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SPRING Singapore and People's Association Enhance Support for SMEs with Renewal of Satellite SME Centres Collaboration

1. SPRING Singapore and People's Association (PA) have renewed their collaboration to enhance support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through the satellite SME Centres located at the five Community Development Councils (CDCs). Under the collaboration, SPRING, PA, the five CDCs and five Trade Association and Chambers¹ (TACs) will leverage on existing grassroots networks to identify business needs, and collaborate with Mayors and merchant associations to drive upgrading projects that address issues faced by SMEs in specific trades or locations. The satellite SME Centres will also continue to drive engagement with SMEs in the heartlands, and provide them convenient access to business advice and government schemes.

2. "SMEs are an integral part of the community, contributing to the vibrancy of the community. Heartland SMEs are more than just business outlets," said Chairman of Mayors' Committee Mr Teo Ser Luck. "Many SMEs have contributed to the community in their own ways. The CDCs will continue to work through the network of SME Centres to reach out and deepen engagements with SMEs. When our SMEs do well, it benefits Singapore and our community."

¹ The five TACs are the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME), Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI), Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI), Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SMCCI), the Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF).

3. “The Government is committed to helping businesses raise productivity and restructure.” said Mr Poon Hong Yuen, Chief Executive of SPRING Singapore. “With this renewed collaboration, we want to enable upgrading projects that address the needs of SMEs in specific trades and localities. We appreciate the strong support from the Mayors, PA and TACs, and will continue to develop and drive tailored solutions on the ground.”

4. First established in July 2013, the satellite SME Centres were introduced to extend the reach of the main SME Centres housed at the five TACs, and make business and productivity advisory and resources more accessible to SMEs located in the heartlands. Since then, the satellites SME Centres have assisted 11,000 SMEs through one-on-one advisory sessions.

5. Hallmark Flowers & Gifts is an example of an SME that received assistance from the satellite SME Centre @CDC. Founded by Ms Lina Lai in 2006, the company provides corporate and retail customers flower arrangement services and gift hampers for a variety of occasions at its shop in Toa Payoh. In August 2014, Ms Lai approached SME Centre @CDC to expand her business. Through business advisory sessions with the business advisor, Ms Lai was able to embark on e-commerce and implement a new point-of-sales system to expand her sales channels and automate sales and inventory management processes. As a result, she is able to handle more customer enquiries and her sales improved by 30%. Ms Lai is now exploring ways to promote and drive more online sales through the company’s website.

6. SMEs are encouraged to tap on business advisory and upgrading initiatives available at the satellite SME Centres as well as the five main SME Centres. In 2015, the SME Centres collectively provided one-on-one advisory to over 22,000 SMEs.

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About Community Development Councils

There are five Community Development Councils (CDCs), namely, Central Singapore CDC, North East CDC, North West CDC, South East CDC and South West CDC. Mayors of the Districts are Chairmen of the respective CDCs. The CDCs' 'ABC' mission is to Assist the Needy, Bond the People, Connect the Community. The Office of the Mayors are:

- (a) Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District;
- (b) Mr Teo Ser Luck, Mayor of North East District and Chairman of Mayors' Committee;
- (c) Dr Teo Ho Pin, Mayor of North West District;
- (d) Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, Mayor of South East District; and
- (e) Ms Low Yen Ling, Mayor of South West District.

For more information, please visit www.cdc.org.sg, www.pa.gov.sg, and OurCommunity.sg

About SPRING Singapore

SPRING Singapore is an agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry responsible for helping Singapore enterprises grow and building trust in Singapore products and services. As the enterprise development agency, SPRING works with partners to help enterprises in financing, capability and management development, technology and innovation, and access to markets. As the national standards and accreditation body, SPRING develops and promotes an internationally-recognised standards and quality assurance infrastructure. SPRING also oversees the safety of general consumer goods in Singapore. Please visit www.spring.gov.sg for more information.

For media enquiries, please contact:

SPRING Singapore

Charlotte Tan

Manager, Corporate Communications

Direct: 6279 3923

Mobile: 9877 7370

Email: charlotte_tan@spring.gov.sg

People's Association

Peggy Lam

Assistant Director, Corporate Development

Direct: 6340 5487

Mobile: 9749 0013

Email: peggy_lam@pa.gov.sg