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Message From the President

Dear members,

This will be my final message to you in The Contractor as SCAL President.

At the end of his distinguished military career, General Douglas MacArthur remarked before the U.S. Congress that “old soldiers never die, they simply fade away.” I am put in mind of those words as SCAL recently concluded its Annual General Meeting 2023 and I passed on the reins of the SCAL Presidency to my successor, Mr. Lee Kay Chai.

Serving as President of SCAL has been the honour of my professional life, and as Immediate Past President, I am sure that I won't be fading away. My first involvement with SCAL was closer to the beginning of my career, in an industry that would have been unrecognisable to someone today — an industry that was more manual, more informal, and more vulnerable to shocks and crises.

At the onset of my term in 2019, one such shock laid bare these deep vulnerabilities and offered a mirror to the industry for its greatest drawbacks. I did not expect to be President of SCAL during the COVID-19 pandemic — one of the most difficult tests our industry has ever had to collectively endure — but nobody expects responsibility to be thrust onto them in critical moments. The only question is what to do in those moments. I was able to work with my dedicated and forward-looking Council (2021-2023) to address the most urgent problems that arose during this period — financial relief for distressed contractors, streamlined labour regulations for a manpower-strapped market, and sharing knowledge and information with our industry community in a time of confusion and misinformation.

It is fitting that the theme of this edition of The Contractor is safety. As we all know but sometimes forget, safety is not an outcome but a symptom — it can only be achieved when everything else works well within our systems, just like good health. SCAL is currently marking its annual safety and EHS campaign in a time of safety

challenges for the industry. Coming together to improve our safety record—just as we came together to ride out the pandemic — is a calling that we must rise to seriously. An unsafe industry is not one that can confront the new and growing challenges of today and tomorrow. Not only because of the lack of safety itself, but because of the lack of organisational preparedness or resilience this lack of safety reveals. The challenges of tomorrow will demand more of every level of our industry — from workers to professionals and executives.

And keeping an eye on those challenges of tomorrow means cultivating the future of our industry actively — another theme in this edition. As the saying goes, a society grows great when old men plant seeds for trees whose shade they will never enjoy. The same is true of our industry. By continuing to invest in capacity and skills development, recognising professional and organisational excellence, pushing for greater technology investment and adoption, and giving back to the youth and next generation of professionals, we too foster an industry that future Singaporeans will benefit from and be proud of.

The last four years as President have been a truly rewarding experience but is in no way a culmination of my journey with SCAL. As Immediate Past President, I will continue to work with the new Council and President and support SCAL's ongoing initiatives towards transforming our industry to be more Productive, Progressive, and Professional. As anyone who has served with SCAL for long will know, we all ultimately become good friends in the line of service to our industry.

And so, I wish my successor, peer, and most importantly, friend - Mr. Lee Kay Chai all the success as he assumes the office of President for 2023-2025.

Mr Ng Yek Meng
President
The Singapore Contractors Association Ltd

SCAL Shines Light on SLOTS Safety Achievers

Every year, SCAL presents the Workplace Safety & Health Awards for Singapore List Of Trade Subcontractors (SLOTS) registered contractors to recognise sub-contractors who have gone above and beyond to promote a safe and healthy work environment through the implementation of sound WSH management systems. This year's awards are supported by the Workplace Safety and Health Council (WSHC), an industry-led statutory board that oversees safety standards and promotes workspace safety culture in Singapore. Award winners were announced during the annual SCAL Environment, Health, & Safety (EHS) Campaign 2023—an event that brought together more than 200 industry leaders, government regulators, and WSH professionals for the common cause of safer construction industry.



This year, SCAL organised an exciting itinerary of site visits, engaging speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities for participating member companies. Experts spoke on a wide variety of topics ranging from technology, improving safety on worksites to mental health and wellbeing. Alongside insightful sharing and discussions, the event also showcased the latest safety products, technologies and services, giving industry professionals a comprehensive look at the tools and systems available for ensuring workplace safety.

In the run-up to the SCAL EHS Campaign, The Contractor spoke with Mr. Kelvin Ho, the Senior QEHS Manager of BBR Holdings, as well as Mr. Manimaran, Operations Manager, and Mr. Mathiarasan, Assistant Operations Manager of Wee Chwee Huat Scaffolding & Construction Pte Ltd (WCH). Understanding the pulse of safety on the ground is critical to staying ahead of the curve for best practices and ideas.

Throughout Asia, BBR Holdings oversees a multitude of subsidiaries operating across specialised engineering, general construction, property development, and green

technology. Their shared commitment to safety is guided by a robust Quality, Environment, Health, & Safety (QEHS) Management System. Mr. Ho, who oversees the system, believes that all components of workplace safety and health, from communication and training to inspections and awareness, are crucial.



Site visit to AMAT @ TIC hosted by Boustead Projects Pte Ltd

Given BBR Holdings' wide range of competencies and an equally wide range of safety requirements spread among its different subsidiaries, he acknowledges the challenge of maintaining alignment throughout the company. "In every company, I encounter different directors, different mindsets, different scopes of work, different manpower strengths, and so on," said Mr. Ho, "The key to overcoming this challenge is to communicate. I speak to as many people as I can, to understand their scope of work, their requirements, their culture." In Mr. Ho's view, BBR functions at their best when everyone is aligned and "when everyone is on the same page, we understand one another, share resources, compromise, and collaborate to achieve good outcomes together."

