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Launched, Asia's first Certified Professional Logistician (CPL) Programme

The Singapore Trade Development Board (TDB), in collaboration with the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and the Chartered Institute of Transport Singapore (CITS) launched Asia's first professional accreditation programme for logistics professionals. The Certified Professional Logistician (CPL) programme is part of the overall plan to develop a critical mass of logistics professionals to propel the industry towards the e-logistics frontier.

A benchmark of excellence for measuring competency and proficiency within the profession of logistics and supply-chain management, the CPL programme represents the hallmark of logistics professionalism. Successful candidates will achieve international recognition from CIT's 28 international affiliates under the global CIT network, and reputable universities. CPL holders can also be considered for exemption from certain subjects of the Masters of Science (Logistics) programme offered by the Nanyang Technological University.

The programme is a key initiative under the IT Action Plan for the Logistics Industry announced in March 2000 by Mr Lim Swee Say, Minister of State for Communications & Information Technology and Trade & Industry.

Said Mr David Chin, Chairman of Steering Committee on Logistics and Deputy Chief Executive Officer, TDB, "The successful launch of the CPL programme is indeed an achievement, a result

of concerted efforts from logistics experts, educational institutions, technology providers and government agencies. The certification will provide the necessary motivation for logistics professionals to upgrade and continually retrain. This is critical in the new economy, as we will need professionals with a good blend of supply chain management skills and technological expertise in order to help propel the industry to achieve its vision of becoming a premier, regional, e-logistics hub.”

“Those who are certified would receive recognition like their counterparts in the finance, medical and engineering professions. We plan to provide a standard benchmark for all critical IT skills, first at the national level, next at the regional level and in future, globally,” added Mr Chin.

Dr Kaizad Heerjee, Assistant Chief Executive, On-line Development Division, IDA said, “The launch of the CPL programme marks another milestone in supporting the growing manpower needs of the logistics sector. The programme would help support Singapore’s quest to bring higher level education through the IT curriculum in the courses offered through the CPL program. In collaboration with various partners in the CPL, IDA aims to facilitate Singapore’s evolution into a vibrant e-learning hub for the region.”

To ensure that the CPL programme remains a defined benchmark of excellence that will be earned only by a select group of logistics professionals, 16 leading practitioners from the academic, public and private sectors in the logistics field have been enlisted to form a CPL Qualification Review Board (QRB). These members will assess the competency of each candidate seeking qualification. To ensure consistently high academic standards, senior professors from NUS and NTU will undertake the role of setting and marking the examination.

Commented Mr Karmjit Singh, Chairman of CPL Qualification Review Board and Chief Executive of Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) Airport Services, “Benchmarked against international standards, the CPL programme ensures that qualifying candidates have attained a high professional standard worthy of recognition by the rapidly growing logistics industry in Singapore. We are targeting to certify 150 candidates over the first 3 years.”

To become a CPL holder, candidates need to pass a certification examination which would test their ability to apply their broad knowledge of the entire supply chain spectrum and leverage on critical IT skills in supply chain management.

Prospective candidates can do a self-assessment via a point system to determine if they are

qualified to take the CPL examination. The criteria for qualification include relevant experience in the logistics and supply chain management industry and at least 400 certification points from areas such as “Work and Management Experience”, “Formal Education” and “Professional Membership”.

Upon certification, CPL holders will be awarded the title, Certified Professional Logistician (CPL) and are entitled to the post nominals ‘CPL’, in recognition of their professional competence.

Application for the CPL examination is now open. To obtain an application package or for further details on the CPL programme, please contact the Chartered Institute of Transport Singapore at tel: 235 2836 or email to cit@pacific.net.sg or visit the website at www.cit.org.sg/cpl.

