



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **State Courts and A\*STAR's Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R) Collaborate to Develop Real-time Speech Transcription System for Use in Courts**

1 The State Courts and A\*STAR's Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R) are developing a Speech Transcription System (STS) for use in the Courts, so that oral evidence and delivery presented in court proceedings can be instantly transcribed in real time.

2 The STS recognises human voice and transcribes the speech into text in real time. The use of this technology will redefine the recording of evidence in the State Courts as real-time transcription service will be available for the parties involved in court proceedings without the use of court reporters or transcribers. The STS will also provide instant access to the recorded evidence to all participants as the transcripts produced can be displayed on individual computer monitors in the courtrooms simultaneously. With this, the Judge and parties to the case would be able to review the oral testimonies and evidence presented in Court immediately.

3 The State Courts handle about 99 per cent of the criminal cases in Singapore. Currently, all criminal court proceedings, except mention cases, are digitally recorded and the transcription process which is done by an external service provider takes about seven days. In order to have immediate access to transcripts, parties have to engage private vendors that provide court reporting and real-time transcription services. With the introduction of the STS, the State Courts' court reporting services will include real-time transcription.

4 There are many benefits of real-time transcription. Judges, prosecutors and defence counsel in criminal hearings can access the recorded evidence immediately, which allows for more effective participation by the parties, especially the party that is questioning the witness on the stand. Real-time transcription is also useful when the witness cannot be heard clearly and when the speaker gives unclear or inconsistent evidence. When this is detected by the STS, the speakers can be prompted to speak more clearly. Clarification can also be sought immediately by using the system's search function to locate specific parts of the evidence. In

other words, the introduction of the STS will assist the parties to conduct their criminal cases in a more effective and expeditious manner.

5 The project will be carried out in two phases. The first phase is the Proof of Concept which is expected to be completed by early 2019. The second phase will be the full implementation of a speech transcription system in all the courtrooms in the State Courts Towers which will be in operation in 2020.

6 Justice See Kee Oon, Presiding Judge of the State Courts, said: “The State Courts are constantly improving our services to provide an effective justice system. The Speech Transcription System is indeed another innovation harnessing technology to offer real-time oral evidence which will benefit all parties to court proceedings.”

7 “This transcription system is a great example of how technology can be used to improve productivity by automating a traditionally labour intensive process. This allows court officers to work more efficiently and effectively. The technology can also be used to improve productivity not just for court staff, but also for communicators, archivists and other such professions,” said Professor Dim-Lee Kwong, Executive Director of A\*STAR’s I²R.

Issued by : State Courts

Date : 14 December 2017

For further information or clarification, please contact:

Ms Michelle Chiang, Assistant Director, Communications Directorate

Tel: 6435 5179 / 9722 6139

Email: [michelle\\_chiang@statecourts.gov.sg](mailto:michelle_chiang@statecourts.gov.sg)