Mr. Ho also recognised that external stakeholders like SCAL and the WSHC greatly influence 'BR's safety standards: "The standards they set are based on a big-picture view of the industry. As such, they could be helping individual

companies cover blindspots that they didn't know they had." Looking to the future, Mr. Ho envisions an expanded role for technology in future construction operations. "These days, I see technology being used more for non-hazardous tasks such as the detection of safety violations and threats," he expressed. "I would hope that technology can eventually play a bigger role and help reduce the manpower involved in higher-risk operations such as working at height."



SCAL WSH Awards for SLOTS
Registered Contractor 2023 – GOLD
BBR Construction Systems Pte Ltd

SCAL WSH Awards For Supervisors
2023 – Bronze
Haque Md Monjurul
Wee Chwee Huat Scaffolding &
Construction Pte Ltd

Over at WCH, Mr. Manimaran and Mr. Mathiarasan similarly recognise the value of adapting and innovating to meet new challenges, as seen in their creation of a Fall Experience Simulator (i-Fall). This ingenious tool simulates common workplace accidents, bridging the gap between theory and practical experience. "We conduct training for other companies using our i-Fall simulator, and it has also been showcased to regional delegations brought by the WSHC," said Mr. Manimaran.

With a clear focus on nurturing a close-knit family culture throughout WCH's four subsidiaries, the management ensures the safety and mental wellbeing of their workforce. "We want our workforce to be safe, like how we want our family members to be safe," said Mr. Manimaran, "Our emphasis on family culture helps everyone understand the perspectives of one another and take ownership of their personal responsibilities to work towards a common goal," Mr. Mathiarasan added.



Site visit to North-South Corridor (Contract N110) hosted by Lum Chang
Building Contractors Pte Ltd



Like Mr. Ho, they credit external stakeholders like SCAL and the WSHC for setting safety standards that help guide the industry. "[SCAL and the WSHC] set the bar for the entire industry, and we use that as a reference to improve ourselves and try to go beyond the bar they have set," Mr. Manimaran shared. Winning the SCAL WSH Award is more than just an honour for them—it boosts morale and instils a sense of pride in their work at all levels. Specifically for their team, it is a well-deserved recognition for one of their long-time supervisors who has been a cornerstone of their safety culture.

The SCAL WSH Awards for SLOTS-registered contractors do more than just recognise companies for their outstanding performance in workplace safety and health. The awards place these companies in the view of industry figures, enhance employee morale, and offer tangible benefits like a complimentary year of SLOTS membership. More than that, they serve as an industry-wide benchmark that encourages all companies to aspire to and reach the standards set by the winners.



With all the knowledge and insight shared during the SCAL Annual EHS Campaign 2023, let's remember that the responsibility to create safe and healthy workplaces is shared among us all. It is our collective commitment that will propel us towards our ultimate goal of a zero-harm working environment. When everyone is home safe, better homes are built for all Singaporeans.

View the full album:

www.scall.com.sg/photo-gallery/scal-ehs-campaign-2023

Building Up The Next Generation

Master Builder Lu Ban (鲁班先师), revered as the patron saint of builders and contractors and a symbol of Chinese excellence, continues to inspire the construction trade today. As part of its efforts to preserve Lu Ban's legacy, the Singapore Contractors Association Limited (SCAL) presents the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary Awards to children of employees from SCAL's member companies each year.

On 3 May 2023, SCAL proudly awarded 12 outstanding students from primary school through to pre-university levels who have demonstrated good academic achievements. The Contractor spoke to two award recipients, Amzar Arshad and Twins Lim, to gain insight into how the bursary has impacted their educational journey.



Amzar Arshad is a two-time recipient of the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary, currently studying Chemical Engineering at Singapore Polytechnic under the Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP). His N-Level results were among the top few in his class, and to Amzar, the bursary was an acknowledgement of all the hard work he had put in over the past year. His father, Mr Arshad Salleh, who has worked at Tiong Aik Construction Pte Ltd for 21 years, first learned about the awards from his company's HR department a few years ago, and is immensely proud of Amzar's accomplishments.

The SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary has contributed significantly to Amzar's academic journey, allowing him to purchase a laptop for his studies and also serving as a form of motivation to maintain his academic excellence. Being in

Singapore Polytechnic has not only allowed Amzar to pursue the course of study he was interested in, it has also let him explore his interests on the side. "I recently joined [Singapore Polytechnic's] Stage Management Club, and I'm interested to learn about theatre production and camera work," said Amzar. When asked about his future career aspirations, Amzar expressed that he has yet to fixate on one in particular, although he did have a clear goal he was determined to accomplish: "My goal is to make my family, friends, and loved ones proud."

Having worked hard to support Amzar and his two older brothers' education over the years, Mr Arshad expresses his gratitude for the support he has received: "I'm really grateful to SCAL, the Lu Ban Bursary committee, and my company for giving us this opportunity. It has really helped to ease my financial load as I put my kids through school. Education is very important to me, and I'm glad that the bursary not only eases my financial load, it also motivates Amzar to do well in school."

