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INSURANCE PROTECTION: A sure thing

By pekwan

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PIAM's panel workshop guarantees policyholders' and insurers' protection

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[1]

WE refer to the letter headlined "Post-accident stress" by Curios of Subang Jaya published in *The Malay Mail* on Aug 20.

The association also refers to the letter headlined "Don't tar all with same brush" by the president of the Federation of Automotive Workshop Owners Association of Malaysia (FAWOAM), published in the paper on Sept 1, on delayed accident claims and beyond economically repaired vehicles.

PIAM's panel workshop system safeguards the interests of both the policyholders and insurers. Here, policyholders are assured of a certain standard in quality and professionalism as insurers constantly monitor the performance of panel workshops.

To ensure panel workshops remain competitive, policyholders have a choice of workshops from the panel. The industry norm is for the insurer either to repair, replace or pay in cash for the accidental loss or damage to the insured vehicle.

The most common option is to repair the damaged vehicle. In some cases, insurers have also considered the other alternatives based on the merits of each case.

Besides selecting reputable workshops with good facilities, equipment and qualified personnel, insurers also require their panel workshops to use approved parts and provide a six-month warranty for the repaired vehicles.

If these workshops are in breach of these conditions or found to be involved in fraudulent or criminal activities, they would be initially suspended for investigation and terminated subsequently.

Currently, repair estimates from some workshops are still found to be unreasonable and excessive compared with that of independent and professional loss adjusters.

This has given some policyholders the perception that the insurer's final approved repair cost is much lower than the actual repair cost. In this regard, insurers have a duty to ensure claims settled are fair and equitable.

In any case, the guiding principle is to repair accident vehicles to make them safe and roadworthy again.

Policyholders can rest assured the industry has set benchmarks for various stages of the motor accident claims process and this has worked out well for the majority of cases.

For policyholders with grievances, we have set up a Complaints Action Bureau on the 3rd Floor, Wisma PIAM, 150, Jalan Tun Sambanthan, 50470 Kuala Lumpur; Tel: 03-22747399; Fax: 03-22745910; or www.piam.org.my [2].

There is also another level of grievance handling at the Financial Mediation Bureau on Level 25, Dataran Kewangan Darul Takaful, No. 4, Jalan Sultan Sulaiman, 50000 Kuala Lumpur; Tel: 03-22722811, Fax: 03-22745752; or www.fmb.org.my [3].

Lim Chia Fook
Executive Director
Persatuan Insurans Am Malaysia (PIAM)
(General Insurance Association of Malaysia)