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THE CONTRACTOR

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COVER STORY

Keeping workplace safety a priority
post COVID-19

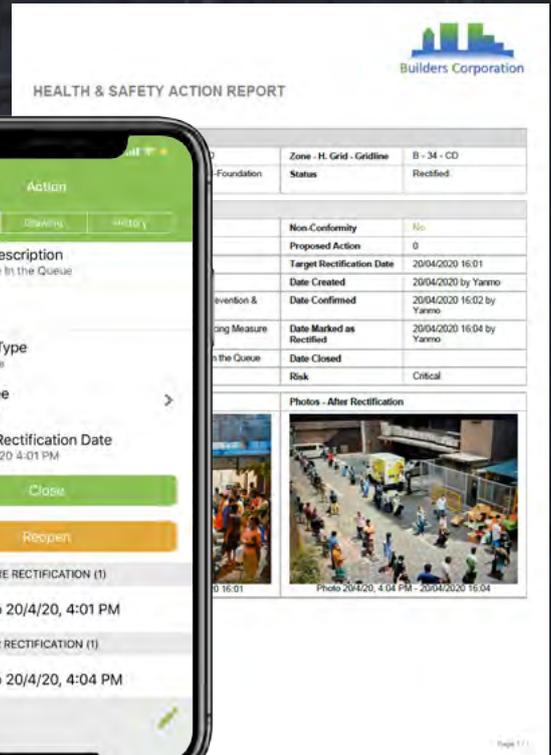
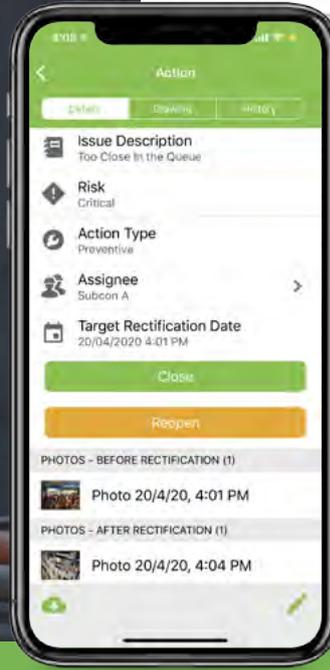
Embarking on the path to recovery

SCAL administering the Green and
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- BuildSG - BuildSG-COVIDSafe Platform (CSP)

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PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE



Ng Yek Meng
President
The Singapore Contractors
Association Ltd

“To-date, our \$1 million SCAL COVID-19 Fund has provided relief to 250 small and medium-sized member companies experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic.”

After a year stricken by COVID-19, 2021 began with mixed sentiments for the construction industry.

On one hand, this year's total construction demand is projected to recover to between S\$23 billion and S\$28 billion. This is an increase from the \$21.3 billion worth of projects estimated to have been awarded last year, before the pandemic severely impacted construction demand.

On the other, the labour crunch looks to continue to be a major roadblock for many construction firms seeking to resume business, as migrant workers continue to be stuck overseas due to border restrictions.

During the last quarter of 2020, SCAL continued to stand committed to help the construction industry weather the turbulence. To-date, our \$1 million SCAL COVID-19 Fund has provided relief to 250 small and medium-sized member companies experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. We also continued to move learning online for our members, with a rich line-up of webinars conducted by the SCAL Academy. Our support also covered issuing of the BluePass contact tracing devices and Livinguard masks to the construction sector as well as vaccination exercises and improving mental well-being of foreign workers.

As we help construction companies navigate these difficult times, SCAL did not lose sight of our longer term vision of promoting sustainable construction. In partnership with the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), we organised a webinar to promote sustainability within the industry. SCAL also took over the Green and Gracious Builder Scheme (GGBS) from the Building and Construction Authority

(BCA), with the objective of playing a bigger role in raising the environmental consciousness and professionalism of builders.

Moving ahead, SCAL will focus on strengthening our construction firms' ability to resume, recover and rejuvenate work in a safe and healthy manner. We will continue to work closely with the government to alleviate the labour crunch to the best of our abilities.

One of our deepest concerns is workplace safety – there have been 11 workplace fatalities in the first few months of this year, compared to 30 deaths for the whole of 2020. We urge all construction firms to review existing safety provisions and implement immediate measures to uphold and develop new safety practices.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Ms Louise Chua to SCAL. She assumed the role of Executive Director on 1 March. With her wealth of experience in both the built environment industry and forging long-term partnerships with key stakeholders of the value chain, Ms Chua will play a key role in driving SCAL towards our vision. To Mr Lam Kong Hong, our outgoing ED, I sincerely thank you for all your valuable contributions during your years of esteemed service.

As we continue to ride out the COVID-19 crisis, SCAL remains committed to serving our members and preparing to face every challenge ahead so as to move our members, industry and nation towards a better future.

KEEPING WORKPLACE SAFETY A PRIORITY POST COVID-19

Singapore's construction industry has faced one of the biggest challenges in its history since COVID-19 struck last year. This seems to have an impact on workplace fatalities, as shown by the sharp increase in accidents over the past few months, including:

- Ten workplace deaths from June to October 2020 including three that happened in the construction sector
- Two workplace fatalities at construction sites within two days in November 2020
- Seven workplace deaths in February 2021 alone including those that took place at construction sites
- Eleven fatalities in February 2021 across all sectors including three from construction

In all, the number of fatal injuries for 2020 is 30 compared to 39 in 2019 but construction remained the top contributor – at nine fatal injuries.

