

**NUS Safety and Health Award Ceremony 2009**  
**Wednesday, 22 April 2009, 8.50am, Shaw Foundation Alumni House**  
**(Auditorium)**

Mr Go Heng Huat, Deputy Director (Risk Management), Occupational Safety & Health Division, Ministry of Manpower

Distinguished Guests

Award winners

Colleagues, Students & Friends

Thank you for joining us today for the NUS Safety and Health Award Ceremony 2009.

Now a key event on our University's calendar, this award ceremony presents a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together and recognise the accomplishments of departments and teams who have dedicated time and effort to ensure a high degree of workplace safety and health in NUS. In addition to ASHPA and the Safety & Health Improvement Project Awards, we have also introduced two other categories of awards this year, namely – the Fire Safety Compliance Award and the Safetymation Award. On behalf of the University, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to all our winners.

Since ASHPA's launch in 2004, a great deal has been accomplished to promote good practices in work safety and health in NUS. The integration of safety and health into every aspect of our research, education and service has been progressing steadily, and for all this and more, I would like to commend Dr Peck Thian Guan and his team at OSHE for their unrelenting efforts as well as the Deans, Directors, Heads, faculty, staff and students for your strong support and cooperation.

To illustrate, let me share with you three noteworthy achievements and developments.

First, the Campus Safety Health and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA or shee-ma), a US-based professional organisation for campus safety specialists, conferred upon NUS its prestigious Merit award last year. This Award was in recognition of our efforts in implementing appropriate safety programmes, incorporating novel and original efforts, while complying with international standard regulations. And just two years earlier, NUS received the Occupational Safety and Health Management System Silver Award from the Singapore Ministry of Manpower for maintaining high standards for safety and health practices through our ASHPA initiatives.

Second, a University-level committee has been established to oversee construction safety, chaired by Prof Yong Kwet Yew, Vice-President for Campus Infrastructure. With the continuous upgrading of our laboratories and the setting up of new NUS research centres such as the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore and the NUS-GE Singapore Water Technology Centre, and construction of our University Town well underway, this Committee is committed to ensure that appropriate building and environmental safety systems are in place to safeguard our campus community.

Third, OSHE will be releasing new guidelines that will define the responsibilities of our principal investigators when they send their researchers and students for training and attachment to other institutions. OSHE has also initiated discussions with international agencies such as the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and the Institutional Review Board to harmonise and improve our compliance processes. We hope that with the implementation of these measures, our safety management system and processes will be further enhanced, and the well-being of our staff and students better protected.

## **Closing**

Before I end, I would like to say a few words about the accomplishments of this year's top achievers for the ASPHA competition – the departments of Pharmacy, Anatomy, Paediatrics, Pharmacology, Physiology, Physics, and the Life Sciences Institute. As an institution that always strives to be self-surpassing, we have raised the bar for this year's programme. However, while we may not have a gold award

winner this year, we do have a record number of seven silver winners, almost double the number from last year. In all our winners, I see that the common formula for success lies in strong teamwork, personal commitment and a sense of determination to make our workplace, safe place for all. You have pushed the envelope on good work safety and health practices and maintained high safety standards. Keep up the good work.

I am also very conscious that our efforts to enhance work safety and health do not result in unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy that unproductively consume the time and energy of faculty, students and staff in NUS. I am glad that OSHE and our Research & Technology Office are rising to the challenge I have set them to simplify and streamline procedures even as we enhance our safety framework and programmes.

On this note, let me express my appreciation to all of you for supporting ASHPA and for being part of this important effort to promote safety culture in our University. Congratulations once again to all our award winners today for your sterling achievements.

Thank you.