Another recipient of the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary award is Twins Lim, a Year 1 student pursuing a Diploma in Experiential Product and Interior Design at Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP). Her father, 68-year-old Mr Lim Song Hiong, who works at Star Ready-Mix Pte Ltd.

Twins explained why she chose her course of study: "I've had a passion for interior design since I was young, and I hope to pursue a career in this field." When asked about how the SCAL Lu-Ban Bursary award helps her in her academic journey, Twins said: "There are lots of study and research materials we may need to buy to facilitate our studies, so the bursary reduces my financial stress in obtaining them."

With the construction sector facing challenges like a shortage of fresh, young talent and high attrition rates for existing talent, initiatives like the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary Awards play a crucial role in bringing hope for the future.



Upon finding out that Twins was named a recipient of the bursary, Mr Lim was overjoyed and grateful. “I’m happy that it really reduces my financial burden, because that is my biggest concern,” he said. Echoing the same sentiment, Twins expressed her gratitude: “I want to thank my father’s employer, and give my appreciation to SCAL and the Lu Ban committee for their support.”

Assisted through the entire application process by HEC Electrical & Construction Pte Ltd’s HR executive, Moon, the company demonstrates a level of care for its employees that extends beyond the workplace. “Our employer really wanted to support Mr Lim, knowing how hard he works to support his family even at his age,” said Moon, who proactively initiated to help Mr Lim, knowing that he was not as proficient in English. “So as a colleague, it’s my duty to assist him through the entire application process. I’m happy they received the bursary, and grateful to SCAL and the Lu Ban committee for their understanding and readiness to provide support so that Mr Lim’s daughter can pursue her studies without worry.”

With the construction sector facing challenges like a shortage of fresh, young talent and high attrition rates for existing talent, initiatives like the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary Awards play a crucial role in bringing hope for the future. In the spirit of Lu Ban, who selflessly shared his tools and inventions to build a better world, SCAL looks to elevate society by incentivising academic excellence and developing the innovators and leaders of tomorrow.

Much like how SCAL came together to support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic, the SCAL-Lu Ban Education Bursary reflects the best of SCAL—an industry community



uniting to invest in building its future workforce. As Lu Ban’s legacy lives on through tools that have improved quality of life for generations, we hope the recipients of the bursary will go on to make significant contributions that build a more sustainable and resilient world for tomorrow.

On behalf of SCAL and the Lu Ban committee, we once again congratulate all the recipients, and wish them the very best in their educational journeys ahead. We encourage our readers to continue supporting meaningful initiatives like the SCAL-Lu Ban Bursary that develop and nurture the next generation of industry talent.

A Presidential Retrospective: Learnings Through Covid & Collaboration

MR. NG YEK MENG'S FOUR-YEAR PRESIDENTIAL LEGACY: METAMORPHOSIS, ENDURANCE, AND CONTINUOUS CHANGE

The light of leadership shines on everyone, but only the truly reflective shine it back out onto those that they lead. As SCAL President Mr. Ng Yek Meng steps down at the end of an eventful and challenging four-year term—a rare tenure in the history of SCAL's Presidents—The Contractor spoke with Mr. Ng to reflect on his journey as President: the key milestones, the winding backroads, and the path ahead; a journey where Mr. Ng has made important contributions to the way that SCAL sees itself, its role in the local construction industry, and its transformative, nation-building mission.



When Mr. Ng ascended as SCAL President in 2019, he was committed first and foremost to impelling the industry towards a metamorphosis; a key priority was shifting public perception away from the industry's "3D reputation"—Dirty, Demanding and Dangerous—towards the 3Ps—Professional,



Mr Ng speaking at the SCAL Annual Dinner 2019.

Progressive and Productive. This commitment has deeper roots. Mr. Ng has been a lifelong member of SCAL, having joined as fresh-faced young engineer. As a more experienced (but still surprisingly fresh-faced) engineer and business leader today, Mr. Ng has had a unique vantage point to survey the past few decades of industry evolution.

As the industry faces down the growing and interlaced threats of labour and talent shortages, materials price instability, and safety incidents, Mr. Ng's proposed metamorphosis has become increasingly more important. The industry must find its wings as a consequence of this metamorphosis or feel the effects of economic gravity first-hand.

And indeed under Mr. Ng's leadership, SCAL has been successful in guiding the industry towards making strides in professionalism, productivity, and sustainability, despite facing daunting odds in implementation. As Mr. Ng moves on from his role as the President of SCAL and begins his tenure as Immediate Past President following the 2023 SCAL

"And indeed under Mr. Ng's leadership, SCAL has been successful in guiding the industry towards making strides in professionalism, productivity, and sustainability, despite facing daunting odds in implementation."



SCAL Construction Hub Groundbreaking Ceremony – 18 April 2022.

Annual General Meeting, Mr. Ng leaves behind a foundation of softening the most significant barriers to change in the local construction industry. In many senses, Mr. Ng's term has woven the cocoon of the industry's ongoing and imminent metamorphosis with many strong and silken threads of reforms across policy, labour, technology, and safety.

But this cocoon did not have a wholly peaceful existence—the very branch it clung to was shaken violently by one of the industry's greatest storms. And the endurance to continue clinging on was something Mr. Ng inspired SCAL and the industry to develop and amplify.