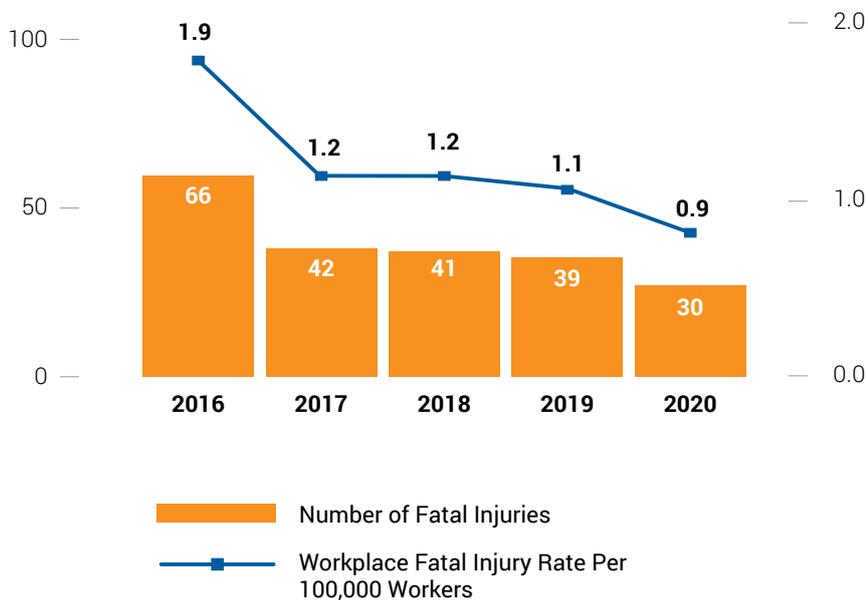


Figure 1: No. of fatal injuries from January to December 2020 (Source: Singapore WSH Report 2020 by the Ministry of Manpower)

Calls to prioritise the safety of workers

The startling fatal injury figures from the last few months have raised questions about whether the focus on safe management measures is compromising workplace safety and if companies are too focused on regaining pace to avoid further loss of time.

The situation has prompted the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council and the Singapore Contractors Association Ltd (SCAL) to call firms to make workplace safety a priority amid COVID-19 over the past few months. Their main pleas include:

- Urging firms not to forget the fundamentals of workplace safety as companies prepared to resume operations when Singapore moved towards Phase 3 of re-opening in October 2020
- Calls to all construction firms to take a step back, reassess their workplace and safety procedures and conduct thorough Safety Time-Out exercises at worksites

Most recently, SCAL also called for Safety Time-Out for Working at Height (WAH) Safety and use of machinery respectively on 8 and 23 February. In total, 126 projects from 41 companies participated in the Time-Out exercise. Members were urged to include reviewing of work activities, Fall Prevention Plan (FPP), Permit-to-work (PTW), training, edge protection and fall protection in their exercise; and were given guidance through a various checklists developed by WSH Council.



Recommended measures

Workplace safety is everyone's responsibility. SCAL urges all its member companies to step up safety in the following ways:

- Conducting Safety Time-outs to push the pause button and review safety measures and protocols where necessary
- Ensuring that Safety Time-outs are not just one-off exercises
- Training of workplace safety and health representative to ensure that the implementation of safe management measures at the workplace to address the risk of COVID-19 infection does not compromise on workplace safety
- Adopting ways to ease workers who have not returned to their worksites for months to ease gradually back into their jobs
- Putting in place a structured re-orientation programme for workers who are returning to the workplace after a prolonged period
- Conducting refresher WSH courses so that safety remains at the top of everyone's minds

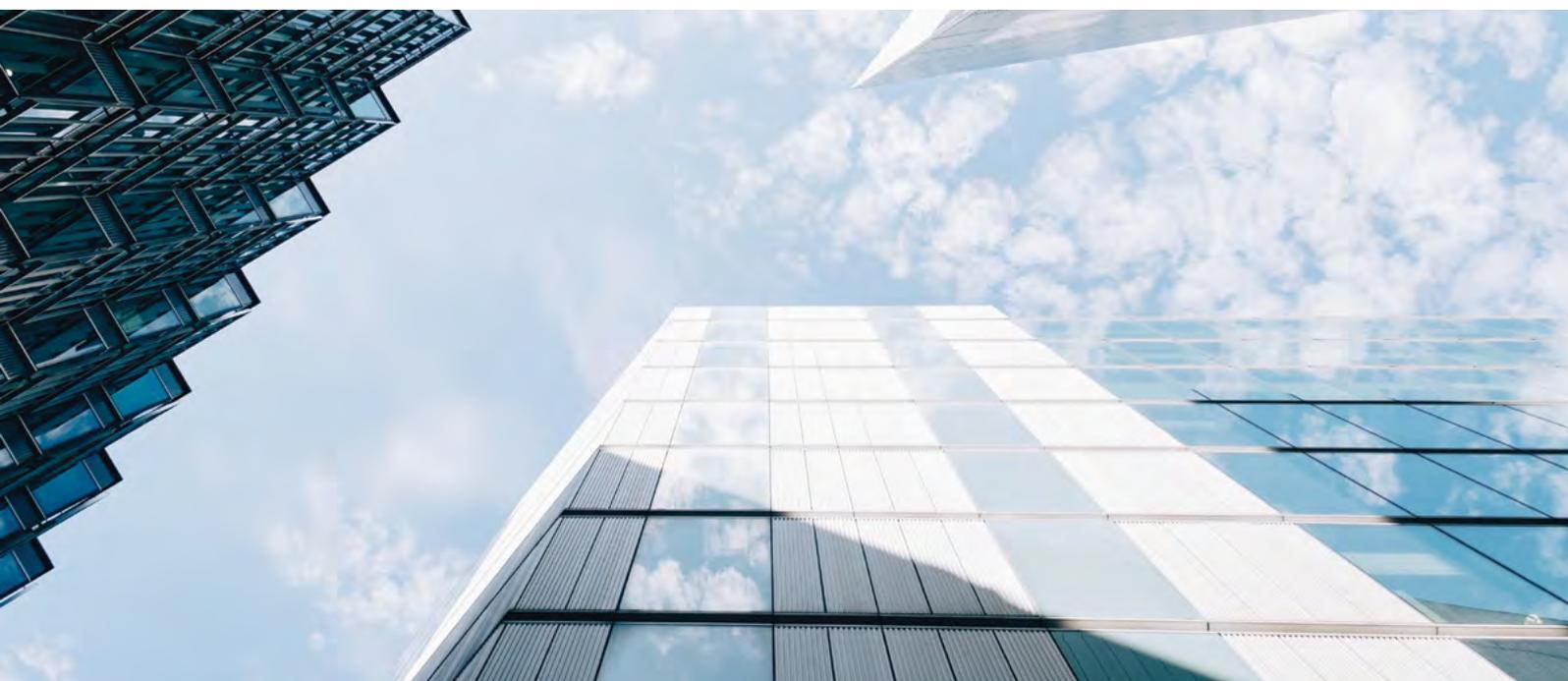
Keeping an eye on WSH 2028 targets

The WSH 2028 Committee's target is to reduce workplace fatal injury rate from a three-year average of 1.4 per 100,000 workers to below one for every 100,000 workers within 10 years from 2019, according to MOM. The committee has also laid down several goals including reducing major injury rate by 30 per cent, from the three-year average of 17.2 per 100,000 workers to below 12 by 2028.

