

SPEECH BY BCA CEO HUGH LIM AT THE 5TH SIA DESIGN AWARDS

PRESENTATION CEREMONY – 5 OCTOBER 2017

Mr Ong Tze Boon, SIA President

SIA Council Members

Friends from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand

Presidents of Specialists Trade Alliance of Singapore (STAS) Members

Institutes

Introduction

1. A very good evening and thank you for inviting me to be part of this special occasion to celebrate the achievements of outstanding architects in our midst. Such achievements have transformed Singapore's built environment, and provide us a visually exciting cityscape to live, work and play in.

Transforming the sector

2. Our built environment sector itself is in the midst of transformation: as in many sectors, technology offers us new ways in which we design, build and maintain our buildings and infrastructure. Such technology not only empowers the individual practitioners, but also offers to connect and integrate what is traditionally a fairly fragmented industry. To aid in this transformation, we in BCA will partner key stakeholders like SIA to work out the best ways in which public policy, industry practice and technology can combine to yield the best benefits for our sector, and bring the

beauty, the quality, the productivity and the sustainability of Singapore buildings to even greater heights.

3. BCA's objective is not to limit our practitioners and industry, but rather to work with you to level up our capability to create the best buildings for Singapore. For example, in our drive to improve productivity in our sector, we are encouraging the use of PPVC or Prefabricated Pre-Finished Volumetric Construction for various projects in Singapore. This approach not only offers the use of automation to raise productivity but also greater quality in the finished product, which matters to end customers, and safety on the worksite – since the sheer number of persons working at height can be drastically reduced. But some architects have expressed their concern that the use of modular boxes will stifle their creativity and freedom to offer visually exciting buildings. From our study of PPVC projects in other parts of the world, this has not been the case, as architects have been able to include very different building features on PPVC projects, including curved façades, and non-rectangular floor layouts.

4. I'm confident, therefore, that our architects too can help us push the boundary of what is achievable through our new ICPHs or Integrated Construction & Pre-Fabrication Hub - yes, quite a mouthful. Straits Construction, just opened its new Greyform ICPH two days ago. They informed me that there is actually a whole range of finishes which they can render in the pre-cast components they are producing. All it takes is for the designers to ask for them! If you take a visit to their site in Kaki Bukit, you will see some very interesting finishes on their own building, all done in concrete.

5. All these point toward the need for greater collaboration and conversation between the different practitioners in our industry to explore how to push the boundaries. This forms a key theme in the construction Industry Transformation Map (ITM) which we will be sharing on at the end of the month. Collaboration and integration of the entire value chain are enabled through Building Information Modelling or BIM, which forms a key language for producing complex and creative designs in the ICPHs. In fact, as 3D-printing evolves, I see even greater potential to produce more elaborate shapes and forms in the factory, which would otherwise frustrate traditional construction methods on the worksite.

6. I welcome your feedback and suggestions on how the ITM can support architects, even as we seek to transform the construction sector in Singapore. It is vitally important that the ITM appeals not just to the head, but to the heart also, and in this, I am confident that our architects will continue to play a driving role.

Be the Change you want to see

7. Turning to tonight's proceedings, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to all award winners, who have pushed the boundaries with your innovative designs. Your passion in shaping the built environment of tomorrow are an inspiration to the whole sector and to your fellow architects. You demonstrate that we can inject in every project the aesthetic, the functional and the sustainable.

8. Take for example Oasia Hotel Downtown, one of the award winners tonight. Oasia Hotel Downtown has added new heights of greening in the midst of a bustling business district. Another example is the Bayshore Park Underpass, which will also be taking home an award tonight. Even an underpass that is usually designed to function as a mere walkway, can be transformed into a fun and engaging experiential space, with the architect's touch.

Together, we can go further

9. I am also impressed to see more of you venturing overseas, bringing the Singapore brand-name into new locations. And we look forward to more consultants being able to move into new markets overseas.

Conclusion

10. Let me conclude by thanking every one of you here, for your invaluable contributions to the physical transformation of the built environment sector, be it in Singapore or anywhere else in the world. Your projects have left your mark on the built environment of today, and working together, I am confident we can forge an even more exciting future for the built environment in Singapore, one that offers limitless possibilities in creativity and design prowess, while offering high quality, productivity and sustainability. Thank you very much.