

## **Straits Times Online forum**

July 14, 2009

### **Let's walk the talk on green buildings**

Grant W. Pereira

I REFER to last Thursday's report, 'Green building practices may be mandated'.

I applaud City Developments for building a carbon-neutral building in Tampines. The remarks by Minister for National Development Mah Boh Tan, encouraging those in the construction industry to think green, are very positive.

Singapore has abundant sunlight all year round and it makes sense to tap this natural resource. The Government should insist that all new buildings are at least 10 per cent powered by solar energy. This should be a standard clause in all government building and renovation contracts.

This would show the Government walks the talk and not just talks the talk.

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## **Straits Times**

July 24, 2009, page A22

### **Govt buildings leading green drive**

Tan Tian Chong  
Director, Technology Development Division  
Building and Construction Authority

MR GRANT W. Pereira's Forum Online letter, 'Let's walk the talk on green buildings' (July 14), urged the Government to walk the talk by suggesting that 'all new government buildings should be at least 10 per cent powered by solar energy'.

It is important to design buildings which will inherently consume less energy. This can be achieved through better building orientation, designs that minimise heat absorption through the building envelope and facilitate natural ventilation, and use of energy-efficient equipment and fittings.

The Building and Construction Authority's (BCA) Green Mark scheme, which rates green buildings, emphasises such energy-efficient designs.

The incorporation of clean energy sources like solar panels is another solution to complement energy efficiency in buildings. BCA is currently test-bedding solar

energy infrastructure at its new Zero Energy Building to ascertain its effectiveness and potential.

More HDB precincts will also have solar panels on their rooftops, as part of a \$31 million largescale solar test-bedding scheme. The Government hopes this will encourage wider adoption of solar panels which will help lower the cost.

This two-pronged strategy of exploring clean energy supply and lowering energy demand is a balanced approach to overall energy conservation. Already, new buildings and existing buildings undergoing major retrofitting must achieve the minimum Green Mark certified standard.

The Government is taking the lead in the green building movement by committing its buildings to attain even higher Green Mark standards. Current buildings must attain at least Green Mark GoldPlus by 2020, and new air-conditioned government buildings must obtain the highest Green Mark Platinum rating, which will achieve at least 30 per cent in energy savings.

To date, the BCA Green Mark scheme has received strong support from developers and the industry.

From only 17 green buildings when the scheme started in 2005, we now have close to 300 buildings that have been certified to various Green Mark ratings.

There are also incentives available to encourage the private sector to achieve higher Green Mark ratings and energy savings in both new and existing buildings.

We will continue to review our policies and initiatives to ensure that Singapore's future built environment remains green and sustainable.

We thank Mr Pereira for his suggestion.