The recent spate of accidents has reminded the industry not to lose sight of the WSH 2028 targets despite the extraordinary circumstances brought about by the coronavirus.

Singapore was already making notable progress in WSH outcomes before COVID-19 hit the industry. In 2019, it was reported that the workplace fatal injury rate declined by more than 75% over the preceding 14 years: from 4.9 per 100,000 workers in 2004 to 1.2 per 100,000 workers in 2018 – the lowest level recorded in history.

Such progress is a testament to the fact that it is possible for Singapore to achieve the WSH 2028 targets, if all stakeholders commit to and take an active role to prevent injuries and ill-health at our workplaces.



The way forward

Globally, many countries have already achieved successes in enhancing WSH outcomes by employing varied strategies.

For example, awareness of WSH in Australian companies has grown after their WSH Act started to require directors to exercise due diligence to ensure their company meets WSH obligations. In the United Kingdom, the introduction of the Management Standards by its Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has helped employers to determine actions that can be taken to mitigate risks due to work-related stress.

Moving into the future, construction firms in Singapore should invest in changes on these fronts, encompassed in the WSH 2028 Committee's strategic recommendations:

- **Strengthen WSH ownership** by making WSH more salient in business decisions; aligning company directors and top management to WSH ownership; and strengthening WSH ownership for workers
- **Enhance focus on workplace health** by expanding Occupational Disease prevention efforts and building capabilities to promote workplace health
- **Promoting technology-enabled WSH** by setting up smart, connected workplaces and using technology to improve planning, design, operations and maintenance processes. Firms can leverage on the immense potential in emerging technologies such as Internet of Things, wearable devices, wireless surveillance equipment, biometric technology, Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA) and cloud platforms to enhance WSH outcomes.



Figure 2: Key strategies identified in WSH 2028 (Source of info: WSH 2028 Booklet by Ministry of Manpower)

Committed to our mission of fostering a safe and productive work environment, SCAL will continue to support our members to overcome this challenging period and embrace opportunities to create safer and healthier workplaces for all our workers.

Enhancing WSH performance with SCAL

SCAL's WSH Sub-committee and workgroups organises regular activities including WSH campaign and programmes to engage and remind members on the importance of WSH for all stakeholders.

Participate in our Safety-Time-Out called throughout the year:-

Safety-Time-Out

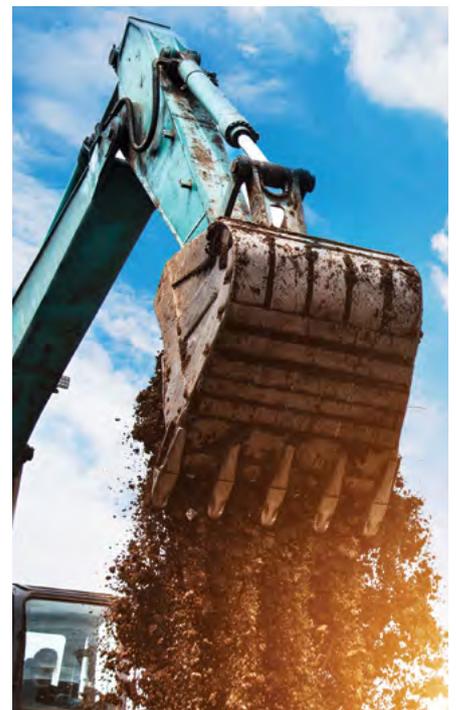
- **Work at Height** - January, August
- **Traffic Management** - April
- **Crane Safety** - November
- **Mozzie Wipe-out** - May

Guidebooks for Construction

The Vector Control Workgroup has developed and published a "Mozzie Wipe-Out Guidebook" in 2019. This guidebook shares concepts and ideas to help eliminate mosquito breeding through prevention and dry construction at site.

The Traffic Management Workgroup is completing the "Construction Site Traffic Management Guide" and targeting to publish by the second quarter of 2021.

SCAL urges all members to closely follow and participate in our year-long WSH initiatives.





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MAIN OFFICE/WORKSHOP :

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SCAL ACADEMY

- 2020 HIGHLIGHTS AND 2021 PLANS



Safe Management Measures Implementation

With health and safety of visitors as our priority, SCAL Academy implemented the following safe management measures (SMM) in 2020:

- Display of multi-language posters with infographics on safe distancing rules and safety practices at our premises
- Briefing by trainers on 'dos and don'ts' and screening of videos on safe distancing measures for course participants
- Availability of hand sanitizers at strategic points
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of training rooms and communal spaces

Looking forward to 2021

To further help our members in their skills competency, SCAL Academy has lined up new courses for 2021 including:

- e CET for Multi-Skilling (Safety) Pathway: Workplace Safety & Health related trades
- CONQUAS training for Builders
- Good Industry Practices workshop

Please visit www.scal-academy.com.sg or write to enquiry@scal-academy.com.sg for more information.

Year 2020 Event Highlights

Following the commencement of circuit breaker (CB) phase in Singapore on 7 April 2020, SCAL Academy converted our seminars online so that learning could continue.

