

**OPENING ADDRESS BY MR CHEE HONG TAT, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE
(MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY & MINISTRY OF EDUCATION) AT THE
ADULT LEARNING SYMPOSIUM 2018, 1 NOV 2018, 9.00 AM, MARINA BAY
SANDS CONVENTION CENTRE**

1 A very good morning to all. I am happy to join you at this year's Adult Learning Symposium organised by the Institute for Adult Learning. I am heartened to see how far the Symposium has come, since its first run in 2008. The symbol we are using for today's Symposium is a clenched fist. I asked the organisers why they picked this, and they explained that the fist symbolises the determination to conquer new frontiers. To form a fist, the five fingers need to come together; in the same way, the Government, employers, unions, workers, training providers and intermediaries including our trade associations and partners, all need to come together. This is what we need to do going forward, as we discuss various initiatives – how to bring together this partnership, and work together as one, to better support lifelong learning and SkillsFuture.

Changing Landscape of Work and Learning

2 Today, the world of work is changing at an ever-increasing pace, driven mainly by technological developments. While such job disruptions can present opportunities, new business models, and innovations, it also means that our workers need to adapt, so that they can move into these new growth areas. This may sound simple, but is difficult to do. That is why we need partnership to do this well. Hence, it is important that workers have the necessary support to ride this wave of change through skills upgrading and reskilling. This is one of the key outcomes that the SkillsFuture movement wants to achieve. We want to empower every Singaporean to succeed in the future economy. This is why we need to support and enable our workforce to acquire the skillsets that can help them thrive in new and emerging industries. This

will not be a one-off exercise. It is a journey, a movement and something that we have to work hard on year after year. These skillsets must continue to be refreshed and updated throughout the worker's career, so that our workforce and workers are always nimble and competitive.

3 Therefore, today's conference theme "Work and Learning: Conquer New Frontiers!" is very timely. The new paradigm of lifelong learning is such that work and learning can no longer exist in separate worlds, but must co-exist in a single continuum. This continual interaction between working and learning is key to helping us stay nimble in the midst of rapid changes and conquer new frontiers. Businesses want training to be work-relevant and bring about tangible business outcomes; workers want their training to be able to help them to do their jobs better, or to secure better employment opportunities. Training and Adult Education (TAE) professionals play a critical role in this process, as you help to integrate work and learning for enterprises and workers.

Launching the Skills Framework for Training & Adult Education

4 In February this year, we launched the TAE Industry Transformation Map (ITM) and this is a broad, high-level roadmap to professionalise and strengthen the capabilities of the TAE sector. Building on this, I am happy to launch the Skills Framework for Training and Adult Education today. It covers 13 job roles such as Learning Solutionist and Learning Technology Designer, and provides key information on trends, career pathways, occupations, as well as existing and emerging skills such as Workplace Learning Delivery and Learning Technology Design.

5 Through this framework, we hope to better support TAE professionals in their efforts to better plan their career and skills development in various career tracks and grow their skills in areas with growing demand. Training providers can also refer to the framework to plan their menu of course offerings and transform their business. At the same time, HR champions within companies can benefit from insights on market trends and emerging skills to better train their in-house trainers, so that they, in turn, can help employees acquire the relevant skills.

Uplifting the Quality of TAE Professionals

6 Using the Skills Framework, the Institute for Adult Learning has designed a new programme to help TAE professionals pick up critical skills, which I am happy to launch today. This new programme, called the Advanced Certificate in Learning and Performance (ACLP), will enable full-time and freelance TAE professionals, as well as those who facilitate learning as part of their jobs, to further advance their training skills. The ACLP will replace the Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA), and is set to commence in Q2 2019, benefitting at least 3,000 TAE professionals. The ACLP will not just cover facilitation and assessment skills, but also include emerging competencies such as designing customised learning solutions. This supports the TAE ITM's call for the TAE industry and community to embrace workplace learning and leverage learning technologies, to deliver learning that promotes business and performance transformation.

7 The quality of our Adult Educators determines the quality of training under SkillsFuture. A key factor why Singapore has a good education system is the quality

of our teachers. Similarly, if we want to have a high quality SkillsFuture movement, we need good trainers, and it is important for us to continually raise their standards over time. This is why SSG will be extending the same Adult Educator qualification requirements currently in place for all WSQ courses, to also apply to non-WSQ certifiable courses funded by SSG. This means that the training providers will be required to have at least 80% of their trainers and assessors possess either ACTA or ACLP qualification or the equivalent by 31 Dec 2020. They will have slightly more than two years to fulfil these requirements. We will give you time and help you along, but it is important that we maintain high standards, so that it is beneficial to the industry as a whole. To help the small group of Adult Educators who are experienced and already have the skills but have yet to be certified, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be made available, because we believe that if the trainers already possess these skills, we should recognise them. Fees will be waived for RPL applications by these Adult Educators during the 2-year transition period from Jan 2019 to Dec 2020. Ensuring that TAE professionals are equipped with the required skills will enable TAE providers to innovate and drive more effective learning, thereby providing higher quality training for all our workers.

