



THE SINGAPORE CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE MAGAZINE

# Thank You for Serving.

Tribute Edition (II): Exclusive Interviews with a Special Class of Individuals

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Photo: First joint-operation involving all three SCDF Volunteer Schemes - CD Lionhearts, NCDCC and CDAU - during the Lying In State at the Padang

A few days ago, I came across some vintage presentation slides in my office. While browsing through them, I realised that the spirit of volunteerism has always been the bread and butter of the Lifesaving Force, apart from firefighting, rescue and public protection.

The Civil Defence Volunteer Scheme was created in 1982 with the aim of establishing a Civil Defence Coordinating Committee in every constituency. This was soon replaced by the Civil Defence Executive Committees at the residential heartlands. By 31 January 1997, the SCDF had 49,512 volunteers and this was possible due to the recruitment of the Civil Defence Volunteers who have evolved to become the People's Association's Community Emergency Response Teams that we have today.

Of course, it did not stop there. In order to adapt to the inevitable changes that comes with time, the SCDF established the Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU) in April 2006

and the Civil Defence Lionhearts Club in 2009. Early this year, we have also launched the first CDAU Firefighting Course for volunteers with no requisite skills in this area of expertise. What is interesting is that our volunteers from various schemes are threaded by one thing in common - a passion to save lives.

A year before setting up the CDAU, the SCDF introduced the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps (NCDCC) in secondary schools with aim of inculcating lifesaving skills to the younger generation. As the NCDCC turned 10 years old this year, their mantra to "Learn, Lead and Serve" will continue to inspire student leaders of tomorrow.

On behalf of the editorial committee, I would like to wish the NCDCC a Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! For those SCDF volunteers out there, I must say that it is definitely a privilege to be part of this noble and meaningful movement especially with the SCDF paving the way with its Vision 2025

of creating A Nation of Lifesavers.

Closer to our hearts, we have also witnessed the first joint operation involving all three SCDF Volunteer Schemes during the Lying In State at the Padang where our volunteers were stationed at the medical posts to render their assistance to members of public as they pay their respect to our late Founding Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

This edition of Rescue 995 is a tribute to all of you - our volunteers - featuring exclusive interviews with a handful of your comrades.

Thank you for serving! Have a heart, play your part towards A Nation of Lifesavers.