- **8 Apr.** Conversion of the following seminars into webinars, with guidance provided to attend the online training:
 - Foreign Workers Security Bond & Medical Insurance (42 participants)
 - The Practical Approach of Settling and Recovering Payment and Variation Claims through Arbitration and Litigation (9 participants)
- **22 Apr.** E-learning on Applying bizSAFE / CultureSAFE to battle COVID-19 (14 participants)
- **24 Apr.** Free webinar for SCAL members on COVID-19 Temporary Measures Act and its implications for construction and supply contracts (201 participants)
- **28 Apr.** Conversion of Construction Safety Course for Project Managers course to online learning (19 participants)
- **8 May.** Webinar on COVID-19 and Planning Your Business Continuity Plans for the Construction Industry jointly organised with BCP Asia (46 participants)
- **19 - 20 May.** Free Webinar for SCAL members on COVID-19 Update for the Construction Industry - Preparations for back to work post-Circuit Breaker (19 May session: 863 participants and 20 May session: 548 participants)
- **29 May.** First online Safe Management Officers Course for Construction, accredited by Building and Construction Authority (16,000 safe management officers trained)
- **7 Jul.** Free Webinar for SCAL members on 2nd COVID-19 Update for the Construction Industry - Preparations for back to work post-Circuit Breaker (510 participants)
- **23 - 24 Jul.** E-learning on Developing Safe Management Measures (SMM) to Combat COVID-19 (10 participants)
- **6 Aug.** Webinar on Briefing on Work Injury Compensation Act (with latest changes) (322 participants)
- **26 Aug.** Free Webinar for SCAL members on Safe Management Measures, Safe Restart for the Construction Industry (521 participants)
- **11 Sept.** Free webinar for SCAL members on Mental Resilience for Migrant Workers, Employees and Employers – How to spot the warning signs and manage them (402 participants)
- **16 Oct.** Webinar on Navigating COVID-19's Impact on the Construction Industry (112 participants)
- **27 Oct.** Webinar on Navigating the PSSCOC and Discussing Recent Amendments (105 participants)
- **25 Nov.** Free Webinar for SCAL members on Innovation and Technology for the Construction Industry (162 participants)
- **3 Dec.** Psychological First Aid – Strong Together in Construction online training (42 participants over two sessions)

In addition, with the approval of accreditation bodies including Skillsfuture, Ministry of Manpower and SP Group, SCAL academy also progressively moved other training courses online including:

- Registered Earthwork Supervisor Course
- Design for Safety for Professionals Course
- Develop a Risk Management Implementation Plan

To further prepare SCAL members' ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the academy also organised many other webinars covering a comprehensive range of topics from obligations of employers, employees and contractors to the Employment ACT and legal changes arising from the crisis.

Despite the challenging situation, SCAL Academy has rolled out new and also enhanced existing courses in 2020 including:

- Workshop to Enhance the Safety of Crane Operation
- WSQ Apply Workplace Safety and Health in Construction Sites, which is enhanced with experiential learning

SC2 – 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

AND 2021 PLANS

SC2 Pte Ltd

In 2020, SC2 continued to focus on **safeguarding people, property and the environment** by offering professional safety & health auditing services. With our pool of experienced professional auditors, we have enabled our clients to enhance workplace safety and health standards as well the bonds between management and employees.

Here are the highlights of our achievements in 2020:

- **Certification:** SC2 attained another milestone in our journey as a certification body as we gain accreditation for ISO 14001 certification by the Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC). Further extending our scope of certification to cover Engineering Services, we are now able to provide holistic certification services to all organisations in the BE sector.
- **Workplace Safety and Health Audits:** As one of the key Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Auditing Organisations and a SAC Accredited AO providing ConSASS Audits for construction projects, SC2 supported many clients in improving their worksite safety and providing their employees with a safe workplace. In 2020, by engaging our services holistically including our physical condition checks (PCC), many clients successfully achieved higher WSH standards and won prestigious WSH Awards presented by the WSH Council for their companies and/or projects.

- **Adopting digital and green practices:** mid the COVID-19 crisis, SC2 has seized the opportunity to enhance our processes and teams to enable working with our clients through digital channels. In support of the industry's shift towards digitalisation and greener practices, SC2 has also moved from printed reports and certificates to e-Reports and e-Certs since June 2020.

Looking ahead to 2021, as the built environment continues to ride out the COVID-19 pandemic, SC2 strives to:

- Intensify our efforts to secure the **safety, health and well-being** of our clients, their employees and families by maintaining high auditing standards and shaping a positive safety culture in our industry. Innovating our audit services to provide the additional values to better serve our clients.
- Enable even more organisations in the built environment sector to **benefit from our comprehensive set of accredited certification services** covering Quality (ISO 9001), Environmental (ISO 14001), Occupational Health and Safety (ISO 45001) Management System.
- Build on our complete suite of certification services to **contribute to the Green & Gracious Builder Scheme (GGBS) and SCAL Accredited Builder Scheme (SABS).**

SAC Certificate No: AO-2018-14

Scopes

- Construction worksite
- Metalworking industry
- Shipyard
- bizSAFE RM audit



TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU NEED AN E-PERMIT TO WORK (e-PTW) SYSTEM

It seems that everybody is talking about 'going digital' these days. The building and construction industry is no different. Why? Simply because digitisation removes site-based manual processes and replaces them with efficient, frictionless and fast processes using cloud and mobile technology. Without digitisation, the industry is less efficient and agile.

All site processes can be digitised, quickly and easily, with no need for paper forms. Information can be made available to an entire team in real time. However, not every builder, developer, facility operator or civil infrastructure project has the budget to digitise the full spectrum of their field management processes.

Digitising individual forms and processes is an easy way to start to build efficiencies into site operations and removing some of the cumbersome, manual processes involved with managing health, safety, environment or quality in the field.

In this article, we look at the top 10 reasons why you need a digital construction platform to digitise your PTWs. Why are e-PTWs essential? To answer that, let us take a step back and look at what is a PTW and its processes.

What is a Permit to Work (PTW)?

A permit to work (PTW) is designed to control hazards associated with high-risk activities. Often mandated by the statutory authorities, PTWs are also implemented as an additional measure to control high-risk tasks as part of a company's Safety Management Plan or System. PTWs are typically required for high-risk tasks such as:

- Hot works
- Excavation (to prevent hitting services)
- Lifting operations
- Working at height
- Working in confined spaces or tunnelling
- Blasting
- Demolition

Regulatory authorities or safety management systems usually provide complete lists of activities requiring PTWs.





What is the Permit to Work (PTW) process?

The PTW process includes information of high-risk activities: time of commencement and completion, assessment of the local risks involved, measures to manage risks and safety checks to be performed on completion.

The PTW process controls the commencement, operation and completion of high-risk works through a delegated approval and authorisation process. It is a formal authorisation system that starts with filling in a permit form by a work supervisor known as the PTW Applicant.

