

WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR QUEK SEE TIAT, CHAIRMAN OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY, AT THE BCA-INDUSTRY BUILT ENVIRONMENT SPONSORSHIP AWARD CEREMONY ON THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2015, AT 3:00PM, BCA ACADEMY FUNCTION HALL

Good afternoon to all of you.

1. Welcome to the BCA-Industry Built Environment Sponsorship Award Ceremony.

Let me extend my warmest congratulations to all the sponsorship award recipients.

2. I am delighted to be witnessing the award of 211 sponsorships from BCA and 37 industry firms to young and promising undergraduate and diploma students. With the strong demand for talent in the Built Environment sector, you have a promising future.

You will be our next generation of leaders to lead the advancement and transformation of the sector.

Abundant Opportunities and Demands for Talents

3. The demand for talent is driven by the sustained growth of the built environment sector. Construction demand is forecasted to be between \$27-\$36 billion annually in 2016 and 2017. We have a healthy pipeline of exciting developments beyond 2020, such as the expansion of Changi Airport, extension of the rail network, vast redevelopment opportunities with the Paya Lebar airport relocation and building of a mega sea port at Tuas. There will be plenty of job opportunities in the sector.

4. Infrastructural developments are critical in fuelling Singapore's economic growth and serving the social needs of our population. Buildings and infrastructure developments are getting denser. They are built with greener and friendlier features to cater to a climate-conscious and ageing population. Also, with the huge demand to produce quality work fast, construction processes are transforming to become more productive and innovative with greater adoption of the "Design for Manufacturing and Assembly" approach or DfMA in short. With DfMA, more work is carried out through off-site manufacturing in a controlled environment. This results in the improvement in the quality and consistency of the building finishes.

5. In light of the sector's dynamic transformation and strong progression, we need a pool of young and motivated entrants, as well as industry professionals, with the right aptitude and skills set, to lead and transform the built environment sector. In order to achieve this and cater to all levels of students and working personnel, BCA has expanded its comprehensive suite of Career Development Programmes, from the seven that were offered in 2013 to 10 programmes in 2015. This includes the new part-time Postgraduate Sponsorship and part-time Diploma Sponsorship.

Under these new programmes, BCA and the sponsoring firms will fund the course fees to help in-service personnel deepen their expertise.

6. We have also enhanced our existing Building Specialist Sponsorship, the post-diploma and post-ITE development programmes. These efforts are aligned to the government's SkillsFuture Earn-and-Learn movement, providing opportunities for entrants and in-service personnel to upgrade themselves, at different stages of their development, despite their varied starting points.

Attracting and retaining talented individuals

7. Apart from encouraging our local talent to take up built environment courses and careers through our programmes, we believe that good human resource (HR) practices play an important role in retaining employees in the sector. To recognise its importance, we rolled out a new voluntary initiative in 2014, “Pledge for a Better Built Environment Workplace” to encourage more firms to adopt good HR practices.

8. To date, 33 industry firms have signed the Pledge to commit and drive the transformation of the built environment sector into a workplace of choice. BCA is continuing this collective effort with our key industry associations to urge more firms to play a part in transforming the sector’s HR practices.

9. In addition, BCA is working with the Institutes of Higher Learning to develop structured internship programmes to provide a well-guided learning experience that will achieve desired learning outcomes for the students. We have also implemented a Teachers’ Attachment Programme. It provides educators with the necessary foundation on the latest sector development so that they can share with their students and excite them on the rapid transformation of the sector.

Conclusion

10. On that note, I would like to specially thank the industry sponsors for your support of these career development programmes. I look forward to your continued support and commitment in grooming the next generation of promising leaders for the built environment sector.

11. To our sponsorship recipients this year, I urge you to dream big and embrace all the promising opportunities that are ahead of you. This year as Singapore celebrates its Jubilee year, we can be proud of our achievement in building a first world country. As future leaders of the built environment sector, you will help shape the nation in the next 50 years. My heartiest congratulations to all of you and I wish you success in your future endeavours.

12. Thank you.