

WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR HO CHEE KIT, PRESIDENT OF THE RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) (RAS) AT THE LOO (LET'S OBSERVE OURSELVES) AWARDS CEREMONY ON 18 NOVEMBER 2022, 10.00AM, AT ENVIRONMENT BUILDING

A very good morning to:

Our Guest of Honour Mr Baey Yam Keng, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and the Environment

Mr Andrew Khng

Deputy Chairman, Public Hygiene Council

Mr Allen Ang

Board Technical, Singapore Green Building Council

Mr Roger Ng

Deputy Director, National Environment Agency

Awards recipients, partners and distinguished guests

I warmly welcome everyone to the 14th LOO Awards. The word play of "LOO", is not only the colloquial term for restroom, but also stands for "Let's Observe Ourselves". This means all stakeholders must observe themselves to play their part. To elaborate further, if owners, operators, cleaning service providers,

cleaning attendants and public users can play their part well, we can sustain quality restroom standards. Today, I'm excited that all stakeholders are present here, especially our exemplary award recipients. Please accept my heartiest congratulations and I strongly believe all of you will continue to excel and uphold your strong commitment of sustaining the quality restroom standards of Singapore.

Guide to Better Public Toilet Design and Maintenance

Today, I'm pleased to announce that the 5th edition of the Guide to Better Public Toilet Design and Maintenance will be available for download on our website www.toilet.org.sg after the launch. I'm honoured to receive the kind support of our Guest of Honour Mr Baey, who'll be launching the guide later. In 2013, I joined Guest of Honour Ms Grace Fu, who was then the Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, on stage as she launched the 3rd edition. Five years later in 2018, I was with Guest of Honour Dr Amy Khor who was then Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources as she launched the 4th edition.

This latest edition would not have been published without the support from the National Environment Agency (NEA), Singapore Green Building Council (SGBC) and other product partners. With the prevalence of COVID-19 and emphasis on safer public restrooms, this latest edition includes products which are effective against viruses such as 3 in 1 compatible products that can perform multiple functions of cleaning, disinfecting and deodorising in one step, antimicrobial coatings, paints and lighting technology. This edition also includes NEA's revised Code of Practice on Environmental Health on public

toilet requirements which took effect in March this year. I hope this latest Guide will benefit owners, operators and cleaning service providers to enable them to better create a clean and safe restroom environment for everyone.

Certification of Restroom Products

Last year, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SGBC on the certification of restroom products under the four product categories, namely Detect, Feedback, Eliminate and Clean or in short, DFEC smart products. As I mentioned last year, “Detect” represents the use of sensors to detect and monitor any defects or situations. “Feedback” relates to the use of interactive feedback systems for defects or situations, which cannot be effectively monitored by sensors. “Eliminate” categorises the use of sanitisers, deodourisers and protective coatings or paints to eliminate odour, viruses and stains. “Clean” which not only means the adoption of technology to facilitate cleaning, but also the adoption of facilities for self-cleaning by public users, such as the use of bidets and taps integrated with fast and hygienic hand-drying functions for effective hand washing.

Since the signing of the MOU, RAS has been actively reaching out to introduce SGBC to product companies to certify their products. Owing to the expertise of SGBC, I’m encouraged by the recent certification of three companies this year. They will be the first batch of companies to be presented with a ceremonial certificate by Guest-of-Honour Mr Baey later. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank them for their strong commitment to offer reliable and durable restroom products. With this new certification, it marks a new beginning for star-rated restrooms. 4-star restrooms will need to adopt at least

one of the SGBC-certified DFEC smart products while 5-star restrooms will need to adopt at least two of the SGBC-certified DFEC smart products. 6-star restrooms will need to adopt all four SGBC-certified DFEC smart products. As the criteria of certifying other products are still in the development process, we will progressively adopt the new criterion for star-rated restrooms. I hope with this new certification, it will not only encourage product companies to offer reliable and durable products but also encourage more business owners, operators and cleaning service providers to source for certified product companies on restroom maintenance.

Conclusion

As I conclude, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Guest of Honour Mr Baey for taking time to grace our awards for the first time. I wish to thank our LOO Awards judging panel from NEA and the Public Hygiene Council for their evaluation, our partners especially SGBC for certifying the restroom products, award recipients and distinguished guests. Owing to your support, the award ceremony can be successfully organised this year, as we jointly commemorate World Toilet Day, which is tomorrow on 19 November. I look forward to your continued support next year. Let's work together to sustain a clean and safe Singapore for everyone.