Once the PTW Applicant completes the form, the permit then goes through for approval to the delegated approvers known as the PTW Authority. Work can only commence after the permit form gets approved.

The PTW form usually needs to be displayed or held on-site at all times during the operation. After completing work and safety checks, the Permit Applicant will mark works as 'completed' and formally close the permit. Where 'follow on operations' are necessary, the PTW Authority may also close the permit releasing the follow-on works/operations of the site.

Now that we have reviewed what a PTW is and the PTW process, we can examine the top 10 reasons why you need an e-PTW.

5 key points to keep in mind when selecting an e-PTW system

Make sure you can:

1. Easily customise the PTW templates to meet your company and regulatory standards.
2. Customise your approval process and only assign authorised personnel to manage high-risk tasks.
3. Ensure that the digital system works in offline mode; PTW applicants can apply for permits offline and submit them online. Identify workers, view their qualifications and ensure workers have valid credentials/approvals to carry out high-risk tasks.
4. Identify equipment, view their certifications and ensure they can operate safely.

Article contributed by Novade

Top 10 reasons why you need an e-PTW

1. **Reduce administration costs** with easy data entry and reporting.
2. **Increase accountability** with rigorous approval process.
3. **Gain traceability** with digital signoffs and proper authentication technology.
4. **Reduce time taken** for the submission and approval process. No more time wasted chasing forms and approval before commencing work.
5. **Get real-time visibility** on PTW application on multiple sites. You do not need to be on-site to know what is going on.
6. **Facilitate coordination** on complex projects where multiple teams need to operate in the same areas.
7. **Enforce consistent standards** across multiple sites. Benchmark HSE performance across these sites with the data captured.
8. **Drive HSE performance** with analytics. Build insights on e.g. reasons for permit rejections. Link near misses or incidents to PTW applications.
9. **Keep records safely** in the cloud. Say goodbye to the thousands of manual forms.
10. **Easily access and retrieve** PTW records in case of an audit.



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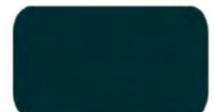
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SCAL ADMINISTERING THE GREEN AND GRACIOUS BUILDERS SCHEME FROM BCA

With effect from 1 April 2021, The Singapore Contractors Association (SCAL) will officially take over the Green and Gracious Builder Scheme (GGBS) from the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) with the objective of playing a bigger role in raising the environmental consciousness and professionalism of builders.

Introduced by BCA in February 2009, the GGBS is a certification scheme that provides a benchmark of a builder's corporate social responsibility to the environment and public during the construction of projects. It also sets standards for green and gracious practices that builders can implement to address environmental concerns and mitigate possible inconveniences to the public caused by construction works.

Such a scheme is playing an increasingly crucial role as more buildings are constructed closer to one another in land-scarce Singapore.

In 2014, BCA revamped the scheme and launched a modified GGBS for small and medium construction firms (SMCs) to encourage gracious behaviour towards residents in the vicinity of their work sites. BCA also aims to help SMCs overcome the challenges faced in smaller projects through the adoption of best gracious practices.

SCAL has been heavily involved in GGBS for many years including jointly organising regular workshops on the scheme with the BCA Academy. These workshops focused on providing builders with a platform to exchange ideas on best green and gracious practices and gained knowledge from visits to sites by award-winning builders.

Moving forward, SCAL aims to bring onboard more builders into the GGBS scheme to create an industry that is committed and responsible both socially and environmentally. Certified organisations gain many benefits that come along with it, including:

Green

- Adoption of innovative green practices
- Optimisation of cost-savings by energy conservation, waste transformation and full resource utilisation
- Alignment and compliance with Government policy in environmental protection

Gracious

- Adoption of friendlier and gracious construction practices
- Establishment of good rapport and relationship with neighbours and clients to reduce complaints and disruptions and achieve smooth progress for projects
- Safe, healthy and gracious working environment for staff
- Better manpower development, engagement and management

Eligibility

Both the GGBS and GGBS (SMC) certification schemes are highly recommended for all builders.

However, builders wishing to apply for or retain their BCA Contractors Registry System (CRS) registration in work heads CW01 and CW02 and financial grades from A1 to B2 are required to obtain GGBS certification.

Based on their score, GGBS firms will be rated in four tiers: Certified, Merit, Excellent and Star.

To find out more, please visit <http://bit.ly/SCALGGBS> or email accreditation@scal.com.sg.

We encourage more firms to step forward for this certification to minimise noise, danger and inconvenience to our communities during construction; and promote the widespread adoption of sustainable construction in Singapore.

From a business perspective, GGBS also enhances eligibility for tendering higher value projects for progressive builders.

BUILDING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Today's worsening climate crisis is an urgent issue that will affect everyone and for future generations to come. Fuelled by carbon emissions since the industrial revolution, the average temperatures around the world is increasing rapidly.

In the Construction Industry, the construction, operation and maintenance of buildings contributes to approximately 40% of global carbon emissions. Buildings have a huge impact on the environment and is also Singapore's second largest energy consumer, using almost a third of the nation's electricity.

This article features a summary extract of the recent SCAL-CIOB Webinar on Sustainability to explore some possibilities to make the industry, and perhaps the world more sustainable.

Planning for Low Carbon Construction – An international perspective of opportunities and challenges

With growing climate crisis, the decision to engage in large scale activities which may affect the ecological environment is being taken more seriously by governments and carved into societies' laws around the world. One such example is the Heathrow Decision in 2020 where the government's decision to allow the construction of a third runway in the U.K. was appealed at the Court of Appeal, on the grounds of climate commitment. Other infrastructure projects to build roads, railway lines and housing development in the U.K. are increasingly being challenged on the grounds of climate change.

To tackle climate change on a global scale, zero carbon development is essential to achieve this target. However, zero-carbon development is very complex and requires a combination of low carbon technologies and societal or behavioural change. In Cambridge, U.K., net zero carbon will be a key element of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan for the local construction industry. That means, the amount of carbon emissions associated with the construction, product, or building's operational energy has to be reduced through high levels of building fabric performance, energy efficiency and onsite renewable energy, with any remaining emissions offset by renewable energy to reach net zero emissions.



Emma Davies
Principal Sustainability Consultant, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, U.K.

