

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY DR JOHN KEUNG, CEO, BCA AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE 1ST INTAKE OF THE BCA-UCL MSC IN FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME AT THE MARINA BAY SANDS CONVENTION CENTRE, ON FRIDAY, 25 JANUARY 2013, 2.30 pm**

Mr Quek See Tiat,  
Chairman, Building and Construction Authority

Ms Judith Slater,  
Deputy High Commissioner, British High Commission, Singapore

Professor Michael Worton  
Vice Provost (International), University College London

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon.

1 First, let me congratulate all the 20 graduates who have successfully completed the University College London Master of Science in Facility and Environment Management Programme. I believe that your hard work and sacrifices in balancing your studies, work and family commitments for the last two years have finally paid off. Most of you have done extremely well with 50% of your cohort achieving the Merit award. As the pioneer batch of graduates, you will set the benchmark and blaze the trail for succeeding batches to follow.

2 The green building movement in Singapore has taken off after several years of hard work with the built environment sector. BCA has developed the Green Building Masterplan, which set the directions to achieve the national target of greening 80% of all our buildings in Singapore by 2030.

3 The Masterplan includes a slew of measures such as financial incentives, capability building programmes, and regulatory and administrative policies. With the masterplan as our key driver, our green building journey started from a humble beginning of 17 green building projects when the BCA Green Mark scheme was launched in 2005 to about 1,400 now. This translates to 40 million square metres of green floor space today or 17% of the national building stock.

4 Last July, we enhanced the S\$100 million Green Mark Incentive for existing buildings and it has proven to be effective in encouraging building owners to green their existing buildings. About 62 green building projects have applied for this funding so far and S\$70 million out of the S\$100 million have been committed to date. We are anticipating that the funds will be fully committed by the first half of 2013, if not earlier. Moving forward, we will focus on the newly introduced mandatory measures to green existing buildings, which will be implemented by the second half of 2013.

5 This rising trend towards sustainability and energy efficiency in our built environment will create job opportunities and a demand for well-trained facility managers to manage the operations and maintenance of green buildings equipped with modern facilities and green features.

6 On the supply side, having a ready pool of facility management (or FM) professionals is crucial to support the rapid growth expected in the Asia Pacific region.

7 In any organisation, including FM firms, developing human capital is critical as well-trained professionals can foster an environment of higher productivity and innovation in the workplace. This will help organisations to achieve their business objectives and be more competitive in the global marketplace.

8 As part of BCA's continuous effort in nurturing the capabilities of built environment professionals, including those from the FM industry, BCA Academy has been working closely with industry partners to develop skills and expertise. The BCA Academy has also been tailoring training courses for the industry at management, supervisory and technical levels to level up the industry's capability in key areas.

9 Since 2009, the Academy has trained more than 1,500 green FM practitioners, under our academic programmes including Diploma, Specialist Diploma, Bachelor and Master's programmes, as well as professional development and certification programmes such as the Green Mark for Facilities Manager.

10 The UCL Master's programme, which is one of our latest training programmes for the FM industry, forms an integral component of our strategic thrust to develop the best built environment for Singapore. It was initiated by BCA Academy in the year 2010, in partnership with the prestigious University College London (UCL), one of the world's leading universities, to deliver the first global postgraduate Master of Science Degree in Facility & Environment Management (FEM) in Singapore.

11 This programme has received an encouraging response from the industry. The inaugural class attracted 24 students from the facility management industry. They started this programme in September 2010 and underwent two years of part-time studies conducted by UCL lecturers through face-to-face teaching, small group discussions and practical site visits to leading facilities in Singapore. To date, we have a total of 62 students from three cohorts in this MSc programme.

## **ACCREDITATION OF PROGRAMME**

12 The Master's programme has also received accreditation by the International Facility Management Association, IFMA. This accreditation means that the programme meets the academic rigor as well as incorporating real-world facility management applications and practices. BCA has also recently accredited the programme under its Certified Green Mark Facility Manager (GMFM) course. This is a further affirmation that the knowledge and expertise that our graduands have gained through the programme will be highly valued by employers both locally and internationally.

## **GRADUATES FEEDBACK ON PROGRAMME**

13 We have received positive feedback from the students on this programme. They found the course insightful and highly applicable to real challenges and situations faced by growing organisations in the FM industry.

14 Mr Lincoln Teo, a Project Director in Times Properties Pte Ltd and recipient of the IFMA Gold Prize (Distinction Award), shared that apart from the knowledge gained, the learning-in-partnership and friendships formed with industry peers across a variety of sectors were the most invaluable. Not only did it enhance the learning experience, it also provided insight to the broader industry environment, both locally and internationally.

15 Another graduand, Mr Loh Long Chiang, an Operations Manager from AsiaMalls Management Pte Ltd, said that the programme has enabled him to have a deeper grasp of what sustainability means. It also helped bring together a group of like-minded individuals to tap into each other's specialties and knowledge for work-related questions. I am glad to hear that he would recommend the programme to those who are able to commit to the intensive 2-year programme as it combines the good practices of FM with a focus on sustainability.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UCL & INDUSTRY PARTNERS**

16 I am glad participants have found the course relevant and useful. On this note, I would like to thank our partners, UCL and participating organisations, for kindly organising site visits to showcase their green building technologies, and guest speakers for sharing invaluable experiences with our graduates. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the strong support that Professor Alexi Marmot has provided to help us get this programme up and running within a short span of time in 2010.

17 I would also like to thank our sponsor, International Facility Management Association (IFMA, Singapore Chapter) for their sponsorship of the top prize award to our top graduand.

### **CONCLUSION**

18 Finally, I wish all our graduands success in their future careers.

Thank you.