SCAL members online get-together session 2021 – 30 March

At the very beginning of Mr. Ng's term as SCAL President, the local construction industry was impacted by one of the most disruptive events in its history: the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects were delayed, companies stared down the barrel of acute manpower shortages, and materials supply was constrained. Firms started to feel the heat as costs soared and revenues dried up. "Nobody knew what to do."

Everyone was contacting [SCAL] asking for solutions," Mr. Ng recounted. His first response was to set up a task force and establish clear channels of communication for SCAL members to reach out. The task force acted as a critical liaison, facilitating communication between SCAL, its members, and government agencies. They engaged with government authorities to obtain financial relief for struggling contractors and develop safe work protocols. Through these efforts, the task force enabled the industry to navigate disruptions and safely resume operations. Strongly supporting the task force, Mr. Ng was instrumental in helping negotiate and engage in meaningful dialogues with industry regulatory authorities for more practical guidelines to optimise productivity while ensuring safety.

The pandemic, despite the widespread destruction of livelihoods and business activity for the local industry, did have one key silver lining; it elevated the industry's capacity for collaboration by bringing all members of the industry



Mr Ng, presenting the commemorative book "SCAL & the Pandemic" to Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for National Development & Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration during the SCAL Annual Dinner on 12 October 2022.

value chain—developers, contractors, consultants, and subcontractors—together in support of one another. "We recognised the importance of collaborative effort as we are all in the same boat. I'm glad to see the friendships that have developed during those tough times," remarked Mr. Ng. He also noted how SCAL's importance and presence were amplified throughout the pandemic: "People got to know about what SCAL is doing, and the government appreciated how we functioned as a platform to facilitate communication with all the builders—especially the smaller businesses—that they would normally have difficulty reaching."

On a more personal level, the pandemic was a reminder to never be too comfortable. "Everyone thought that everything was fine, and business would be smooth. Then the crisis hit, and hit everyone hard. I learnt not to take things for granted," Mr. Ng reflected.

The spirit of collaboration that Mr. Ng has fostered and advocated for is indeed necessary as the industry continues on its ongoing journey towards the aspirational "3P" image. "This vision isn't something that can be accomplished in the short term. It's a continuous process of laying the foundations to move the industry forward," said Mr. Ng. He believes that this transformation requires a concerted effort and the commitment of all stakeholders.

One of the most significant hurdles in making this shift is the growing challenge of attracting, developing, and retaining young talent in the industry. To address this, Mr. Ng moved SCAL members to recognise that attracting younger workers involves adapting to their expectations, not always the other way around, and acknowledged that an industry-wide shift needs to take place. "Young professionals today are looking for work-life balance, opportunities for growth and learning, and workplaces that value their contributions. We need to incorporate these elements into our industry culture and practices," he advised. As a champion for greater technological adoption, Mr. Ng admits that changing entrenched mindsets within the industry remains an ongoing and challenging process. "I think the industry has to be more receptive to

adopting technology in their operations. As a starting point, we have to be comfortable working with less manual labour," he added, recognising how the COVID-19 pandemic unveiled the local industry's over-dependence on foreign labour.

Perhaps the P of the 3Ps that is closest to Mr. Ng's heart is "Professionalism." Both as President and in his long career of contribution to SCAL before that, Mr. Ng has always realised the importance of professionalising the industry and raising standards. During his presidency, he spearheaded initiatives like the Construction Professional Accreditation Scheme (CPAS) and SCAL Accredited Builder Scheme (SABS), which aim to strengthen professionalism at the individual and organisational levels, respectively. CPAS raises the bar for project managers through strict selection criteria and requirements for experience/education, while SABS provides frameworks and standards for recognising excellence in construction firms. "What differentiates our accreditations is that all our guidelines and training programmes are developed by construction professionals, for professionals," said Mr. Ng.



2022 Post-Budget: Measures & Implications for the Construction Community – 18 March 2022. Guest-of-Honour, Minister of State for National Development, Mr Tan Kiat How.

These initiatives in sum underline an important mindset shift that has hinged on Mr. Ng's instrumental role as President—the process of transformation in the construction industry is one of continuous, often unpredictable change. Constructing buildings is a well-defined project with a start and end date. Constructing the construction industry is the project that goes on and on, where milestones only grow in importance, and failure is a penalty for complacency and the misapprehension that transformation has been "completed."

As President, Mr. Ng therefore strongly held that more industry professionals need to come forward and serve with SCAL in order to drive such positive and continuous change. "On top of participating in SCAL's initiatives and programmes, we encourage professionals from various companies to explore opportunities as part of SCAL," he said, "By serving with SCAL, we address industry-wide issues, which give us a broader perspective on the industry as a whole, and see where we are heading towards," he added. "So, young professionals



committed to the industry's progress should join SCAL, where they can not only learn, but also contribute at the same time."

To attract the next generation of the industry's leaders and professionals, one of Mr. Ng's brainchilds as President was the SCAL Young Leaders Programme (YLP), which identifies, cultivates, and provides opportunities to emerging talents from different companies. He considers the YLP critical for renewing and revitalising SCAL with fresh perspectives that align the industry with its 3P vision. The programme aims to nurture these young talents to become future industry leaders. Participants gain exposure through networking with



Mr Ng speaking with some of our Young Leaders.

their peers and receiving mentorship from more experienced industry veterans. Although COVID-19 disrupted activities initially, Mr. Ng has seen a strong rebound in its interest now that events have resumed.