Reducing Carbon in Construction - Lendlease

Lendlease is committed to sustainable development and practices. It is also a "1.5 °C aligned" company that has set ambitious targets to be net zero by 2025 (scope 1 & 2 emissions) and absolute zero by 2040 (including scope 3 emissions). The company is committed to achieving this through designing out inefficiency, fuel switching to low emission alternatives such as renewable diesel and increasing the electrification of construction site plant and equipment in conjunction with purchasing green power.

According to International Energy Agency (IEA), the construction and operation of buildings contributes to over 40% of total carbon emissions globally. During the construction of a building however, the vast majority of these emissions are not generated during the building process, but rather embodied within the materials themselves. As an example, Lendlease estimates Concrete, Steel and Facades comprise in excess of half a building's embodied carbon emissions .

For Lendlease, their sustainability practices targeted at construction materials are as follows:

AVOID	Reduce	Prevent
<p>Material efficiency – design for material efficiency to reduce the amount of materials used in construction</p> <p>Supportive Programme – design and contract for long duration projects to allow for lower embodied materials to be used such as fly ash, geopolymers concrete</p>	<p>Alternative Materials – design for and specify alternative materials that have less embodied emissions eg CLT, Geopolymer concrete</p> <p>Recycled Content – design for and specify recycled content materials</p> <p>Suppliers – specify and use the procurement process to set standards for suppliers and sub-contractors to meet low embodied emission targets</p> <p>Procurement and processes – design for more efficient construction process and procurement</p>	<p>DFMA – Design for Manufacture and Assembly to increase efficiency, reduce waste and control delivery timing</p> <p>Design for Zero Waste – design landlord systems to achieve zero waste in operation</p> <p>Return not Divert – design construction waste process to focus on Return of materials to the economy rather than just diversion from landfill. Ensure materials are reusable where possible.</p>

Lendlease is also committed to SteelZero, an initiative created by two non-governmental organisations, Climate Group and ResponsibleSteel. The SteelZero initiative aims to drive market demand for steel with 100% net zero carbon emissions by building a united group of leading organisations to support this transition.

For more information on SteelZero, go to www.theclimategroup.org/steelzero



Michael Long - Head of Sustainability, Asia, Lendlease



Sustainability for Contractors

In terms of implementing sustainability among contractors, it is important to find the right balance between profit, social inclusion and environmental protection. However, it is also common that contractors' over-price or under-price the projects because they don't correctly understand the sustainability specifications.

Sustainable construction is economical to the clients in the long run, but could be expensive to the contractors. Contractors may need additional resources to fulfill the sustainability project specifications.

Given the not-so-straightforward costs of sustainability measures, contractors need to

constantly be updated and educated in terms of the methods, practices and economics of environmental protection solutions during the construction process in order to be able understand these pricing better.

Here are some examples of environmentally friendly practices of a 615 villas, single-family detached housing units, construction project in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia:



Placing Concrete Barriers on the edge of Excavation area for sedimentation control & Soil erosion prevention.



Upon installation, seal all permanent ducts and vents to minimize contamination during construction. Remove any seals only after all phases of construction are completed.



Segregation of waste as per Construction Waste Management Plan



Hasitha Herath
Sustainability Specialist, Ted Jacob Engineering Group Dubai Branch, U.A.E

Embracing DFMA by Adopting Green and Productive Solutions with Mass Engineered Timber (MET)

Carbon in a timber structure is removed from the atmosphere and sequestered within. When substituting concrete or steel as an element of structure the net carbon footprint for a mass timber structure is calculated as negative. For example, 1m3 of KLH® solid timber panels will remove approximately 800 kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Design for Manufacturing and Assembly (DfMA) comprises a continuum of various technologies and methodologies that promote offsite fabrication from prefabricated components to fully integrated assemblies across various disciplines in a construction project such as structural, architectural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing.

MET is essentially "designed" for manufacture and assembly given it's versatility and ability to

be cut into different shapes and sizes easily.

Even though Mass Timber is considerably more expensive than concrete. It can be more productive than concrete when used in the right way, such as in DfMA projects. It is also aesthetically more pleasing and a much more sustainable material with a lower carbon footprint.

MET is mostly used in medium to lightweight infrastructures such as light industrial buildings, institutional buildings, roofs and canopies, but when MET is used in a hybrid approach with steel and concrete then tall buildings solutions are possible.



Launchpad @ one-north - a 3-storey lightweight industrial building built largely using MET



A canopy at Changi Chapel – a artistic and natural design of a wooden canopy

Unsurprisingly, manufacturing of Mass Engineered Timber was largely unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic despite Europe's lockdown. This is primarily due to:

1. Vastly less manpower required on-site
2. Less connected trades, ie. bare finish can remove fit out labour
3. Faster install can make up for delays in other trades



Kevin J. Hill
Managing Director, Venturer Pte Ltd, Singapore



EMBARKING ON THE PATH TO RECOVERY

As we approach the one-year mark since Singapore entered the circuit breaker period imposed by the government on 7 April 2020, here's a reflection of how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the construction industry and a peek into the road ahead.

A challenging year for the construction industry

The construction industry took a slew of hard hits due to COVID-19 and the measures implemented to curb the pandemic. The main challenges include:

- Labour crunch due to tighter border controls that restricted the number of migrant workers entering Singapore
- Rise in costs of building materials due to international supply chain shortage
- Outbreak of the virus in dormitories leading to operators needing to incur additional costs to meet safe management measures such as finding alternative accommodations for migrant workers
- Project delays that amounted to prolongation costs

These challenges have notably impacted construction demand for the year. In September 2020, the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) revised its projected construction demand down from \$28 billion to \$33 billion in January 2020 to between \$18 billion and \$23 billion for the whole of 2020, attributing the plunge to the drop in demand and postponement of projects to 2021.

Government aid for the construction industry

The government has extended significant support to the construction industry throughout the period. Four Budgets with a total of almost \$100 billion in COVID-19 support measures were passed in 2020. For the construction sector, a \$1.36 billion fund, the Construction Support Package, was set up to co-fund some of the additional costs incurred by construction firms.

In addition, foreign worker levy waivers and rebates have also been given out. The foreign worker levy in April was waived and employers were given a rebate of \$750 for each work permit or S Pass holder and in May, the levy waiver and rebate were extended for up to two months. In June, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) announced that up to \$920 million has been set aside to further extend the levy rebates for firms in construction, marine shipyard and process sectors until 2021.

