

MEDIA RELEASE

BCA TO RECOGNISE TWO NEW ACCREDITATION SCHEMES THAT WILL RAISE COMPETENCY OF MANAGING AGENTS AND FIRMS

12 February 2020, Singapore – To support the industry's initiatives in raising the standards of managing agents (MA), the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) will recognise two new accreditation schemes by the Association of Property and Facility Managers (APFM) and the Association of Strata Managers (ASM), who expect to roll them out in a year's time. The accreditation schemes aim to raise the professionalism and improve the competencies of MA firms and individual MAs, with a focus on those providing services to management corporations (MCSTs).

2 Under the schemes, individual MAs will need to undergo training conducted by either APFM or ASM, and the BCA Academy. In order for MA firms to receive accreditation, they need to ensure that a minimum number of their individual MAs are accredited. APFM and ASM will administer their respective accreditation schemes through an Accreditation Panel, an Examination Board and a Disciplinary Committee. More information on the accreditation schemes is in Annex A.

3 The one-year period will allow time for MA firms to send their eligible staff for training, so they can improve their knowledge and competencies, and meet the requirements for accreditation. The lists of accredited MA firms and accredited individual MAs will be published on APFM and ASM's websites respectively.

4 APFM and ASM will receive a certificate of recognition from BCA for their accreditation schemes, which will be subject to renewal every 3 years. So far, more than 10 MA firms have indicated their intention to support the accreditation schemes, including Colliers International Consultancy and Valuation (S) Pte Ltd, Jones Lang

Lasalle Property Consultants, Newman & Goh Property Consultants Pte Ltd and Suntec Real Estate Consultants Pte Ltd.

5 Commenting on the initiative, Mr Chin Chi Leong, Commissioner of Buildings, BCA, said, “BCA recognises the need for competent MAs and has worked with the industry associations to develop a competency framework to train and upskill MAs. We are encouraged that the industry is taking the initiative to raise standards and professionalism through a structured programme and accreditation. Individual MAs will learn about key legislative provisions, basic principles of facilities maintenance and services, as well as communications and administrative skills. These skill sets will help improve the running of the estate. We encourage MCSTs to help create the demand by engaging the services of accredited firms and individual MAs going forward. As a good practice, MCSTs should also spell out the key performance indicators clearly in the service agreement and review the performance of the MA firms and individual MAs on a regular basis.”

6 Dr Lim Lan Yuan, President of APFM said, “APFM started the Accredited Managing Agent (AMA) Scheme with the Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers (SISV) in 2003, and it has since been widely accepted and recognised by stakeholders in the property management industry. We are now enhancing the AMA Scheme in tandem with the objectives of the amended Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act, to further professionalise the provision of property and facility management services. Owners of properties, residents, management corporations, managing agents and all in the value chain of property and facility management will benefit from the enhanced Scheme through the structured approach to training, certification and accreditation of persons and firms providing property management services.”

7 Mr Chan Kok Hong, President of the Association of Strata Managers said, “Strata management is a specialised area of property management; it is more complex and demanding, particularly in mixed-use developments where there are likely to be differences in the vested interests of Subsidiary Proprietors. The accreditation scheme is a timely initiative in upskilling the workforce to meet increasing technological and service demands and in attracting new entrants to join the MA industry, which currently faces a shortage of trained strata management personnel. With the accreditation

scheme in place, MCSTs can make informed decisions in selecting MA firms and individual MAs who meet their needs while being assured of service quality. ASM is pleased to be a champion of this drive. We are pleased to collaborate with the Real Estate and Construction Academy as the training partner for the accreditation scheme."

New Strata Management Guides

8 In another effort to help homeowners and council members of strata developments better manage their estate, BCA has put together a series of Strata Management Guides to share best practices and practical information on dealing with common issues faced by MCSTs. BCA developed these guides taking into consideration feedback received through regular stakeholder engagement. The guides will provide stakeholders and laypersons with greater clarity on their roles and responsibilities with regard to matters concerning strata developments, within the provisions of the Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act. These guides, which will be shared through BCA's website, are meant to serve as an easy-to-understand and practical resource for MCSTs. The first five guides covering fundamental concepts and information on strata management, and common topics relating to general meetings, are now available for download at <https://www1.bca.gov.sg/regulatory-info/building-maintenance-and-strata-management/strata-management-guides>.

Issued by the Building and Construction Authority on 12 February 2020

Enclosed:

Annex A: Factsheet on the Recognition of Accreditation Schemes for Managing Agents

About BCA

The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) of Singapore champions the development of an excellent built environment for Singapore. BCA's mission is to shape a safe, high quality, sustainable and friendly built environment, as these are four key elements where BCA has significant influence. In doing so, it aims to differentiate Singapore's built environment from those of other cities and contribute to a better quality of life for everyone in Singapore. Hence, its vision is to have "a future-ready built environment for Singapore". Together with its education arm, the BCA Academy, BCA works closely with its industry partners to develop skills and expertise that help shape a future-ready built environment for Singapore. For more information, visit www.bca.gov.sg.

Annex A: Factsheet on the Recognition of Accreditation Schemes for Managing Agents

Background

Under the Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act (BMSMA), Management Corporations (MCSTs) can appoint managing agents (MAs) to help manage and maintain the development.

The Association of Property and Facility Managers (APFM) and the Association of Strata Managers (ASM) will roll out their respective accreditation schemes, with the aim of uplifting the professionalism and competency of MAs at the individual- and firm-levels.

Accreditation for Individual MAs

To qualify for accreditation, an individual must:

- Attend a training course conducted by either of the two Associations and the BCA Academy (BCAA);
- Pass the required examinations administered by the respective Association and BCAA;
- Have minimum two (2) years of relevant full-time working experience in strata or property management;
- Adhere to and maintain the code of conduct and ethics developed by the respective Association;
- Attend minimum eight (8) hours of continuing professional development (CPD) training a year.

Accreditation for Firms

To qualify for accreditation, a firm must have:

- Minimum 30% of its individual MAs accredited from Feb 2021; this minimum percentage will be increased to 50% from Feb 2022 and 70% from Feb 2023;
- Professional indemnity insurance with an appropriate coverage;

- At least one (1) key management staff with a relevant degree or diploma and with minimum five (5) years of direct working experience in strata or property management;
- At least one (1) key management staff and one (1) other staff pass interviews conducted by the respective Association's Accreditation Panel, testing their knowledge in strata management and their professional integrity and objectivity.

The accreditation scheme will be administered by the Associations through their respective Accreditation Panel, Examination Board and Disciplinary Committee whose Terms of Reference are as follows:

Accreditation Panel: To assess applications of MA firms and individual MAs based on the criteria for accreditation under the scheme and to ensure that the terms and conditions of the accreditation are complied with.

Examination Board: To ensure the overall integrity of the assessment process; approve the appointment of trainers; review and update the curriculum of the prescribed training modules for accreditation, and consider and approve exemptions from the prescribed training for equivalent courses. It will also ensure adequate and appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) courses offered for accredited individual MAs.

Disciplinary Committee: To ensure that all accredited members comply with the respective Association's code of conduct. The Disciplinary Committee will investigate complaints against an accredited MA firm or individual MA.

Recognition of Accreditation Schemes

BCA will issue a certificate of recognition for the Associations' accreditation schemes in 2021. Meanwhile, MA firms are encouraged to send their eligible staff for training so as to meet the accreditation requirements when the schemes are launched.

Training Modules for Accreditation of Individual Managing Agents

1. Legislation (for Managing Agents)
2. Practical Application of BMSMA
3. Building Services and Maintenance
4. Communication and Office Administration