Looking to the future with optimism, Mr. Ng is confident that the industry is on the right track. However, he urges future leaders to be prepared for continuous change. "The challenges we face today will evolve. New ones will emerge. But as long as we remain adaptable, stay committed to learning and improving, and focus on laying the right foundations, I am confident we are ready to tackle any challenge that comes our way." For the next President of SCAL, Mr. Ng emphasises the importance of teamwork: "As President, you can't accomplish everything, because you're ultimately only one person. Always encourage collaboration, and think collectively."

Mr. Ng's leadership at SCAL has left a significant legacy. His focus on changing perceptions, attracting younger talent, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration has laid the foundations for the next chapter in the industry's evolution. His advice for future leaders—emphasising adaptability, learning, and teamwork—offers valuable insights on navigating an ever-changing landscape. As SCAL looks to begin a new chapter of leadership, Mr. Ng's dedication to building a Professional, Progressive, and Productive industry serves as a guiding light for those who will follow in his footsteps.

For an organisation that is many things to many stakeholders—liaison, standard setter and bearer, advocate, organiser, outlet, platform—Mr. Ng served as a similarly multifaceted President. SCAL is grateful for his many years of service, being many things for many challenges—leader, idealist, negotiator, diplomat, and a voice to carry the day for a more progressive, professional, and productive industry.

SCAL Brings Construction Leadership Industry Back Together at 2023 CEO Networking on the Green



On 23 May 2023, over 150 CEOs, executives, and leaders of the construction industry congregated at the scenic 18-hole golf course of Tanah Merah Country Club. As the industry continues its cautious rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, this networking event symbolised the resilience, unity, and rekindling of the close-knit relationships critical to the construction industry. The attendees—ranging from diverse firms—leveraged the opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones, against the backdrop of a shared passion for golf, the local industry’s success, and sustaining their relationships.



In facilitating these discussions and encouraging collaboration, the SCAL CEO Networking On the Green 2023 was much more than just a get-together; it served as a platform where members could explore innovative, sustainable approaches to their businesses. Drawing insights from the main sponsors of the event—Busways and Daikin—it was clear to the event’s participants that staying at the forefront of technological and sustainable advancements isn’t just a corporate responsibility, but a critical factor in remaining competitive and relevant.

The return of the SCAL CEO Networking On the Green underscores the pivotal role such events play in fostering meaningful dialogue and

knowledge-sharing within the construction industry. In an industry where collaboration is key, personal interactions are often the seeds of innovation and progressive strides. With the pandemic disrupting this essential element, this event served as an important milestone for an industry emerging out of the pandemic, reconnecting with its roots, and moving forward together. President Ng Yek Meng noted this important milestone in his address to the gathered leaders just before dinner:

“The journey to a better industry is a continuous one, not unlike our day golfing today. Moving from hole to hole—from objective to objective—there is always another back nine that we need to get through, and then yet another. It can be tiring and uncertain, but good company that you can rely on—like the people in this room—makes the journey lighter and worthwhile.”



The Contractor also reached out to two participants, Busways Pte Ltd and Daikin, to gain deeper insights into their latest initiatives and understand their contribution to the industry. As Platinum and Silver sponsors respectively, they not only financially supported the event, but also enriched the discussions on the industry's future. Busways—a leading local Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) engineering company—has been instrumental in the sector's growth, deploying comprehensive electrical power distribution solutions that meet the unique requirements of heavy industrial, commercial, data centre, and semiconductor sectors. Their recent establishment of a new electric vehicle charging division is proof of their dedication to sustainable development. This is a significant initiative for contractors and other industry stakeholders to take note of, considering the increasing need for cleaner, greener transportation infrastructure in Singapore.

Similarly, Daikin—a global leader in the air conditioning industry—shared about their efforts towards sustainable growth. With the construction industry's increasing demand for environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient air conditioning systems—a trend spurred by the shift towards sustainability and smart buildings—Daikin is at the forefront of these transitions. Their digitalisation and sustainability initiatives, including AI-driven energy management systems and smart building automation, underscore their ongoing commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and aligning with global sustainability standards.

SCAL is grateful to all participants and sponsors who made this event a resounding success. As we move forward, we continue to foster a community where our members feel heard, understood, and supported. Here's to many more such events that help us gauge the industry's pulse, gather valuable feedback, and provide our members with a platform to learn, share, and grow together.

View the full album: <https://www.scall.com.sg/photo-gallery/2023-scail-ceo-networking-on-the-green>



Celebrating The Commitment to

SUSTAINABILITY

The effects of climate change on our environment continue to intensify, underscoring the need for mitigation efforts. With the construction industry responsible for a significant environmental footprint, Environmental Control Officers for Specified Construction Sites (ECO(SCS)) play an indispensable role in creating, promoting and implementing practices that reduce the sector's environmental impact. In practice, ECOs advise on pollution remediation, ensure compliance with environmental regulations, instruct personnel on maintaining standards that reduce industrial waste and harmful emissions, and survey sites for lapses - all aimed at limiting the sector's contribution to climate change and safeguarding the natural environment surrounding development projects.