***“Four Budgets with a total of almost \$100 billion in COVID-19 support measures were passed in 2020.*”**



SCAL's COVID-19 initiatives

To support construction firms, SCAL had introduced various COVID-19 initiatives and worked with firms to provide support in the issuance of BluePass tokens, distribution of Livinguard face masks and assistance for vaccination exercises. We have also conducted webinars to keep members up to date on the required regulations when restarting work after the circuit breaker period and delivered care packages to frontline healthcare workers.

In May 2020, SCAL also set up a COVID-19 Fund to assist members with a token sum for those companies in need. (Refer to side story)

We have also proactively consolidated and provided feedback on matters of our members' utmost concerns to the relevant authorities. For example, in March 2021, SCAL provided feedback on the difficulties faced by our members in applying for entry approval for their foreign employees to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the Building and Construction Authority (BCA). After considering our feedback, MOM started to gradually increase the entry approval quota in the week of 22 March 2021 while monitoring and controlling the increase of quota to manage the risks of imported cases.

Looking ahead for 2021 and beyond

While work has restarted for a while, more support is still needed for the construction sector to recover. Even as the total construction demand is projected to recover to between \$23 billion and \$28 billion in 2021, it is uncertain if firms will be able to cope with this rise in demand, given pertinent issues that continue to affect the industry. Manpower shortages, cash-flow issues, rising material and manpower costs and supply chain disruptions are still big concerns.

SCAL is here to help our members navigate the challenges ahead. Our support will continue into 2021 in these areas:

- Providing feedback to relevant authorities on issues such as review of Safe Management Measures and advocating for support in areas such as extension of COVID-safe project-based support to more firms
- Making available services such as the SCAL COVID-19 Fund and simplified claims process for prolongation cost claims
- Keeping members updated through webinars to provide important updates and share best practices

We will continue to work with government agencies and all stakeholders as the situation evolves to put our member companies and all construction firms on the best path to recovery.

Follow SCAL on social media for updates on COVID-19:



http://bit.ly/SCAL_facebook



http://bit.ly/SCAL_LinkedIn

SCAL COVID-19 FUND: TIMELY RELIEF FOR SCAL MEMBERS

The SCAL COVID-19 fund was set up in May 2020 to help small and medium enterprise (SME) member companies affected by the pandemic. A total of \$1 million had been raised for the fund through contributions from SCAL members, BCA and Enterprise Singapore's SG Together Enhancing Enterprise Resistance (STEER) programme.

To date, 260 companies have applied and SCAL has disbursed \$452,400 to 250 companies from the fund. There are still adequate funds for SCAL to help more than 200 companies. Four recipients of the COVID-19 fund share their thoughts on how the funding has helped them:

"We are operating in an extremely challenging environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic so it is heartwarming to see that SCAL has extended help to its members. The COVID-19 fund initiative was definitely a confidence booster for the company."

- Mr Wayne Huang, Owner, HJF CONSTRUCTION PTE LTD

"Thank you SCAL for the provision of the SCAL COVID-19 Fund. The extra cash has assisted us in providing the essential support for our foreign employees placed under Stay-Home Notice (SHN). Not only could we continue remuneration for our workers who are not able to report to work, we have also been providing additional aid to them including a care package with items such as a data SIM card to ensure that their SHN is more bearable."

- Joseph Chiu, Director, Scan-Bilt Pte Ltd

"The COVID-19 fund has helped our company tide over the pandemic and it gave us a firm footing when the industry was hit hard by the pandemic and measures to stem it. The funds came in at the right time to help us weather the storm. SCAL has helped its members with such initiatives and we appreciate it."

- KJ Wong, Director, Caxton Engineering

"During the circuit breaker period, construction companies faced many challenges including the rising COVID-19 cases among migrant workers residing in dormitories. With the SCAL COVID-19 fund, we prepared health packs for our employees and migrant workers to increase awareness on the importance of personal hygiene. Through this project, we hope our employees will do their part to protect themselves and stop the spread of COVID-19."

- Ivy Tjin, HR Manager, Feng Ming Construction Pte Ltd

SCAL members are still able to submit their applications for the SCAL COVID-19 Fund as there are sufficient funds available to help more members. For more information, please call +65 6278 9577 or email enquiry@scal.com.sg.



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REAL-TIME PROGRESS TRACKING BY USING OPEN SOURCE TOOLS

Contractors have been searching for ways to get more value from the BIM models they produce. Resources and time are put into developing detailed BIM models for both tender and project delivery, and using models for just design coordination, clash detection and visualization are no longer enough.

Maintaining large BIM Resources is not sustainable for many, so companies are challenged to find ways to reduce their reliance on manpower to undertake certain BIM tasks or processes in an automated manner. Readymade Software solutions can be expensive, and applications and plugins may have restrictions or lack the customization that contractors require.

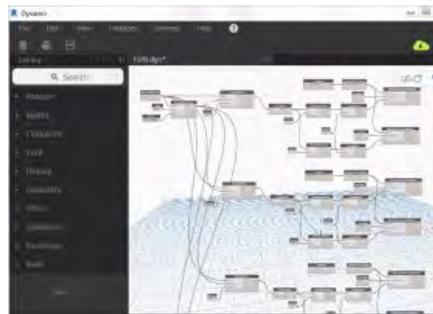
Sometimes it is an unexpected and inexpensive solution that can derive great value and benefits to a project without increasing the manpower required of investing in new software's to enable this delivery.

We have integrated Revit with Dynamo & Google sheets to create a workflow that can automatically update the Revit model in Realtime to show progress of precast installation components in the 3D model.

