

Welcome Address by Dr A. Chockalingam
Chairman of the Singapore Chemical Industry Council
SCIC Annual Dinner 2009 /
Responsible Care Awards 2008 Presentation
Intercontinental Hotel Singapore
Thursday 26th March 2009, 7:00 pm

Our Guest of Honour, Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Senior Minister of State for Law & Home Affairs, Representatives from the Government Agencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

A very good evening to all of you.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Singapore Chemical Industry Council's Annual Dinner 2009 and Responsible Care 2008 Awards presentation ceremony.

The chemical industry has had a very good economic run over the past few years, growing in tandem with the world economy. The global financial crisis that descended upon us in October and which is still unfolding has caught us all by surprise. We have hit a very turbulent patch. We all know that flying through turbulence normally results in a sudden drop in elevation. We need to steady ourselves and recover lost ground.

Chemicals generally enjoy a steady demand growth, with new plants creating a step change on the supply side resulting in short term overcapacity and reduced margins, which takes time to correct itself,

contributing to the cyclic nature of the chemical industry. The current crisis is unprecedented, given the drop in demand, brought about by the contraction in the Auto and Housing Industries. Industry is resilient, it makes adjustments and will go on a new trajectory.

Industry associations such as SCIC play an important role during such times to help our members. One year ago, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SPRING Singapore to work together to help the Singapore Chemical industry manage its ongoing challenges. As part of the collaboration, the SCIC team together with the help of SPRING, have been cascading information and conducting training workshops on EU REACH compliance for the Chemical and other industries in Singapore. With the new economic challenges we have also been working with SPRING and other agencies on new funding schemes and grants to help our members.

We must not waiver in our commitment to Responsible Care in these challenging times. On the Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) front however, we had encountered a number of incidents. The recent tragedy involving a service provider reminds us that when things go wrong, the consequences are very high. Collectively we must strive harder to improve on our HSSE performances to make the industry a safer place to work in. SCIC has been working closely with the Ministry of Manpower to help our members proactively manage risks and improve on workplace health and safety. We must extend this to evaluate our service providers as well on their HSSE

practices and ensure that in serving us they do not put the community at risk.

We must also ensure that service providers do not pass on the task to other companies without the approval of the principal. SCIC will work with both the Occupational Safety & Health Department and the Workplace Safety & Health Council of MOM to bring improvements in these areas.

The review of safety management system for process industries will be based on SS506 part 3 from July this year. This new standard was officially launched in 2006 and calls for an improved and auditable process safety management system. SCIC will be arranging a workshop to highlight the changes to help our members.

Responsible Care programme remains the main focus of SCIC and getting SME's to subscribe and live up to the principles of Responsible Care is a major challenge. We have made significant progress and I am very pleased with the success of 3 SMEs who have strived hard to achieve the awards for 2008. This is a very positive development, which I hope will be an encouragement to others.

Manpower is a major focus for our industry both in good and bad times. The Open Day in August 2008 was a major success, showcasing the Chemical Industry to tertiary students and their

parents. We will continue this event targeting a different audience this year. Given the current economic climate, we are working with the tertiary institutes and SPRING to have short term employment opportunities for fresh graduates till the economy turns around.

On behalf of SCIC, I would like to take this opportunity to thank OM Group and SOXAL for sponsoring the Responsible Care 2008 Awards. I would also like to thank the SCIC team of Terence, TJ, Kah Boon, Agmer, Richard and Wennie for their tremendous efforts in organizing this event.

I extend my heartiest congratulations to the recipients of the Responsible Care 2008 Awards and the SCIC Appreciation Awards. Special recognition goes out to the panel of judges who have devoted their valuable time to painstakingly review all the applications, conduct clarification meetings and select the outstanding practitioners.

Prof Ho, thank you for gracing our event this evening,

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish all a pleasant and enjoyable evening evening.