



**Speech by SCAL First Vice-President, Mr Ng Yek Meng
at the SCAL Lunar New Year Lunch held at 12pm on
8 February 2017 in SCAL Multi-Purpose Hall**

Council members

Fellow SCAL members

Ladies and gentlemen

Gong Xi Fai Cai!

- 1 Good afternoon and a warm welcome to the annual SCAL Lunar New Year Lunch. I am glad to see so many familiar faces as we gather here to celebrate the Year of the Rooster. On behalf of SCAL, may I wish all of you a Happy and Prosperous Lunar New Year.

CELEBRATING A MILESTONE

- 2 2017 is a special year for SCAL as we celebrate our 80th anniversary. To start off the commemoration, we held a media conference last month to announce two new initiatives to lead the industry on safety and productivity.
- 3 Leveraging on technology, SCAL launched a new mobile app to raise safety awareness among workers. The app is now available for download on iTunes stores and Google Play. I would like to encourage members to utilise this new tool to internalise safe work practices at construction sites.
- 4 To raise construction productivity in Singapore, SCAL also released findings and recommendations from a productivity study



initiated in collaboration with the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, or SCCCI. We will continue to work with the government and relevant stakeholders to implement these recommendations.

BUSINESS SENTIMENTS

- 5 Most of us have a sense that the construction outlook for 2017 will not be too promising. This is in view of the current economic uncertainties and continued slowdown in the property market.
- 6 BCA anticipates that the private sector construction demand will likely to remain subdued and is projected to stay between S\$8 billion and S\$11 billion. However, with more public and infrastructure works expected this year, public sector construction demand is projected to increase to between S\$28 billion and S\$38 billion.
- 7 For the upcoming Singapore Budget 2017 to be announced in about 10 days' time, SCAL has put up a set of recommendations, one of which is asking the government to help the construction sector tide over this lull period by ramping up public sector projects. Among other recommendations, we also asked the government to introduce measures to reduce business costs, and enhance workplace safety and health provisions in government tenders and contracts.



TRANSFORMATION FOR THE FUTURE ECONOMY

- 8 Beyond 2017, our industry will face new challenges as Singapore prepares for the future economy. We need to position ourselves to transform by embracing new technologies, re-engineer our processes and raise productivity to overcome the many challenges that lie ahead. SCAL will work with government and the other stakeholders in the built environment value chain to prepare ourselves for this future.

CONCLUSION

- 9 Entering into our 80th year, SCAL will continue to play a pivotal role to promote the best interest of our members and to improve the business climate in which the industry operates. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to your active participation and contributions in the activities and programmes we have lined up for members in 2017.
- 10 Once again, may I wish one and all abundant prosperity, good health and happiness in the year of the Rooster! 祝大家，身体健康，万事如意！（Zhù dà jiā shēn tǐ jiàn kāng wàn shì rú yì）