Mr Chew Ming Fai, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Public Health Director-General, National Environment Agency, making his speech at the Awards Ceremony.

On 10 March 2023, the crucial but sometimes undervalued work of ECOs was acknowledged at the inaugural ECO(SCS) Awards Ceremony. With a turnout of close to 400 physical and virtual attendees, the event shone the spotlight on environmental excellence within the construction industry, and underscored the significant role that ECOs and construction companies play in the prevention of dengue fever and other

public health threats. SCAL's involvement underlines their commitment to working hand-in-hand with the NEA and other stakeholders in protecting our environment.

At the ceremony, 10 individuals were presented with the ECO(SCS) Excellence and Merit Awards, and 5 teams received the Best Practices Team Award. The Contractor connected with two of these recipients: Mr. Zac Wong Zhi

Xue from Teambuild Engineering & Construction Pte Ltd, and Samwoh Corporation Pte Ltd, represented by their Civil & Infrastructure General Manager, Mr. Thoo Keng Hong and their Environmental Control Officer, Mr. Subramanian Anandhan.

The project that led to Mr. Wong receiving the ECO(SCS) Excellence Award was the SkyResidence @ Dawson. This project was not without its unique challenges which required innovative solutions to tackle. Some high-risk areas of the project identified by Mr. Wong was the basement car park and the skybridge that connected multiple adjacent buildings. "The basement was a ponding hazard because it was where all the water would accumulate," said Mr. Wong. "We needed to come up with strategies to pump out the water and redirect it to the discharge point." Similarly, the accumulation of water on the skybridge was a concern. "As the skybridge was being constructed, some areas were hard to reach, which became a challenge for implementing vector control," explained Mr. Wong. "We relied on drones to help us inspect these areas that were hard to access."



Mr Zac Wong, Teambuild Engineering & Construction Pte Ltd, receiving his ECO(SCS) Excellence Award.

Speaking about the hurdles in maintaining a safe work environment, Mr. Wong highlighted, "On site, everyone had different roles, different objectives, and different concerns. We had to make sure that everyone was on the same page and willing to cooperate with one another to implement the environmental management plans effectively." For Mr. Wong, the key factor to overcoming these challenges was constant communication, ensuring that the entire team was informed, involved, and invested.



The award, according to Mr. Wong, was not just a testament to their hard work but also a validation of their commitment. "This award is an acknowledgement that our effort and hard work to manage our work environment have paid off. It brings pride to our company and the site teams involved," he said. "It also reaffirms to all our employees that all of our efforts don't go unrecognised."



Samwoh Corporation Pte Ltd bagged the Best Practices Team Award.

Samwoh Corporation Pte Ltd's civil engineering projects require managing expansive project sites involving a diverse set of stakeholders. Their primary challenge revolved around enforcement and monitoring of the erosion control plan, a task they efficiently managed through the appropriate integration of technology. With innovative solutions such as solar-powered automated Erosion Control Measure (ECM)

tanks, the team was able to increase productivity significantly and reduce human error.

Reflecting on the team's achievement, Mr. Thoo Keng Hong said, "It's a testament to our team's hard work and commitment to safety and environmental control, and a reflection of the Company's and our Management's policy and dedication. The achievement motivates us to continue to innovate and strive for excellence in safety and environmental control."

The recognition stemming from these ECO(SCS) awards conveys a strong message of encouragement, and serves as a symbol of pride for all awardees. It is a reminder that the hard work they put into maintaining excellent environment practices does not go unnoticed. It's no surprise that the awardees are big advocates of harnessing technology for environmental management, while demonstrating an unwavering commitment to refining their practices in future projects.

The ECO(SCS) awards, supported by SCAL, underline the critical role Environmental Control Officers and the broader construction community play in preserving our environment. In celebrating the winners, it must be reiterated that the responsibility of raising and maintaining high environmental standards is a collective one borne by all links in the industry value chain. The work environment is shared by all stakeholders, and only by coming together and working with ECOs can that shared environment be better preserved for a more sustainable construction industry.

Building a Strong Safety Culture: Insights from the Process Industry

Safety is a critical aspect of the construction industry, where decisions made every day and moment can deeply impact lives and projects. The process industry has a similar emphasis on safety, where operations involve complex processes, hazardous materials, and stringent safety regulations.

To gain insights into safety practices and lessons from the process industry that can be applied to the construction industry, SCAL spoke with Mr. Cheng Beng Kwang, Projects Director at PEC Ltd., a leading service provider for engineering, procurement, construction and maintenance services in the process industry. He was accompanied by Ms Samantha Hng, Head of Corporate HSSE (Health, Safety, Security & Environment), and Mr Mathew Puthanpurayil Thomas, HSSE Manager. Together, they shared their experiences, challenges, and approaches to safety within the process industry—valuable insights that the construction industry can benefit from.

To ensure the well-being of its employees and the successful execution of projects, PEC has implemented specific safety management systems and protocols. Planning for safety begins at the tendering stage of a project, before operations even begin.

