

Checked Against Delivery

**Speech by Minister of State for Manpower, Mr Teo Ser Luck
At bizSAFE Convention 2016 at Max Atria @ Singapore Expo
On Wednesday, 17 February 2016, 10am**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. This is the first time I'm attending the Convention and I'm happy to see the big turnout today. The bizSAFE programme has grown over the years. From its humble beginning in 2007 with 1,900 companies, we now have over 23,600 bizSAFE-certified companies today. This is a clear demonstration that more employers are recognising the importance of having good workplace safety and health (or WSH) practices.

Theme of bizSAFE Convention 2016 – Prevent, Protect and Build Capabilities

2 The theme this year is “bizSAFE – Prevent, Protect and Build Capabilities”. Most of us would agree that the best way to reduce injuries is to prevent accidents from happening. In order to do so, we must first believe that all injuries and ill health at work are preventable and zero harm is possible. This is the basis for companies to come onboard the bizSAFE journey, to set the direction in managing risks and preventing accidents.

3 But bizSAFE is not about completing a paper exercise on risk management. Employers must put the plan into practice and constantly review their WSH practices

and continuously implement measures to eliminate or reduce risks to a minimum, to protect employees.

4 Above all, employers need to ensure that employees are trained and competent to perform their jobs. As your company progresses along the bizSAFE programme, you will also build up WSH capabilities. Management and employees must continually improve in managing risks to prevent accidents and protect lives at work.

Benefits of good WSH management

5 For those new to WSH, you may ask – “Why is risk management important and how does having good WSH practices help my company?”

6 Firstly, good WSH management saves and protects lives. As employers, you are responsible for your employees’ lives at work. It is both a legal and moral obligation that you provide a safe and healthy work environment for your employees.

7 Secondly, good WSH management brings several business benefits. Fewer accidents and injuries at work mean fewer work stoppages, translating to higher productivity, timely delivery of projects and reduced operating costs. This helps to build a good reputation for your company. Your workers will feel valued and happy knowing that they are well taken care of and in turn, be better motivated to give their best for the company.

8 Based on my experience engaging with SMEs, I found that often, SMEs are reluctant to make changes to their day-to-day operations. Even when they know it is important, the sense of urgency is lacking. They find it overwhelming to change existing methods and put new systems in place. However, once they overcome these barriers, they realise that the rewards from improving work processes are well worth the effort. I believe this applies to WSH as well.

Implementation of risk management

9 The revised Approved Code of Practice on Risk Management was launched a year ago to help companies better understand risk management and how to go about doing it. The three key principles of risk management outlined are: It must be pragmatic, reduce risks at source and take individual risk factors into account. The 39 bizSAFE Award 2016 recipients here today are examples of companies and individuals who have applied these principles in their WSH efforts.

10 Take for example, bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Award recipient, Techgems Engineering and Construction Pte. Ltd. Previously when its workers were performing conventional manual and mechanical excavation, there was a risk of damaging features buried underground such as cables. Workers were also at risk of potential hazards such as presence of toxic gases underground. With the understanding of the risks, the company invested in suction excavators which were more efficient and safer. The suction excavators are powerful enough to pull up debris and toxic gases but gentle enough to prevent damage to underground features. This has significantly reduced the

risks of worker exposure to toxic gases while safeguarding public safety with more contained worksite areas. With suction excavators, the work process onsite is up to 16 times faster, thus significantly reducing overall project costs.

11 Another example is bizSAFE Champion Award recipient Suherwan Jasmani. Every week, he and his WSH team from Wee Guan Construction Pte Ltd will visit various sites randomly to conduct on-the-job refresher training. They do so to ensure that site personnel are well trained and adhere to WSH legal requirements. Safety checks on different WSH focus areas such as labelling of hazardous chemicals, housekeeping and clearing potential mosquito breeding areas are also conducted daily. These initiatives help to ensure that safe work practices are in use and existing risk control measures are still effective. These examples show that implementing risk management is in fact, doable and worthwhile.

