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PRESS RELEASE

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT AT THE MRT CIRCLE LINE WORKSITE THAT LED TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE NICOLL HIGHWAY.

The Acting Minister for Manpower has appointed a Committee of Inquiry under Section 54 of the Factories Act (Chapter 104), to inquire into the cause of the incident at the MRT circle line worksite that led to the collapse of the Nicoll Highway on 20 April 2004.

2 Senior District Judge, Mr Richard Magnus, has been appointed as Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry. He will be assisted by two assessors, Associate Professor Teh Cee Ing, Head, Division of Geotechnical & Transportation Engineering, Nanyang Technological University and Mr Lau Joo Ming, Director, Building Technology Department, Housing and Development Board. Their CVs are at Annex A.

3 The Terms of Reference for the Committee of Inquiry are attached at Annex B. The date and venue of the Inquiry will be announced shortly.

4 All interested parties who wish to be represented at the hearing and all persons who wish to give evidence at the Inquiry are invited to contact the Committee's Secretary, Mr Mohd Ismadi, at:

Address: Ministry of Manpower
18 Havelock Road, #03-02
Singapore 059764.
Tel: 6317 1246
Email: Ismadi_Mohd@mom.gov.sg

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CV of Mr. Lau Joo Ming

Mr Lau has dedicated his 30 years of distinguished service in the HDB to the relentless goals in housing a nation. He is a Registered Professional Engineer, a Chartered Engineer as well as an Accredited Checker. In addition to this, he is a Fellow of the Institute of Engineers (S'pore), Fellow of the Institute of Civil Engineers (United Kingdom) and Fellow of the Institute of Structural Engineers (United Kingdom).

Mr Lau started work as a Structural Engineer in 1973. In 1989, he held the appointment of Chief Structural Engineer till June 2003. During this period, he has contributed substantially to the successful completion of well over 850,000 dwelling units which housed 85% of Singapore population.

He spearheads HDB's aggressive drive to upgrade the local public housing construction industry through the use of innovative design and more productive precast technology based construction methods. His vision for the HDB to undertake Research and Development with Industry and Institutions of Higher Learning led to the establishment of HDB's Prefabrication Technology Centre.

Another key contribution is in the area of construction site safety. Er. Lau's leadership in the pursuit of safety management and his dedication to the improvement of the well-being of HDB's site workers, has resulted in HDB's impressive site safety record. HDB's safety record ranks among the safest in the world, surpassing even that of Japan.

Under his dynamic and competent leadership, the Structural Department of the HDB has also been conferred many Awards like the American Concrete Institute Award (ACI), CIDB Best Buildable Design Awards, Asean Engineering Award, ROSPA International Award etc for its innovative use of building technologies,. In recognition of his significant contributions to Public Housing in Singapore, Mr. Lau was awarded the Public Administration Medal Bronze in 1983 and the Silver in 1993 by the Government. Internationally, he received award from ACI for sustained and original contribution in advancing the art and science of concrete technology worldwide, Derrington Construction Award from Institute of Structural Engineers, UK, on Upgrading prefabrication Technology . He was awarded the Distinguished Award from the Standards Council of Singapore for his distinguished services and outstanding contributions in Singapore Standardisation Programme . He was recently awarded the Distinguished Engineering Alumnus Award 2002 by NUS for his contributions to the engineering community.

Mr Lau has also authored and presented many papers both locally and internationally on various aspects of building technologies.

Presently, he is the Director of Building Technology Department. The new department was formed in July 2003 with the principal objective of innovating to provide a cost effective total solution to enhance technology, quality and building service life of public housing and its facilities. He now leads a team of professionals, comprising architects, engineers, project managers and researchers, to look into the development and implementation of new technologies and products for the building industry as well as to provide total building performance and maintenance care which helps to prolong the useful life of buildings and improve the quality of the living environment

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CV of Mr. Teh Cee Ing

Mr Teh Cee Ing

Associate Professor, BE, DPhil

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E-mail: cciteh@ntu.edu.sg

Head, Division of Geotechnical and Transportation Engineering

School of Civil & Environmental Engineering

Nanyang Technological University

Director, NTU-PWD Geotechnical Research Centre

Dr Teh Cee Ing graduated from the University of Malaya with a BE (Hon Class I) degree in civil engineering. He worked in the public sector, construction sector and consultancy firms in Malaysia for several years before taking up the Kuok Foundation Oxbridge Scholarship. He obtained the DPhil degree from Oxford University in 1987. He was a CAD-CAM specialist with the National University of Singapore from 1987-1990. He has been on the faculty of the School of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Nanyang Technological University since 1990. He is currently the Head, Division of Geotechnical and Transportation Engineering. He is concurrently the Director of the NTU-PWD Geotechnical Research Centre. His research interest is in the areas of piled foundations, soil-structure interactions, in-situ testings and soil improvement.

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Academic Qualification & Professional Experience

- DPhil, Oxford University, United Kingdom
- BE, Honours Class I, University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Professional Engineer, Singapore
- Member, Institution of Engineers, Singapore

Aug/1990 – present Lecturer/Sr Lecturer/Assoc Prof, NTU

Dec/1987-Jul/1990 CAD-CAM Specialist, NUS

Aug/1982-Jul/1984 Civil Engineer, Public Works Department, Malaysia

Mar/1982-Jul/1982

Geotechnical Engineer, Pilecon Engineering, Malaysia

Research Interest

- Piled Foundation
- Interpretation of in-situ soil testings
- Application of numerical methods in Geomechanics
- Soil-structure interactions
- Soil improvement

Service to Industry

- Member, steering committee on underground storage of petroleum products on Jurong Island
- Member, working group on the utilisation of underground space, URA
- Specialist consultant to Penta-Ocean on the Esplanade, Theatre on the Bay
- Specialist consultant to JTC on Jurong Island Reclamation and International Business Park
- Expert Witness for arbitration between JTC and Contractor
- Consultancy/Advisory services to Sembcorp Constructors on DTSS project
- Conduct short courses on specialist geotechnical topics to practising engineers

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**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY
APPOINTED UNDER SECTION 54 OF THE FACTORIES ACT (CHAPTER 104)**

1. Inquire into and ascertain the causes and circumstances of the incident at the MRT circle line worksite that led to the collapse of the Nicoll Highway on 20 April 2004.
2. Make recommendations to prevent the recurrence of such an accident.
3. Make any observation and express any opinion on matters related to the accident which the Committee should, in its opinion, bring to the attention of the Acting Minister for Manpower.
4. Determine whether there was negligence, including criminal liability, on the part of any person or parties.
5. Make and submit a report of its proceedings, findings and recommendations to the Acting Minister for Manpower.