Safety requirements are carefully examined, and a comprehensive HSSE action plan that outlines the necessary safety measures and procedures is developed. This plan includes the scope of work, potential risks to be aware of, safe work procedures, training requirements, and metrics for evaluating the effectiveness of the plan. The plan is reviewed monthly and semi-annually throughout the duration of the project, and upon its completion, a postmortem report is made to identify more points of improvement moving forward. Documentation and review are unavoidable element of good safety practice. Every HSSE action plan is contextualised to the specific site, taking into consideration factors such as manpower strength, client needs, and site-specific requirements.

Given that safety is all about controlling and mitigating risk, one key challenge in the process industry is navigating the factors and variables outside of control. “Enabling safety is a collaborative effort,” said Mr Cheng, “In every operation, we’re working in different environments, with different clients and plant owners. To mitigate the risk, we pool our expertise, adhere to the established procedures, and remain alert at all times.”

Besides learning from incidents and near-misses, PEC emphasises the importance of recognising and appreciating efforts to maintain a safe work environment. The HSSE action

plan of every project includes promotional programs and campaigns designed to raise awareness, encourage best practices, and incentivise safe behaviour. Exemplary safe practices in the project sites are acknowledged through internal awards and prizes presented to employees and subcontractors for their contributions to safety.

“Our workers are the ones doing the work on the front lines and being exposed to these risks, which is why their suggestions to improve the processes are important to us.”

Ms Samantha Hng
Head of Corporate HSSE (Health,
Safety, Security & Environment)
PEC Ltd.

With a workforce operating throughout Asia and the Middle East, PEC has developed a culture of knowledge-sharing and proactive involvement at every level. The corporate HSSE committee, which comprises directors and site in-charges, actively participates in decision-making and brainstorming sessions to ensure the practicality and effectiveness of safety initiatives. PEC recognises the importance of involving onsite workers’ input in the development of safety initiatives, and actively encourages them to contribute ideas for creating a safer work environment. “Our workers are the ones doing the work on the front lines and being exposed to these risks, which is why their suggestions to improve the processes

are important to us,” Ms Hng said. “Their feedback doesn’t just help to improve safety and reduce risk, it could also improve productivity, which is why we encourage every member of the team to highlight and suggest improvements for our processes, no matter how small the suggestion may be.” At the same time, the management also supports and empowers workers to make their own judgement calls and

PEC Gppd Practice - Gas Cylinder Trolley



Chain to secure cylinder



3 Wheels for stable movement



Handles to manoeuvre the gas cylinder trolley



Cylinder placeholder to prevent movement

protect themselves from risky or unsafe situations at their sites.

While the leaders are responsible for establishing directives and procedures, their involvement extends beyond the boardroom and office. PEC's directors and leaders are known to regularly show up at project sites to walk the ground and interact with workers. "The best way to prevent incidents from happening is to report something immediately when we see it out in the field," said Mr Cheng, emphasising critical junctures like project turnarounds and shutdowns where gases, chemical residue, and hazardous matter could be out in the open. He is a strong advocate of digitalisation and hence a supporter of PEC's commitment to developing and adopting new technology to digitalise the workload and reduce the paperwork involved. "As leaders and safety practitioners, paperwork is important, but it's also important for us to walk around our sites and check for hazards," he added.

While the nature of work, duration of projects, work environment, and other elements may differ for the construction industry and process industry, both sectors share a similar emphasis on safety as a fundamental aspect of their operations. The construction industry and the process industry both recognise the importance of creating a

safe work environment to protect workers, prevent accidents, and minimise risks. Safety protocols, training programs, and safety management systems are implemented in both sectors to ensure compliance with regulations and promote a safety culture. However, one novel insight from PEC is how they view safety as an ongoing process, instead of a one-time checklist or a mere regulatory obligation.

Their safety culture inspires every employee at every level to buy in and support one another. Leaders are actively involved and accessible; when workers feel heard and empowered they are motivated to do good work. Technology is used to continually improve and innovate PEC's training programmes, incident reporting frameworks, and communication systems. Last but not least, besides openly sharing knowledge within their own company, PEC also sees value in sharing knowledge with the entire industry. By recognising that everyone has a part to play in upholding safety, the construction industry can draw valuable lessons from PEC's approach, fostering a culture of collective responsibility and commitment to safety. This industry-wide mindset will not only safeguard the well-being of workers, but also contribute to the overall success of projects, ensuring a safer and more sustainable future for all involved.

Upcoming Events, Webinars & Workshops

SCAL



SCAL Annual Dinner 2023

24 October 2023 | Marina Bay Sands

Registration coming soon. Please refer to our website for the latest updates.



SCAL Cricket Tournament

Registration coming soon. Please refer to our website for the latest updates.

SCAL ACADEMY

CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL COURSES



Remedies for Non-Payment

21 Aug 2023 / 27 Oct 2023 | 10.00am | Online

Understand the importance of cash flow in Construction Projects. Explore remedies for non-payment, including Security of Payment Act Adjudication, Arbitration, and Litigation. Gain insights from local case law and practical considerations to navigate payment disputes effectively and observe how dispute resolution methods interact in practice.



Dispute Avoidance & Best Practices in Live Construction Projects

23 Aug 2023 | 2.00pm | Online

CPAS: 3 Units

Learn how to implement best practices to keep projects on track and minimize disputes, ensuring successful project completion within budget and on time. practical skills to perform the standard payroll processes in the best interest of the employer and employees. workplace covering topics such as disputants' psychology, negotiation, communication skills, and the process of conflicts and disputes resolution.