Training and support for implementing good practices

12 To carry out risk management effectively, employers and employees must be equipped with the relevant competencies. In this aspect, the Singapore Institution of Safety Officers has been running workshops based on the enhanced risk management Code of Practice since May last year. I strongly urge you and your employees to sign up for the next available run so you can better understand, control and deal with WSH risks.

13 The WSH Council have also introduced many measures specially tailored to help SMEs implement risk management.

- There is the START guide – a simple step-by-step guide for SMEs to start on WSH which is available on Council's website.
- You can also subscribe to the Council's free electronic WSH Bulletin to be updated on WSH case studies and learn recommended safety measures to help you avoid similar incidents from happening. The website also contains many practical and innovative solutions compiled from industry best practices.
- And you can now tap on SPRING's Capability Development Grant to defray up to 70% of the cost of attaining bizSAFE Level 1 through bizSAFE STAR.

14 The importance of risk management cannot be overemphasised. In the first half of 2015, there had been 29 workplace fatal injuries. However, last month alone, nine lives were lost in various work accidents. Injuries at work are simply not acceptable. The nine workers are not mere numbers; they are someone's child, spouse, parent and co-worker. The loss of lives could have been prevented if proper risk management and adequate control measures had been put in place. Employers and employees have to work together. It is the obligation of employers to ensure the safety of their employees. We must not be complacent about safety and health. I urge every one of us to step up efforts to look out for one another and take every reasonable precaution to prevent injuries and accidents.

Conclusion

15 In closing, I hope that you will take the next step in changing the way you think and do about WSH. The onus is on every one of us to prevent injury and ill health. Through our commitment to manage risks at work, we can make a difference to our lives and those of our colleagues. I wish you a fruitful session and a safer and healthier year at work this year. Together, we can prevent all injuries and ill health at work. Thank you.

National Archives of Singapore

FACTSHEET ON bizSAFE AWARDS 2016

The bizSAFE Awards 2016 recognises companies for their commitment to the bizSAFE programme and achievement in workplace safety and health (WSH) performance through sound and effective management of risks at their workplaces.

There are three main categories in the bizSAFE Awards:

1) bizSAFE Partner Awards

- The bizSAFE Partner Awards recognises bizSAFE Partners that are committed and proactive in encouraging their contractors, suppliers and vendors to come on board the bizSAFE programme. For instance, they incorporate WSH requirements into their business models by having bizSAFE Level 3 as a pre-requisite in procurement contracts.
- These bizSAFE Partners also have to demonstrate their contributions towards the progress of bizSAFE Enterprises as well as evidence of visible WSH leadership. .

2) bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Awards

- The bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Awards recognises bizSAFE Level STAR enterprises based on their exemplary WSH management and performance.

bizSAFE Champion Awards

- The bizSAFE Champion Awards is a sub-category of the bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Awards. This Award recognises individuals who have been proactive in their organisation in driving bizSAFE and raising the risk management capabilities of their organisation.

3) bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Awards

- The bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Awards recognises bizSAFE Enterprises for their efforts in improving WSH and establishing risk management capabilities within their organisation by progressing from bizSAFE Level 1 to Level 3 within 6 months.

Summary of number of applications and winners for 2016

	Number of applications	Number of winners
bizSAFE Partner Awards	19	10
bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Awards	38	10
bizSAFE Champion Awards	38	3
bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Awards	27	16
Total	122	39