8 Beyond this certification, more experienced TAE practitioners can participate in programmes like the Certified Workplace Learning Specialist (CWLS) that trains them to become specialists who provide suitable business skills development solutions for organisations. Since its launch in 2016, 60 specialists have been trained and involved in over 100 enterprise capability-building projects.

9 One of the individuals who has undergone this programme is Kris Loy from the pioneer batch of the CWLS course. After being equipped with workplace learning and enterprise solutioning skills through the CWLS, Kris went on to work on various learning performance projects, such as at Aegis Building and Engineering Pte Ltd, where she prepared Persons with Intellectual Disabilities to take on tradesmen roles doing plastering and painting. She worked closely with the company supervisors to develop a workplace learning system, including customised job-aids such as step-by-step standard operating procedures and videos to shorten the learning curve of these tradesmen. According to Mr Yeong, Managing Director of Aegis who is here with us today, the change has made Aegis a more inclusive workplace. Through this new arrangement, they have not only developed a new source of manpower, but also built up new capabilities in learning and work performance. I look forward to hearing many more of such success stories, where our TAE practitioners play a central role in catalysing business transformation.

Developing an Ecosystem that Supports Industry Transformation

10 As part of the continual efforts to enhance the quality of the TAE sector, I have asked for the regulatory requirements under SSG to be further streamlined, and for the application fees charged to all types of training providers and private education institutions (PEIs) to be reviewed. With the Committee for Private Education (CPE) now coming under SSG, we have the opportunity to improve such application processes to make things simpler, better and faster for our businesses, lowering overall business costs, while still achieving a good baseline standard for the sector. We will share more about the outcome of this review next year, but I wanted to share

this direction and my commitment with you today – to bring the regulations under review, with the aim of making them simpler, better, faster, for our training providers.

11 I am proud to say that Singapore's TAE system is well-regarded by many countries today. This is due to the many years of hard work and dedication by TAE providers like yourselves. SSG and our industry players must continue to work together to uphold high standards, so that we safeguard Singapore's hard-earned reputation and trusted branding. This includes taking a united, firm stand, against black sheep who tarnish the image of our TAE industry.

12 There is a growing demand for our continuing education and training (CET) model globally. Even as we continue to strengthen the system in Singapore, it is opportune for training providers to consider overseas expansion which can create more business and job opportunities for the sector. In discussions with industry players, we realised that many of you have to invest a fair bit of upfront fixed costs in curriculum design and systems. So if you're able to increase the volume of demand, including through taking the training overseas, it will help to spread the fixed costs over a larger demand, and make our TAE providers more competitive due to larger economies of scale. MOE and SSG will work together with the industry to see how we can support you.

13 The Strategic Association of Professional Training-Consulting Organisation (SAPTCO), an industry association formed by TAE providers, has formed a joint venture to export WSQ-aligned curriculum, starting with India and Vietnam. This is a good test-bed to learn and gather valuable insights on what works best for international

markets. I believe this partnership can help us bring the trusted Singapore brand name – the quality education that we provide – to some of these overseas partners. But we need to work together to uphold standards and safeguard our branding. Hence, I appeal for all of you to work together with us and the industry associations, as we need everyone’s cooperation and support to do this well and take Singapore’s education and our trusted brand name, overseas.

14 To support the efforts of our local training providers, SSG will also be working with Enterprise Singapore (or ESG), under MTI, on measures to facilitate and assist training providers, and tap on their capabilities and reputation in the Singapore CET environment to capture business opportunities in the region and beyond. I brought in ESG to work with SSG because ESG has a wider regional and international network, and also has some schemes that can help support overseas expansion efforts. I think with the combination of efforts of these two agencies, and working with industry associations, I am confident that we can make an impact.

Conclusion

15 The various initiatives I have touched upon show our strong support for the overall uplifting of standards in the TAE sector, and we want to do this in close partnership with industry players. Through participation in the various programmes, we want to encourage TAE providers to invest in lifelong learning and skills upgrading of your workforce. These efforts will create win-win outcomes for both the TAE companies and your workers, such as better business returns and job outcomes for individuals. At the broader level, with the TAE sector supporting other ITM sectors in

skills upgrading, the sector will continue to play a strong role in developing the skills needed for our economy to remain competitive.

16 Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for your commitment and support in pursuing and contributing towards a quality TAE sector. Our common determination in taking this industry to greater heights will enable us to conquer new frontiers together.

17 I wish you a fruitful conference ahead.

18 Thank you.