Contracting Construction Project

14 – 15 Sept 2023 | 9.00am | Online

PDU: 14 Units | CET: 14 Hours

This course equips participants with the knowledge to handle contracts, collaborate effectively, and minimize disputes for project success.



Understanding the Security of Payment (SOP) Act

9 Oct 2023 | 9.00am | Online

PDU: 7 Units | CET: 7 Hours | CPAS: 7 Units

This one-day training course provides a comprehensive understanding of the crucial Security of Payment Act (SOP Act) in construction. Learn about payment claims, schedules, adjudication, and dispute resolution. Gain essential tools to prepare or respond to adjudication documents and stay updated on the latest amendments.



SAFETY DEVELOPMENT UNIT (SDU) & ECO(SCS) LICENSE RENEWAL ACCREDITED COURSES



Construction Safety Webinar "Traffic Management & Managing Heat Stress"

31 Jul 2023 | 1.00pm | Online

SDU: 4 Units

Join us in this half-day webinar to gain insights, strategies, and best practices to enhance productivity and worker safety; covering traffic management regulations, technology for efficiency and safety, IT and AI capabilities, worker well-being, and heat stress management



Apply Psychological Methods in Managing Unsafe Practices

2 August 2023 / 24 October 2023 | 9.00am | Online

SDU: 7 Units | PDU: 7 Units | CET: 7 hours

Address workplace safety concerns surrounding unfair dismissal and the blame placed on workers for accidents. Learn psychological methods to manage unsafe practices, understand the need to dismiss unsafe workers, and protect innocent workers from unjust accusations.



Handling of Construction Conflicts and Disputes at the Workplaces

28 Aug 2023 | 9.00am | Physical

SDU: 8 Units | CPAS: 8 Units | ECO (SCS) Licence renewal course

The workshop focuses on providing key site personnel with the necessary knowledge and skills to handle construction conflicts and disputes at the workplace.



Human Factors in Accident Investigation

28 Aug 2023 | 10.00am | Online

SDU: 6 Units

Join this course to delve into the causes of staff-related accidents and effective accident prevention strategies.



Engineering Safety Concepts in Construction

12 September 2023 | 1.00pm | Online

SDU: 2 Units | PDU: 4 Units | CET: 4 hours | CPAS: 4 Units | ECO(SCS) Licence Renewal Course

With the evolving complexity of high-rise buildings, addressing engineering safety issues is crucial to mitigate human and economic losses. Technology adoption during design and construction stages is proven effective in reducing construction risks, making it increasingly essential for contractors to manage and control these risks.

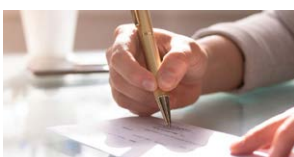


Understanding Workplace Safety & Health through Data

11 October 2023 | 9.00am | Physical

SDU: 7 Units

Learn where to find and analyze relevant data, interpret accident rates, and create impactful visualizations for informed decision-making on workplace safety.



2-Day Applied Safety Psychology in Behavioral Safety Management

25 - 26 October 2023 | 10.00am | Online

SDU: 12 Units

Recommended for safety practitioners, directors, professionals, and individuals with health and safety responsibilities seeking a practical approach to implementing psychology in safety management.



Welcome New Members (Mar 2023 to Jun 2023)

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ALFA TECH VESTASIA PTE LTD
CONSISTENCY ENGINEERING PTE LTD
CORNWALL TECHNOLOGIES PTE LTD
DMJC CONSTRUCTION&ENGINEERING(S) PTE LTD
OSG CONTAINERS AND MODULAR PTE LTD
UES HOLDINGS PTE LTD
FONG YUE DEVELOPMENT PTE LTD
STAR ENGINEERING PTE LTD
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JCP LAW LLC
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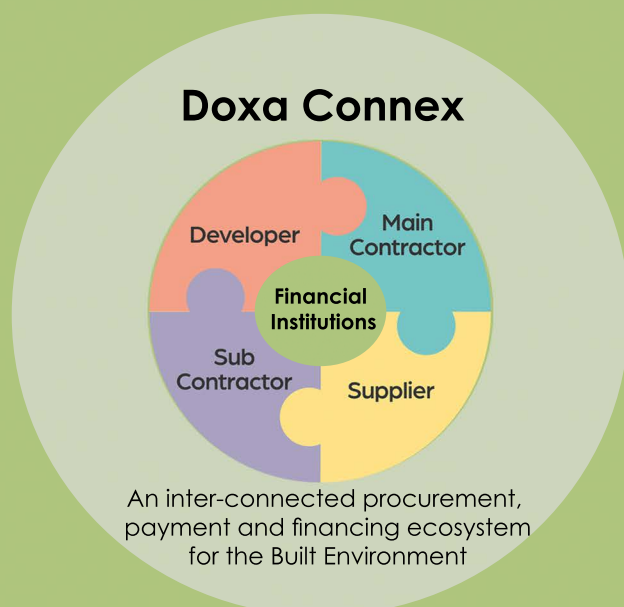
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