

Salesman pays over \$130k for slingshot damage

21-month wrecking spree came to an end after he was caught on camera

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The family of a salesman who went on a 21-month wrecking spree by firing marbles from a slingshot at glass buildings has coughed up more than \$130,000 to pay for the damage he caused.

Magnus Yeo Teck Chuang, 39, got away with it until the police tracked him down after seeing footage from a surveillance camera in Pickering Street.

It showed his car in the vicinity when the glass panel of the SingTel building was shattered at 3.10pm on Sept 27, 2011. This alone cost \$73,152 to repair.

In total, he damaged 13 windows, causing \$152,000 worth of damage. His targets included the Volkswagen showroom where he worked in Alexandra Road and shops in Lower Delta Road.

He also smashed glass panels of the Cycle & Carriage showroom on two other occasions. He was fired from his job after his arrest.

Last month, he was jailed for eight months and he faced another five on top of that if he failed to pay the \$130,803 in compensation to the four victims he admitted targeting. Now that that has been paid, he has dropped an appeal



Yeo (below) began his rampage while driving to work on Oct 8, 2010. He loaded a slingshot (left) with a marble and shattered the Cycle & Carriage showroom's glass panel (right).

against his sentence and will serve just the eight months – which will be subject to a one-third discount for good behaviour.

He had told the district court that his drive-by shootings – in which he targeted glass buildings at random – were inspired by a YouTube training video. Yeo said it led him to buy the two slingshots.

He pleaded guilty to four charges of mischief last month.

His marble madness began when he was driving to work on Oct 8, 2010. He loaded a slingshot with a marble and shattered a glass panel of the Cycle & Carriage showroom on Alexandra Road.

His campaign – described as “hard to detect” by the judge who jailed him last month – went on for nearly two years until he was finally arrested on July 31 last year.

A police spokesman told The Sunday Times that such crimes are difficult to solve because culprits “struck randomly and intermittently in terms of locations and timing of the hits”.

“Hence there was no distinct pattern that could be identified for police to concentrate its resources on to crack the case,” she added.

Some victims had also delayed going to the police as they thought the panels might have shattered on



PHOTOS: SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE



their own.

The police said the delays prevented them from gathering

first-hand information from victims and eyewitnesses.

Also in several locations, employees had cleared the debris before the police could gather evidence.

The court was told that Yeo had been suffering from stress and depression for the last two to three years and a psychiatrist at the Institute of Mental Health believed his state of mind could have contributed to the offences.

Yeo even admitted to the psychiatrist that he was relieved to have been caught because he realised he could have hurt somebody.

The maximum punishment for

such an offence is a two-year jail term and a \$10,000 fine.

A psychiatrist in private practice, Dr Lim Boon Leng, said that such behaviour may be motivated by negative feelings such as frustration, anger and revenge arising from work or relationship problems.

He said: “Unable to fully express these negative feelings, they are bottled up and then are often projected onto inanimate objects which are symbolic of the original organisation or person he had negative feelings for.”

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