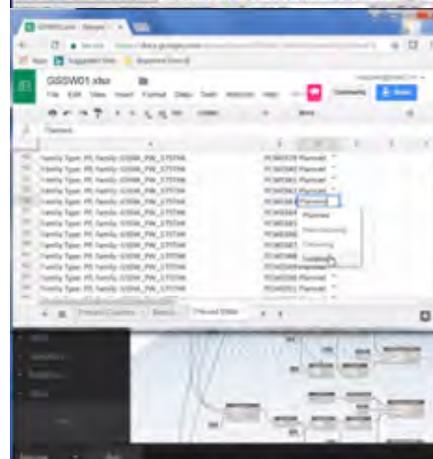
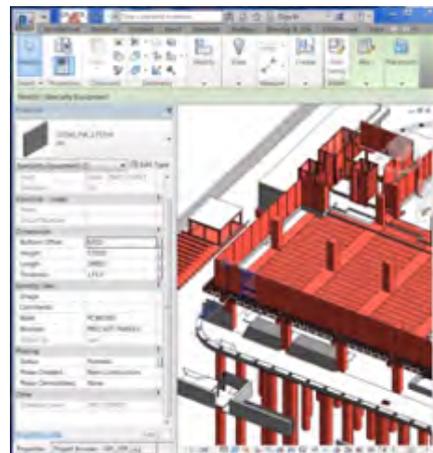
This can be used for progress claim support and visualization for the operation team on installed, delivered and fabrication status just by reviewing the BIM model.

This technique also applies to virtually all other parameters of the BIM model as well.

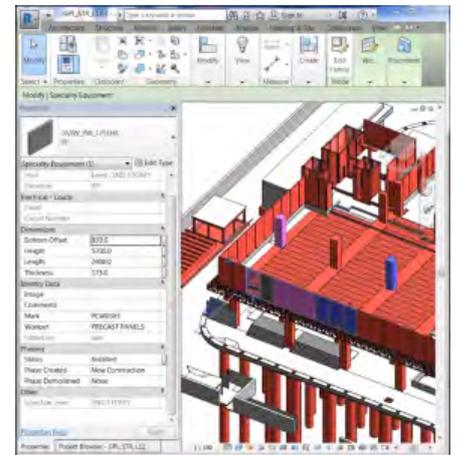
The updating is automated, done through visual programming in Dynamo and activated by the data input through google sheets. This technique also applies to other parameters of the BIM model.



1) Use of Dynamo to link Revit to Google Sheets



2) Updates done remotely using Google Sheets



3) Details of BIM model in Revit updated automatically

For more information and downloads, visit <https://dynamobim.org/download/>

“We have integrated Revit with Dynamo & Google sheets to create a workflow that can automatically update the Revit model in Realtime to show progress of precast installation components in the 3D model.”

27 STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM SCAL-LU BAN BURSARY AWARDS 2020

As part of its corporate social responsibility efforts, SCAL has presented the SCAL-Lu Ban Bursary Awards to needy students of the employees of its member companies since 2011.

For 2020, out of 35 applications, a total of 27 eligible students were presented with more than \$15,000 worth of bursary awards. These include 10 primary school students, 13 secondary school students

and four junior college students who received \$300, \$500 and \$1,000 respectively. Amongst these recipients, 12 also accepted additional cash incentives for achieving outstanding academic results.

Inspired by Lu Ban, a Chinese carpenter known as the "Founder of Builders", the bursary awards aim to encourage the spirit of learning amongst students from lower-income families. In a year when families had to cope with additional financial strain arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the bursaries served to encourage students to do well academically.

This philanthropic effort has been made possible because of the work of the SCAL Lu Ban Committee led by its chairman and SCAL Council Member, Mr. Quek Hong Peng.

"The spirit of giving back to the community and supporting our members has always been an integral part of SCAL's DNA. I would like to thank all SCAL members for supporting us to make a positive impact on our community. SCAL strives to perpetuate the spirit of community development by continuing to disburse bursary awards to disadvantaged families," said Mr. Quek.

For more information on the bursary, go to www.scal.com.sg/luban.



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LEARNING AND WEBINARS

FOR APRIL - JUNE 2021

[WEBINAR] ADDRESSING AND MANAGING HR ISSUES DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

Date: 7 April 2021, Wednesday

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

[WEBINAR] UNDERSTANDING REDAS DESIGN AND BUILD CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

Date: 15 April 2021, Thursday

Time: 9.00am – 5.30pm

[WEBINAR] OVERVIEW OF THE PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT

Date: 16 April 2021, Friday

Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm

The Personal Data Protection Act (“PDPA”) was recently amended to strengthen organisational accountability and consumer protection, while providing organisations with greater confidence to utilise personal data for innovation. The amended PDPA will be taking effect in phases, with some provisions already coming into effect since 1 February 2021.

As the proposed changes are far reaching, these may require significant changes to how an organisation addresses data protection compliance. Join us for an introductory overview of the PDPA, and a discussion on how these recent amendments may impact your business initiatives.

[WEBINAR] UNDERSTANDING THE LAW OF DISMISSAL & EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

Date: 4 May 2021, Tuesday

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm

[WEBINAR] CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UNDER PUBLIC SECTOR STANDARD CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT (PSSCOC)

Date: 18 May 2021, Tuesday

Time: 9.00am – 5.30pm

[ONLINE-LEARNING] PROBLEM SOLVING WITH DATA ANALYTICS

Date: 20 - 21 May 2021

Time: 9.00am – 5.00pm

This workshop provides a broad but practical overview of the entire analytics value chain, with a focus on the harder and more technical aspects of the analytics value chain, specifically data management and analysis. The analytics value chain is built on data; data that is curated and extracted across disparate sources, cleaned, validated, processed, and stored in a manner that is ready for analytics.

MANDARIN SESSION - UNDERSTANDING WORK INJURY COMPENSATION ACT (WICA) AND CONTRACTOR’S ALL RISK (C.A.R)

Date: 3 June 2021, Thursday

Time: 1.00pm – 5.00pm

[WEBINAR] ESSENTIALS OF YOUR C.A.R POLICY – A BRIEF GUIDE TO BEST COVERAGE, 1.00PM - 5.00PM

Date: 7 June 2021, Monday

Time: 1.00pm – 5.00pm

[ONLINE-LEARNING] DESIGN FOR SAFETY (DFS) FOR PMES (PROFESSIONAL, MANAGER AND EXECUTIVE)

Date: 8 June 2021, Tuesday

Time: 9.00am – 5.30pm

[WEBINAR] EMPOWER YOURSELF FOR A TRUSTED & SECURED DIGITAL WORKPLACE

Date: 25 June 2021, Friday

Time: 2.00pm – 5.00pm



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