

**SPEECH FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS BOARD  
DAY OF DEDICATION  
ON SATURDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 11.00 AM AT  
GRAND BALL ROOM RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL**

Mr Desmond Lee

Minister for Social and Family Development and Second  
Minister for National Development,  
Professional Engineers Board Members,  
Fellow Professional Engineers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to all. A warm welcome to all of you to today's Day of Dedication.

**INTRODUCTION**

1 We are very honoured and grateful indeed to have Minister Desmond Lee as our Guest-of-honour. To the new PEs, specialist PEs and ASEAN Chartered PEs, my heartiest congratulations to all of you.

2 This year we have 145 new PE registrants. This is yet another record number since 2007. Of this, the average age of the registrants is 39 years old, compared to average age of practising PE of 54 ( for all PEs, average age is 58). About 16 % of the new PEs are female and this compare well with the overall

percentage of female PEs of about 6%. Besides new PE registrants, we also have a large number of PEs who are registered in various specialised branches of engineering.

## **SUPPORT TO REGULATORY AGENCIES**

3 The key role of the PE Board is to register professional engineers and regulate the qualifications and conduct of professional engineers. The Board is also empowered to regulate companies which supply professional engineering services in Singapore. PEB carries out these roles to support agencies who are tasked with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The PEs registered by PEB are involved as Qualified Persons or Competent Persons and perform the duties of ensuring compliance with the requirements of agencies under their respective regulatory frameworks.

4 To ensure high standards of professional engineering practice, PEB regularly consults with agencies, universities and industry associations. The objective of these consultations is to seek feedback and explore how we could further develop the PE profession to better serve and support our stakeholders. Resulting from these, we have introduced a number of changes during the year. Allow me to update you on some of these changes.

## Introducing Registration of PE In Chemical Engineering

5 With effect from 1 Jan 2017, PEB has commenced on the registration of PEs in a new basic branch, namely chemical engineering. The registration is to support MOM, NEA and SCDF in the implementation of the 'Safety Case' regime for Major Hazard Installations (MHIs). The regime is part of requirements under the Workplace Safety and Health regulations and has come into operation in Sep 2017. PE (Chemical) will be required to certify and endorse key technical aspects in a Safety Case, like front-end engineering design calculations and risk analysis and help to ensure the safe operations of MHIs.

6 We are happy to note that response to the launch of the registration of PE (Chemical) has been very good. As at Oct 2017, 47 PE (Chemical). Interviews for another about 85 applicants are being arranged and we are confident of building up a sizeable cohort of PE (Chemical) that would meet the needs of Major Hazard Installations.

## Introducing registration of Specialist PE in New Specialised Branches

7 Since the beginning of 2017, PEB has also started registering specialist PEs in 4 more specialised branches, namely, lift and escalator engineering, crane engineering, access platform engineering and pressure vessel engineering. PEs registered as specialist PEs in lift and escalator engineering

will be carrying out duties as Competent or Qualified persons under BCA or MOM's regulatory framework, while specialist PEs in the 3 other categories will carry out duties under MOM's regulatory framework. We have so far registered about 95 specialist PEs in these four specialised branches..

## **STREAMLINING OF REGISTRATION PROCESSES**

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE PE ACT**

8 Going forward, we would be putting into effect a number of changes related to recent amendments of the PE Act. The amendments are made for better regulation and development of the profession, and to better meet the changing needs of stakeholders and the general public. Two public consultations were made in conjunction with these amendments, one in Dec 2013 and another in Jun 2017. We would like to thank all of you for taking the time and effort to submit your comments.

9 The amendments are incorporated in the Professional Engineers (Amendment) Bill 2017. The 1st Reading of the Bill was made on 1 Aug 17, and the 2nd Reading was made on the 11 Sep 17. We would like to thank Minister for introducing the Bill and for moving the Bill for second reading in parliament. The commencement date of the Act is being worked out. In the meantime, I would like to highlight some of the key amendments of the Act.

## **Expanding the functions of PEB**

10 PEB's scope of functions will be expanded to allow the Board to undertake more activities to develop the PE profession, in addition to promoting learning and education in connection with engineering. In this regard PEB will collaborate with our partners and stakeholders to engage in activities and initiatives that will help to raise the standards and strengthen the capabilities of the profession.

11 With respect to promoting learning and education in connection with engineering, PEB will continue to award scholarships to engineering undergraduates who meet requirements. In fact, we have tweak the scholarship requirements recently to increase the likelihood that scholarship holders would take up engineering as a career and apply for PE registration. Instead of offering to all undergraduates in all the 4 years, we will limit the scholarships to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduates. The scholarship will be increased from \$3000 per year to \$6000 per year. PEB would also offer to a recipient of a fourth year scholarship to take the Fundamental of Engineering Examination at no charge, for one time only, within 3 years from the date of graduation. In addition, PEB would invite and encourage scholarship recipients to interact and meet with Board members at tea sessions and other PEB activities.

## **Allow licensees to engage specialist PEs**

12 The other key amendments of the Act is to allow a licensee who is either a licensed corporation or limited liability partnership, to engage a specialist PE as a sub-consultant under a service contract. Currently, for such a licensee to provide PE services in a particular branch of engineering, it is a condition of licensing that such services shall be supplied by an in-house PE who is a director, partner, or employee. However, some licensees may not have in-house specialist PEs as permanent staff and this may limit their ability to bid for more complex projects. With this change, a company licensed in civil engineering for example, could engage a specialist PE in geotechnical engineering as a sub-consultant, thus allowing the firm to provide comprehensive civil engineering services that include underground geotechnical building works.

## **Allow builders to employ PEs**

13 Additionally, another key amendment to the Act will enable a builder to employ a registered PE to engage in certain PE works without the need for the builder to be licensed under the Act. The precise scope of such works could be prescribed by agencies where applicable. In general, they could include temporary works which are required to provide access, protection, support, or services and accommodation for persons, equipment and materials during the construction, renovation, retrofit, maintenance, or demolition of permanent works. The proposed amendment would be 'win-win' as builders will be able

to carry out these works without the need to appoint external consultants while PEs are provided with another avenue to practice and to even specialise. Out of a total of about 2400 PEs with PC, only about 150 of them cite their employers as builders. With this change, the numbers of PEs who seek employment with builders could increase appreciably.

## **CELEBRATION OF THE PROFESSION**

### New Registered PEs

14 Back to the new PEs: registration is indeed a significant milestone that brings with it much challenge as well as opportunities. We discuss some of these challenges earlier in the 2 tea sessions in Apr and Sep 17 when Board met a number of the newly registered PEs. Nonetheless, I would like to remind all of you that since we are given the privilege by law to practice professional engineering, we are required to deliver our services professionally and with utmost diligence. We shall always seek to distinguish ourselves by providing the best engineering solutions to our clients and employer.

15 Most importantly, a professional engineer shall act with prime regard to the public interest. When a PE is involved in regulatory work prescribed by government and agencies and is required to evaluate, certify and endorse submissions and plans to regulators, a PE has to bear this objective upper most in his mind and ensure that he carries out his task with knowledge,

competence and due diligence. This applies to new PEs as well as to all the rest of us, who may not be so new.

## **CONCLUSION**

16 In closing, this is a day for our new PEs, specialist PEs, ACPEs and all our award winners to celebrate your achievements with family and friends. I wish you all the very best and every success in your future endeavours.

17 Thank you.

(1540 words)