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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR DAVID CHIN
CHAIRMAN OF STEERING COMMITTEE ON LOGISTICS
AND DY CEO, TDB**

AT THE LAUNCH OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL LOGISTICIAN (CPL) PROGRAMME
18 Aug 2000, 11 a.m. @ TDB Seminar Room

Mr Karmjit Singh, Chairman of CPL Qualification Review Board and Chief Executive of Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) Airport Services

Ms Koh Siu Lan, Deputy Director of Online Business Enablement, Infocomm Development of Singapore (IDA)

Distinguished guests

Ladies & Gentlemen

Good morning,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the launch of the Certified Professional Logistician, or in short, the CPL programme, a key initiative under the IT Action Plan for the logistics industry launched in March this year.

2. Let me begin this speech with a short story. Sometime ago, an unemployed logistics executive was asked by a friend this question after a few rounds of company interviews, "What are companies looking for in a supply chain manager today?"

3. The answer: "Companies today want the world!"

4. As a concept and reality, Supply Chain Management today is moving far beyond the confines of an individual organisation. It has become a dynamic process that involves the simultaneous acquisition and continuous re-evaluation of partners, technologies, and organisational structures.

5. It used to be that being able to run a warehouse and manage people was basically all a logistics person needed. Today, companies want much more technologically oriented people, and they're looking for people with much more broad-based experience. In other words, companies are looking for people who understand the economics of logistics as they apply to every other function.

6. As the unemployed logistics executive in the story and many other logistics veterans like me are finding out, the metamorphosis of transportation and distribution

into supply chain management means that technology and leadership skills are in greater demand than operational savvy these days.

7. According to the Manpower Demand and Skills Survey conducted by the Ministry of Manpower last year, **IT savvyness** (IT savvyness is defined as the ability to use IT in various forms, including Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), Internet, intranet and extranet, to provide a seamless information flow solution to clients.) **and Innovation** (Innovation is defined as the ability to provide new solutions and to set new logistics business models.) **are ranked as two key skills which a future job seeker in the logistics industry must have.**

8. That perhaps, explains why there's so much pressure on logistics professionals in Singapore now to keep up with or stay slightly ahead of the technology curve. The need for technology skills really puts the pressure on. Logistics companies nowadays are looking for younger people. They're sourcing talents from consulting companies. They're even hiring people away from high-tech companies like Oracle and SAP and putting them into what was the transportation and distribution function.

9. To support the upgrading and repositioning of the industry, it is crucial that Singapore continue to strengthen and expand the current pool of professional workforce. TDB is therefore, pleased to work with IDA, CIT and the other relevant institutions to develop the CPL programme, a new professional qualification on logistics management with a dedicated focus on critical IT skills.

10. In essence, the objective of this programme is to enable a minimum standard, which a professional logistician must meet. This programme will enable workers in this industry to develop themselves more effectively, and hence enable the growth of the logistics industry.

11. The Transport and Communications sector in Singapore grew by 9.6% in 2Q2000. Employment growth for all occupational groups was projected to be positive in the next 3 years. The demand for professionals, technical experts and executives will continue to rise over the next 3 years as there is increasing emphasis on the development of a knowledge-based economy and the development of skilled employment.

12. The future growth potential of the Transport and Logistics cluster will hinge greatly on the manpower capabilities of its workforce. Our workforce must recognise that the industry has shifted from the brawn nature of work to one that relies on IT and brainpower, and embrace the career opportunities and challenges presented to them. An excellent land, sea and air infrastructure, together with a skilled workforce will help Singapore to realise her vision of being a Premier Integrated Transport and Logistics

Hub with leading edge in terminal facilities and logistics management competency.

13. TDB, as the lead agency for the development and promotion of the logistics sector, is committed to continue to develop logistics manpower capabilities through further collaboration with the private sector and educational institutions. We value this relationship and hope that our partnership would continue to grow.

14. On this note, may I wish you all the best in your lifelong pursuit for greater logistics professionalism. Thank you.

**SPEECH BY MR KARMJIT SINGH (CHAIRMAN, CIT SINGAPORE)
FOR THE CPL PROGRAMME AT TDB ON FRIDAY,
18 AUGUST 2000**

Good Morning, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It gives me great pleasure to be here with you for the official launch of the Certified Professional Logistician Programme.

