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**WELCOME SPEECH BY BCA CHAIRMAN, MR LEE FOOK SUN, AT BCA AWARDS 2017, AT RESORTS WORLD SENTOSA ON 13 JUNE 2017, TUESDAY, 7.05PM**

Mr Lawrence Wong  
Minister for National Development

Mr Hugh Lim  
CEO, BCA

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

**Introduction**

1. A warm welcome to more than 2,000 of you here at the BCA Awards ceremony this evening.

2. Our industry has come a long way since the first award was introduced about 30 years ago. Today, our built environment ranks among the top cities in the world in terms of safety, quality,

accessibility and sustainability. Our efforts to improve construction productivity has also been recognised internationally.

3. Tonight, close to 500 BCA Awards will be given out. This reflects the broad-based progress and development of leading firms in our sector. On behalf of BCA, I would like to thank all of you for your collective effort and contribution in delivering these achievements for our built environment.

4. This year, more firms are recognised for their productivity efforts, which includes moving towards extensive prefabrication and advanced construction technologies. Our BIM Award winners, for example, represent firms that are embracing Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Virtual Design and Construction (VDC) to improve collaboration across the construction value chain.

## **Raising standards and staying relevant to changing needs**

5. We must continue to aim for higher standards to meet the changing needs of our built environment and keep up with the competition – not just within Singapore but internationally. To do so, we need the collective efforts of all stakeholders to transform our industry and the built environment. We have to keep raising our standards and stay relevant to changing needs.

6. While we have achieved a cumulative 10% improvement in site productivity in the last six years, we need to do more to enhance productivity in the sector and reduce reliance on low-skilled workers. The three key strategies that will drive this industry transformation are: technology adoption, a high quality workforce and greater synergistic integration within the industry.

7. BCA will continue to work with both public agencies and the industry to promote a wider adoption of Design for Manufacturing and Assembly, and help the industry reap the full benefits of BIM and VDC. At the same time, we need to build strong capabilities to support the ongoing transformation of the sector.

8. Concurrently, we will need to continue to do our part as global citizens to mitigate climate change. We have worked closely with the industry to develop our green building standards. As a result, the BCA Green Mark scheme provides a very holistic approach to greening our buildings and infrastructures as well as influencing the behaviour of building occupants. Tonight, BCA will officially launch the world's first dedicated green certification scheme for the design and operation of laboratories. The Energy Research Institute @NTU, and the Singapore Sustainable Laboratories Group have contributed significantly to the design of this new scheme.

9. In addition, we are collaborating very closely with the industry and research community to test-bed green building solutions at the BCA SkyLab. A series of experiments involving more than 20 organisations have been lined up till the end of next year, and more researchers and companies have also expressed their interest to use the BCA SkyLab's facilities.

10. Moving forward, closer collaboration with building tenants and users is critical for us to achieve low-rise buildings that are positive energy, medium rise buildings that are zero energy and high-rise buildings that are super-low energy.

11. Lastly, with the fast ageing population, we need to shape a truly inclusive built environment that caters to the elderly and diverse needs of Singaporeans. This means moving beyond providing basic accessibility to embracing Universal Design (UD).

12. BCA will continue to work hand-in-hand with public agencies, the industry and also voluntary welfare organisations on the development of UD standards. And, we will also actively engage and involve the industry to promote best practices.

### **Raising the competitiveness of our firms and workforce**

13. We like our firms to do well not just in Singapore. We also like to see them do well overseas and internationally. By building deep competencies in core skillsets, our companies will not only remain competitive locally, but will be well-poised to capture regional and global opportunities.

14. In fact, the recent BCA Construction Export Survey showed Singapore firms have achieved an average annual total export value of around S\$1.7 billion in the last 5 years. Just like Singapore, our region is urbanising rapidly. Therefore, there are many more opportunities for Singapore companies to expand abroad with our expertise in green and smart buildings as well as labour-efficient high quality construction.

15. People is the key resource in any business. We need to develop a strong Singaporean core in our workforce, and it is critical that firms adopt good human resource (HR) practices to attract, retain and develop talent. Our journey forward will require our built environment companies to transform and become employers of choice, offering quality jobs to Singaporeans especially at the professional, managerial, executive and technical (PMET) level.

16. Under the five-year Rebranding Roadmap for the built environment sector, one key thrust is to build up the sector's HR capability through a suite of initiatives. These include the HR Pledge, funding support for HR-related training, engagement with the HR community and greater recognition for HR professionals.

17. Since BCA launched the “Pledge for a Better Built Environment Workplace” in 2014, more than 300 companies have signed the Pledge.

18. Tonight, BCA will be launching a HR guidebook specific to the built environment sector. Within this HR guidebook are industry best practices, HR templates and self-assessment tools and resources to help firms further improve their current HR practices. Companies who have signed the HR Pledge can download the guidebook for free.

## **Conclusion**

19. I will like to express my sincere thanks to all the assessment committees and industry professionals for your commitment and time in judging and participating in tonight’s awards. And to all colleagues, friends and stakeholders in the built environment sector, let us continue to work together in our ongoing journey to

transform the sector and create a better built environment for Singapore. Thank you and have a great evening ahead.

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