

1

MTI FORMS NEW WORKGROUP TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR SMES

1. A new government-led workgroup has been formed to lead and coordinate efforts to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in overcoming the challenges they face in restructuring and raising productivity. Led by Minister of State for Trade and Industry Teo Ser Luck, the SME Workgroup comprises Advisors, government agencies and business representatives. (List of members in [Annex A](#))

2. The SME Workgroup is part of the Government's continued efforts to build a strong and competitive SME sector, which will contribute to a vibrant and dynamic economy, providing good jobs and opportunities for Singaporeans.

3. Over the years, the Government has provided extensive support to help SMEs upgrade their capabilities. At Budget 2013, several new assistance schemes¹ were introduced to enhance support for SMEs in the areas of productivity and capability upgrading, as well as tapping into regional markets for business expansion. Schemes have also been streamlined and the application process simplified to make it easier for SMEs to apply for government assistance.

4. The focus of the SME Workgroup will be in three main areas. First, it will oversee the implementation of the various government programmes and schemes related to SMEs. This is to ensure that the various schemes remain accessible and remain relevant to SMEs' needs.

5. Second, the SME Workgroup will strengthen engagement with the local business community, to deepen understanding of the respective sectors' concerns and challenges. This will be done through outreach and engagement sessions, led by the Advisors. Through these sessions, the Advisors will also help to raise awareness of the wide range of schemes and resources available to SMEs.

6. Mr Teo Ser Luck said, "SMEs are increasingly aware of the need to transform and change the way they operate in this new business environment. However, many may still face difficulties due to limited resources and low awareness of government assistance channels. We will engage them and widen our outreach to understand their challenges. We will also continue to partner and work closely with the industry and business associations to co-create innovative solutions and provide targeted assistance that would address SMEs' needs and concerns."

¹ SME-specific schemes announced at Budget 2013 include Collaborative Industry Projects (CIP), SME Talent Programme (STP), enhancement to Partnership for Capability Transformation (PACT), Market Readiness Assistance (MRA) schemes and enhancement of Enterprise Development Centres (EDCs) into one-stop SME Centres.

7. Finally, the SME Workgroup will identify gaps and make recommendations to improve existing policies related to SMEs based on the feedback received. The business representatives on the Workgroup will provide feedback on the concerns of SMEs and the recommendations of the Workgroup.

8. The structure of the SME Workgroup will consist of two groups working in parallel – an Advisory Sub-Committee comprising Advisors to lead outreach and engagement efforts with the SME community, and a Business and Government Sub-Committee comprising government agencies and business representatives to review government policies related to SMEs. The SME Workgroup’s inaugural meeting is scheduled in mid-September 2013.

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
3 September 2013

Annex A

SME Workgroup Members

	Advisors	Constituency
1	Mr Teo Ser Luck (Chair)	Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC
2	Mr Ang Wei Neng	Jurong GRC
3	Ms Foo Mee Har	West Coast GRC
4	Mr Gan Thiam Poh	Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC
5	Mr Liang Eng Hwa	Holland-Bukit Timah GRC
6	Ms Low Yen Ling	Chua Chu Kang GRC
7	Mr Zaqy Mohamad	Chua Chu Kang GRC
8	Mr Vikram Nair	Sembawang GRC
9	Dr Lily Neo	Tanjong Pagar GRC
10	Mr David Ong	Jurong GRC
11	Mr Seah Kian Peng	Marine Parade GRC
12	Ms Jessica Tan	East Coast GRC
13	Mr Yeo Guat Kwang	Ang Mo Kio GRC
14	Mr Ong Teng Koon	Sembawang GRC
15	Dr Chia Shi-Lu	Tanjong Pagar GRC
16	Dr Lim Wee Kiak	Nee Soon GRC
17	Er. Dr Lee Bee Wah	Nee Soon GRC
	Business Representatives	Designation
18	Mr Tony Chew	Chairman, Singapore Business Federation (SBF)
19	Mr Chan Chong Beng	President, Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME)
20	Mr Thomas Chua	President, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI)
21	Mr Zahidi bin Abdul Rahman	President, Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SMCCI)

22	Mr R. Narayanamohan	President, Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI)
23	Dr Jannie Chan	President, Singapore Retailers Association (SRA)
24	Mr George Huang	President, Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)
25	Mr Tan Kah Huat	MD, CEI Contract Manufacturing
26	Mr Jimmy Soh	MD, Chye Choon Foods Pte Ltd; Deputy President, Singapore Food Manufacturing Association (SFMA)
27	Mr Yeo Hiang Meng	Director, Orient Goldsmith & Jewellers Pte Ltd; President, Federation of Merchants' Association (FMAS)
28	Mr Yang Wah Kiang	Chairman, Nanyang Optical
29	Mr Michael Tien	CEO, Atlas Sound & Vision
	Government Representatives	
30	Ministry of Trade & Industry (MTI)	
31	Ministry of Manpower (MOM)	
32	Ministry of Finance (MOF)	
33	SPRING Singapore	
34	International Enterprise (IE) Singapore	
35	Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA)	
36	Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA)	
37	Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)	
38	National Environment Agency (NEA)	
39	Housing Development Board (HDB)	
40	JTC Corporation (JTC)	