Dear Chairman, Deputy Chairmen and Members of WSHC (Construction & Landscape) Committee,

WSHC (CN&L): PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED WSH (WORK AT HEIGHTS) REGULATIONS

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) is inviting members of the public to give feedback on the proposed Workplace Safety and Health (Work at Heights) Regulations from 13 September to 10 October 2012.

Background

2. You might recall that between April and May 2012, MOM engaged members of the Industry Committee to tap on your industry experience and gather feedback and suggestions on the legislative requirements for WAH. Thereafter, a focus group discussion session was also held to gather feedback on the draft Regulations. Over 50 professional bodies and industry stakeholders participated in the discussion. The proposed regulation was revised based on feedback received through these initial engagement sessions.

3. The Ministry is now seeking public feedback to further refine the proposed Regulations.

Key Elements of Proposed WSH (WAH) Regulations

4. The key elements of the proposed Regulations are as follows:

   - **Coverage of the proposed Regulations.** When the proposed Regulations come into effect in April 2013, they will cover only factories, as specified in the Fourth Schedule of the Workplace Safety and Health Act. The Regulations will be extended to cover all workplaces from April 2014, i.e. a year after they come into effect, to allow sufficient lead time for employers/principals in non-factory premises to build up their capability.

   - **Fall Prevention Plan (FPP).** Proper planning and risk management are crucial to WAH safety. A proper FPP needs to be developed and implemented for WAH activities which are carried out in or at a factory where 50 or more persons are at work.

   - **Permit-to-Work (PTW) system.** A PTW system is an effective and useful means to ensure WAH activities are carried out safely. The proposed Regulations require the employer/principal to establish and implement a PTW system where a person needs to carry out WAH activities and is liable to fall a distance of more than two metres. This requirement will only come into effect in April 2014 to allow sufficient lead time for employers/principals to train their staff to competently implement the PTW system.

   - **Industrial Rope Access System.** Work using the industrial rope access system is an emerging area of concern. Due to its high-risk nature, rope access should be considered the last resort when carrying out WAH activities. When rope access needs to be used, the rope access system must be designed by a professional engineer (PE). MOM proposes to impose the following duties on the PE designing the industrial rope access system:
     a) to take reasonably practicable measures to ensure that his design can be executed safely by any person who installs or uses the industrial rope access system according to his design; and
     b) to provide to any person who installs the industrial rope access system, all design documentation (including all relevant calculations, drawings and construction
procedures) as is necessary to facilitate the proper installation of the industrial rope access system according to his design.

Period of Consultation
5. MOM invites Members to participate in this consultation and also assist to inform members of your organisations to participate in the consultation exercise. The exercise will last for four weeks, from 13 September to 10 October 2012.

More details
6. More information of the proposed Regulations can be found on the Public Consultation Document on the Proposed WSH (Work at Heights) Regulations, that is posted on the Government Consultation Portal at www.reach.gov.sg. The portal can also be accessed via this LINK.

Thank you.

Workplace Safety and Health Council.
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Vision: A Safe and Healthy Workplace for Everyone. Mission: To lead industry efforts in strengthening capabilities and building a progressive culture in WSH.