panel weighed only 113.4kg as alleged by the 2D, assigning the Claimant and five co-workers to lift the Accident Glass Panel in the manner

they did on the day of the Accident, given its weight as determined by this Court, amounted to an unsafe system of work or created an unsafe work environment.

(4) The significance of suction cups

77 In its submissions filed post-trial, the Claimant's counsel submitted that significance should be attached to the 2D's failure to supply suction cups to the Claimant and his co-workers for the purpose of lifting the Accident Glass Panel.

78 The Claimant's counsel criticised the 2D's "Method Statement of Aluminium Window Installation" (the "**Manual**") for not clearly defining the situations in which suction cups ought to be used to move glass panels,<sup>43</sup> as well as the 2D's witnesses' lack of knowledge about the Manual's contents and their failure to abide by the same leading, allegedly, to the failure to supply suction cups to the Claimant on the day of the Accident.

79 With respect, even *assuming* all of the foregoing is correct, it was still incumbent on the Claimant to demonstrate the existence of some legally significant nexus between the 2D's supposed failure to supply suction cups, to the Accident *as pleaded by the Claimant*. At the very least, it is not clear how, to the extent that the Claimant's case is premised on being instructed to lift an excessive weight, the use of suction cups could have reduced the effective weight which the Claimant and his co-workers had to lift.

80 In this regard, it bears highlighting that the Claimant's case is premised *solely* on a "coordinated"<sup>44</sup> act of his co-workers in releasing the Accident Glass Panel; it was not premised on some *accidental* slippage of the Accident Glass

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<sup>43</sup> CCS at paragraph 20

<sup>44</sup> CRS at paragraph 24.

Panel from his colleagues' grasps. No such suggestion appears from either the Claimant's AEIC or the SOCA1, which would in any event be inconsistent with the Claimant's assertion that after his fall he found the Accident Glass Panel resting on a metal frame.

***Conclusion: Factual Issue***

81 By reason of the foregoing, I am of the view that the Claimant has failed to discharge the burden of proving that the Accident took place as pleaded in the SOCA1.

**Breach Issue: Legal Significance of the Evidence**

82 The finding above is fatal to the claim herein.

83 This is because the question of whether the 2D was negligent *to the Claimant* can only be assessed by reference to events which the Claimant has *pledged and proved* did take place. Merely highlighting lapses in the 2D's operations which may amount to negligent practices *in vacuo* is not sufficient to establish the 2D's liability *to the Claimant*.

84 As framed in the SOCA1, the Claimant's case is that his co-workers' actions in releasing the Accident Glass Panel suddenly and without warning, leading to a situation in which "the weight to be supported by the Claimant proved to be too much to bear...and the Claimant was caused to fall backwards, causing him to suffer injuries to his back".<sup>45</sup> No alternative mechanism for his injuries has been pleaded.

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<sup>45</sup> SOCA1 at paragraph 7.

85 Whilst there is evidence that the Claimant complained of an injury on the date of the Accident, his failure to link that injury to a weight transfer occasioned by his co-workers' sudden coordinated release of the Accident Glass Panel in the manner pleaded in the SOCA1 means that the Claimant has not proven all the factual elements of the tort which he alleges the 2D has committed.

86 It has never been the Claimant's case that his injuries were suffered simply by virtue of him having lifted the Accident Glass Panel in conjunction with his co-workers. This was the reason why the Claimant's counsel could make the argument, accepted by this Court, that the weight distribution of the Accident Glass Panel amongst all the workers was a "distraction from the true cause of the injury".<sup>46</sup>

87 The decision of *Gaughan v Straits Instrumentation Pte Ltd and another* [2000] 1 SLR(R) 331 ("**Gaughan**"), cited in the DCS, involved similar facts and reasoning to that set out above.

88 The plaintiff in *Gaughan* alleged that he had injured his back when lifting heavy equipment together with some co-workers, who he alleged had, on a particular lifting operation, failed to lift or take any of the weight.<sup>47</sup>

89 The plaintiff's claim in *Gaughan* against one of the defendants was dismissed by Judith Prakash J (as Her Honour then was), *inter alia*, on the basis that he had not proven that he had participated in the lift with his co-workers "in

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<sup>46</sup> CRS at paragraph 14.

<sup>47</sup> *Gaughan* at [6].

the way he said he did”, despite also finding that he could have suffered the injury in a related operation pertaining to the same equipment (at [55]).

90 For completeness, as I have found earlier, the available evidence favours the finding that the weight of the Accident Glass Panel was 113.4kg not 300kg, and the Claimant has not demonstrated that assigning him and his co-workers to lift such a weight was an unsafe system of work or gave rise to an unsafe work environment. As such, this removes the possibility of a finding that the 2D’s breach of duty took the form of the 2D *assigning* the Claimant to lift the Accident Glass Panel.

### **Judgment**

91 By virtue of the foregoing, the claim is to be dismissed in its entirety.

92 The costs and disbursements of this suit are to be fixed by this Court if the parties are unable to agree on the same. The parties are to file and exchange their respective written submissions on costs and disbursements within 14 days hereof, limited to six pages, if required.

Teo Guan Kee  
District Judge

Mr Liew Hwee Tong, Eric [Advox Law LLC] for the claimant;  
Mr Anthony Wee [Titanium Law Chambers LLC] for the 2<sup>nd</sup> defendant.