2 Let me share with you a recent e-mail communication on 1 August from Prof Tae Oum from the University of British Columbia. Prof Tae Oum is intimately involved in Logistics and Supply Chain management. His e-mail sought out the key success factors that made Singapore a major logistics and distribution hub in Asia. He needed the information by return e-mail as he was scheduled to speak at a forum on “Global Logistics Hub Building” in Hawaii on 4 August. He had already received inputs from Japan, Korea, Holland, Germany, Canada and the United States.

3 There are three noteworthy points. Firstly, Singapore is recognized internationally as a Logistics and Distribution hub. Secondly, apart from Japan and Korea there was no other Asian country acknowledged to be in the same league – not even Hong Kong. Thirdly, Prof Tae Oum, who was on a working sabbatical for 6 months, with the Nanyang Technological University, was personally impressed with what he saw in Singapore – our efficient airport and port infrastructure; modern, automated warehouses; the IT support; and the strong government support for the logistics industry.

4 What has this got to do with the CPL programme launch? Well a lot! Singapore did not become a global logistics node overnight nor did this happen by chance. But a significant success factor is the advanced general management skills as well as the commitment toward executive management development for the logistics industry. Not to be under-estimated is our accumulated experience and attendant capacity to organise ourselves, using latest technology, IT and e-commerce to provide integrated logistics services for world trade. Gone are the days when transportation, warehousing, distribution and materials management were seen as separate or distinct functions and disciplines. Today, professionalism of a high standard is required to manage these complex, disparate functions in a seamless and integrated supply chain mode with a clear understanding of the need to track the physical goods flow, financial flow, and, of course, information flow. More significantly, with global restructuring, the industry is increasingly customer driven. Only true logistics or supply chain management professionals will be able to serve the ever demanding needs of today's global customers in the increasingly e-commerce world we operate in.

5 Since we are among the top players, one might ask "How much better can we get?" Well, the answer is a matter of perspective. My reply to the question is: more than one trillion dollars. That's the value of merchandise sitting in warehouses across the United States at this very moment. Logistics can take that static situation and make it dynamic. If logistics professionals can somehow reduce those trillion dollars even by half, it would represent \$500 billion in value redeemed! Even if one is able to reduce by one-tenth – it is still \$50 billion in value redeemed! Only true professionals will be able to change the rules of the game to effect such colossal savings.

6 Several world class logistics companies have already set up logistics operations in Singapore to exploit opportunities in the fast growing Supply Chain Management business in Asia-Pacific. Paradoxically, this growth has reached a point that the local logistics industry is suffering from a shortage of qualified and professional logistics talent. If nothing is done fast, the situation will get worse; industry will suffer.

7 For this reason, the CIT, working together with the key logistics companies, TDB and IDA has embarked upon the Certified Professional

Logistician programme. It is essentially industry driven. This CPL programme, endorsed by the government, will help to benchmark and professionalise the logistics industry in Singapore. It will give due recognition to executives and managers who seek to advance their careers in the logistics or supply chain field.

8 The CIT-NUS in 1994, pioneered the first logistics education programme exclusively for senior logistics commanders and officers in Mindef; it has been running successfully for 5 years and over 310 officers have attended this programme. The CIT-NTU programme focuses more on Transportation, with some exposure to supply chain management. CIT has also conducted 2-week programmes for logistics executives from Shandong, China, as well as South Africa. Both programmes were well received. In November this year, CIT, with the support of MFA, plans to hold another 2-week programme on Logistics for executives from South Africa, Kenya, possibly Mauritius.

9 CIT, under the guidance of the Qualifying Review Board (ORB), comprising University academics, logistics industry Chief Executives, TDB and IDA representatives, will ensure that high professional standards are upheld when awarding the CPL qualification to aspiring candidates. In a sense, the CPL qualification is something akin to the Certified Financial Analysts (CFA) qualification – but the latter is fast becoming popular with financial analysts.

10 The TDB, IDA, CIT and the QRB look forward to working closely with industry in launching this major initiative and making it a success. We will need all your support.

11 I would like to thank TDB, IDA, NUS and NTU, together with logistics industry members of QRB, in making it a success so far.

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