Full list of recipients of the bizSAFE Awards 2016

bizSAFE Partner Awards

1. Bintai Kindenko Private Limited
2. Chye Joo Construction Pte Ltd
3. ID21 Pte Ltd
4. Keppel REIT Property Management Pte Ltd
5. Lendlease Retail Investments 1 Pte Ltd (313@Somerset)
6. Lendlease Retail Investments 3 Pte Ltd (JEM)
7. National Healthcare Group Polyclinics*
8. Sembcorp Marine Specialised Shipbuilding Pte Ltd
9. Sumitomo Mitsui Construction Co Pte Ltd
10. Teambuild Engineering & Construction Pte Ltd

bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Awards

1. Catalyst Engineering Pte Ltd
2. Commersol Commodities Pte Ltd
3. EC Tech Engineering Pte Ltd
4. Emtec Solutions Pte Ltd
5. Joleta Hardware and Electrical Enterprise
6. Ju Shen Ji Engineering Pte Ltd
7. Kasturi Technology Pte Ltd
8. Lam Soon Singapore Pte Ltd
9. Ledar Contracts
10. Lumitron Pte Ltd
11. Mezzo Builders & Consultants Pte Ltd
12. Motivo Inc Pte Ltd
13. Premium Business
14. Premium Global Pte Ltd
15. Somers Management Services (Singapore) Pte Ltd*
16. Thiam Chye Engineering

bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Awards

1. Brightsun Marine Pte Ltd
2. Kwan Yong Construction Pte Ltd
3. Lian Ho Lee Construction (Private) Limited
4. LSK Engineering (S) Pte Ltd
5. Scan-Bilt Pte Ltd
6. Teambuild Engineering & Construction Pte Ltd
7. Techgems Engineering & Construction Pte Ltd*
8. Vigcon Construction Pte Ltd
9. Wee Chwee Huat Scaffolding & Construction Pte Ltd
10. Wee Guan Construction Pte Ltd

bizSAFE Champion Awards

1. Mr Balaiah Kumaragurunathan, WSHO, Brightsun Marine Pte Ltd
2. Mr Mohammad Hidayat Bin Hamzah, WSHO, Vigcon Construction Pte Ltd
3. Mr Suherwan Jasmani, WSH Executive / Fire Safety Manager, Wee Guan Construction Pte Ltd*

** See profiles below*

Profiles of bizSAFE Awards Recipients

bizSAFE Partner Award - National Healthcare Group Polyclinics

As a primary healthcare institution, the National Healthcare Group Polyclinics (NHGP) believes that workplace safety and health (WSH) is of utmost importance to its core business in delivering public healthcare services to its patients.

To provide a safe and healthy workplace for all staff and visitors to its polyclinics, the bizSAFE STAR-certified organisation maintains high WSH standards by implementing comprehensive risk management measures (RM) and ensuring that all staff are trained. Through relevant training in RM, NHGP successfully implemented its own trip and fall risk management measures. Its Risk Management Team conducted risk assessments and tested various flooring solutions to determine the most effective solution to ensure a safe environment for staff, patients and visitors.

As a bizSAFE Partner, NHGP also ensures that its contractors are equally committed to WSH and have good RM capabilities. NHGP organises bizSAFE Level 1, 2 and 4 programmes for all of its contractors. Companies with bizSAFE Level 3 and above are also given priority consideration in the tendering process for projects and contracts. With a safe and healthy work environment, happy and healthy employees enhance NHGP's care delivery and service to its patients.

bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Award - Somers Management Services (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Winning the bizSAFE Enterprise Progressive Awards is a testament to Somers Management Services's (SMS) commitment to workplace safety and health (WSH). The company places strong emphasis on WSH and believes its employees are its most valuable asset. Therefore, SMS is committed in providing a work environment where all employees will go home safely and healthily.

To ensure that all employees are aware of WSH, new employees go through an orientation programme to familiarise with the tools and hazards at work. The programme will also educate them on the importance of working safely and the company's expectation on being a safe and efficient workplace.

Also an integral part of its business process, WSH is one of SMS's five key performance indicators. It is critical to the growth of the company and needed to ensure that its workplace is free from accidents and injuries. When business in the company was growing, the Operations and Safety teams got together to develop a process during its transition. A safety assessment process was used for new work activities identified during the transition phase to assess new risks and implement measures to address the hazards. Since then, WSH continues to be advocated as the company's value.

bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Award - Techgems Engineering and Construction Pte Ltd

Due to the nature of their work, workers of Techgems Engineering and Construction Pte Ltd are frequently exposed to flammable, corrosive and combustible chemicals and gases. Prolonged exposure to these Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) risks requires both management and employees to place extra emphasis on maintaining high WSH standards to avoid any accidents and injuries.

