

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR HENG CHIANG GNEE, CHAIRMAN OF WSH  
COUNCIL AT THE WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH AWARDS 2016  
ON WEDNESDAY 27 JULY 2016, 5.50PM, AT MARINA BAY SANDS**

Mr Sam Tan, Minister of State for Manpower,  
Members of the WSH Council and Committees,  
Recipients of the WSH Awards 2016,  
Industry partners and WSH supporters,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

A warm welcome to all. To all our WSH Awards recipients, my heartiest congratulations to you. Thank you for your support and dedication to protecting the safety and health of our workers.

**Driving the Vision Zero movement**

2 The WSH Council's mission is to lead a mindset that all incidents are preventable and strengthen capabilities to protect health and lives at work. We use the term "incidents", and not accidents because workplace injuries don't happen by accident. They can be prevented. With the right mindset and behaviour, WSH incidents can be significantly reduced.

3 To promote safety and health at work through prevention, the WSH Council launched the Vision Zero movement at the 2015 National WSH Campaign with the message "I can prevent all injuries and be

healthy at work.” We communicated this message through our year-long campaign, through events, public forums and multimedia publicity channels, so as to encourage all to adopt the mindset of injury and ill health prevention. The inaugural WSH Song Writing Competition was also organised to engage and inspire the workforce and community to come up with their own songs to take preventive action at work. Through these outreach efforts, we reached out to over 100,000 workers in FY 2015.

4 To build industry capabilities to better manage risks and work towards prevention, we worked closely with our partners to provide more help for SMEs to take up bizSAFE such as the Capability Development Grant. Through the Construction WSH Leadership Summit in July last year, we rallied construction industry association leaders to reaffirm their commitment and put together action plans to improve the construction industry WSH performance. Initiatives that we have rolled out over the years such as CultureSAFE and the Safety Compliance Assistance Visits (SCAV) also helped companies in implementing measures to improve their WSH standards.

**Theme of WSH Council and WSH Institute Annual Report 2015/16 –**

**“Second Family”**

5 The initiatives I've shared are important in keeping the workplace and the people we see regularly, safe and healthy. Our colleagues are in fact our "Second Family". Many of us spend more time at work than at home. We forge bonds with our colleagues. We become concerned, not only about the work but also their well-being. So when a colleague is involved in a workplace incident, we are also affected immensely.

6 For those of us who have seen our colleagues get hurt during work, we experience guilt. We wonder – could we have prevented the incident? Have we done enough? These feelings are likely to continue to plague us.

7 The close relationships among colleagues is highlighted in this year's joint Annual Report from the WSH Council and WSH Institute.

With the theme "Second Family", we explore how our colleagues are not merely people we depend on to get the work done. We also need to depend on them to keep each other safe from harm. You can find the Annual Report in the folder provided.

8 In this report, we interviewed three individuals whose colleagues have been involved in workplace incidents. Take for example, Mr Hossain Md Zakir. His colleague had sustained a cut to his leg while

using a machine to cut metal plates. Seeing his colleague suffer from the physical pain and emotional trauma made Hossain realise how a workplace injury could affect his family and livelihood, and this experience changed his outlook towards WSH. Through stories like Hossain's, we find out the life-changing consequences that work incidents can have on the injured worker and those around him.

### **Conclusion**

9 The WSH Council aspire to create safer and healthier workplaces through prevention, and we hope the industry will align their efforts by taking greater ownership of WSH issues. To recipients of the WSH Awards 2016, you are leading by example and inspiring other companies and individuals to improve their own WSH efforts. I ask for your support in reaching out to others, so that we can collectively progress towards more effective incident prevention.

National Archives of Singapore

10 Let us work together towards protecting the people we care about – our second family at work – and ensure they go home safe and healthy every day. Thank you.