As a firm believer of setting high WSH standards, Techgems Engineering and Construction Pte Ltd is particularly proud of its initiatives to manage WSH risk at work. The first initiative is the Short Services Worker programme where new workers are mentored, assessed and evaluated for a period of six months before being allowed to conduct work on their own. The second initiative is the Stop Ready & Go programme which requires workers to conduct risk assessment of their own tasks, thus taking ownership of the WSH risks associated with their daily work. Lastly, TechGems Observation Card (TOC) was introduced to encourage workers to observe and speak out against potential failures in WSH in their work area.

Being a part of the bizSAFE programme, Techgems Engineering and Construction Pte Ltd strongly believes that its efforts and investments in WSH has paid off, resulting in more business opportunities for the company.

bizSAFE Champion Award - Wee Guan Construction Pte Ltd

"My concern for the safety and health of others motivates me to address any safety concerns and create awareness immediately before a serious accident or dangerous occurrence occurs."

Suherwan Jasmani believes that everyone, from top management to the individual site worker, has a role to play in making workplaces safer and healthier. Suherwan can be seen at different sites conducting refresher training on high risk activities each week to ensure that workers are educated on the workplace safety and health (WSH) risks associated with their jobs.

To achieve greater WSH standards, Suherwan felt that it is important to inculcate a change of culture and mind-set at the workplace. While it is never easy to introduce changes, Suherwan strongly believes the 5E principles of Educating, Empowering, Engaging, Encouraging and Enforcement can help workers understand the importance of WSH.

Attaining the bizSAFE Champion Award is important as it is recognition of the company's WSH efforts to achieve high WSH standards.

FACTSHEET ON CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT - Supports SMEs in Building Occupational Health and Safety Capability

Introduction

The Capability Development Grant (CDG) is a financial assistance programme from SPRING Singapore to help companies build capabilities across 10 key business areas such as enhancing quality and standards and adopting technology (see [Figure 1](#)). The grant supports a wide range of capability upgrading initiatives to help businesses grow locally and globally. Since 1 October 2015, the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council has partnered SPRING Singapore to drive adoption of Occupational Health and Safety related standards and raise WSH capabilities among companies. The CDG supports the implementation of either SS 506 or OHSAS 18001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems standards to attain bizSAFE STAR (highest level of bizSAFE).

About Grant Support

2 Eligible SMEs can tap on SPRING's CDG to offset the costs of embarking on the bizSAFE programme to achieve bizSAFE STAR (see [Figure 2](#)). Under the grant, SMEs that have not started on the bizSAFE programme, and completed bizSAFE Level 1 to bizSAFE STAR within 12 months, can claim up to 70% of the cost.

Eligibility Criteria

3 Only SMEs that have yet attained bizSAFE programme or SS506 and/or OHSAS 18001 are eligible for the grant.

4 Eligible SMEs are classified as those:

- Registered and based in Singapore;
- Having at least 30% shareholding that is local; and one of the following:
 - *A group employment size of not more than 200 employees (including part-timers); OR*
 - *A group annual sales turnover of not more than \$100 million.*

5 Successful applicants must submit the following documents to WSH Council by end of the 12-month project period:

- bizSAFE Level 1 workshop certificate;
- bizSAFE Level 3 Risk Management Audit Report (audited by an Ministry of Manpower-Approved WSH Auditor); and
- bizSAFE STAR audited to SS506 or OHSAS 18001.

Grant Disbursement Process

6 Companies can apply for the grant via the WSH Council website at www.wshc.sg/bizSAFE. The grant will be disbursed by SPRING upon each applicant’s successful completion of the project deliverables.



Figure 1: Areas of support under CDG



Figure 2: Outline of bizSAFE programme