**Michelle Lim**  
Editor, Rescue 995  
Public Affairs Department

## GET IN TOUCH

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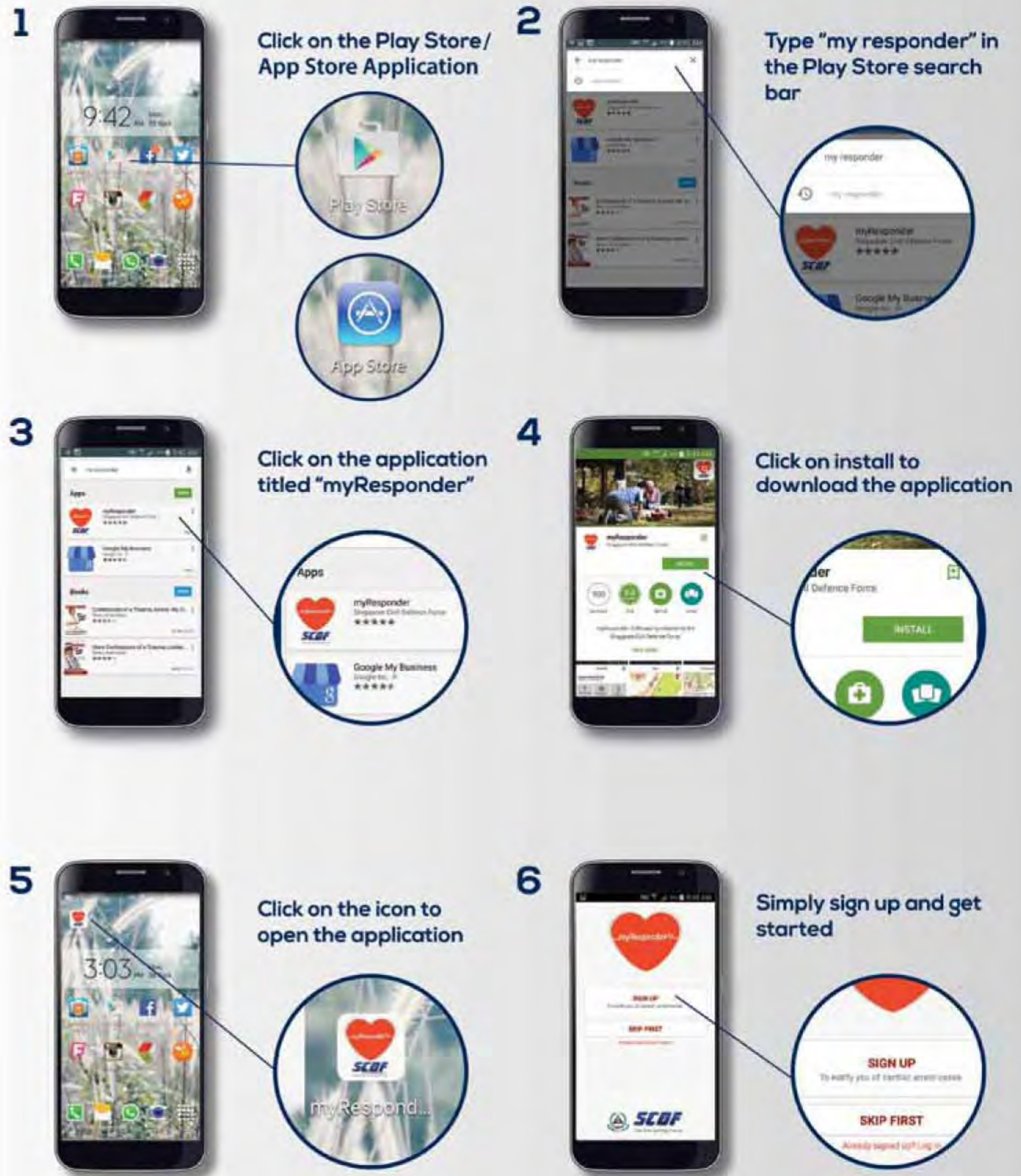
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# myResponder

It's now available in both Android & Iphone version

*If you are trained in CPR and AED. sign up at [www.raedi.sg](http://www.raedi.sg) and download the myResponder mobile application to be a Community First Responder!*



**Singapore Civil Defence Force**  
March 27, 2015

The SCDF CDAU Volunteers, NCDCC Cadets and Civil Defence Lionhearters are on stand-by at the designated Medical Posts in Padang.

For those who are still in the queue to pay your respects, remember to stay hydrated. If you are not feeling well at any point in time, please approach our volunteers.



703 People like this.

Photo: Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee,  
Chairman of Home Team Volunteers  
Network

# Home Team Volunteers Network

## *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Mission*

### **Can you briefly explain the Home Team Volunteers Network (HTVN) tag line?**

The tag line of the HTVN is “*Ordinary People, Extraordinary Mission*” and it succinctly reflects the reality of the work that our volunteers do to fulfil the mission of keeping Singapore Safe and Secure.

### **What is it that you enjoy most when heading the HTVN?**

I enjoy interacting with our volunteers. In fact, I make it a point to communicate with them as often as I can. I also take their feedback very seriously.

Apart from attending dialogue sessions with the Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU) Volunteers, I have also been very involved in the Civil Defence (CD) Lionhearer programmes. Today, we have successfully set up our CD Lionhearer Clubs in all the local polytechnics and Institutes of Technical Education. Of course, we have other future plans to expand our outreach too.

At the secondary school level, the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps (NCDCC) is also successfully taking shape. Today, our Cadet Lieutenants and Honorary Officers from the NCDCC have become ambassadors by contributing their expertise to help nurture our young.

I see these platforms as a continuum where the SCDF engages young Singaporeans from the primary school to tertiary level. It brings me great joy to be able to witness such a steady and healthy growth in the SCDF volunteer movement.

### **Share with us an initiative on the SCDF CDAU in which you had been instrumental of.**

During one of my dialogue sessions, a CDAU volunteer suggested that he should wear the same uniform as the SCDF regular officers. This is to prevent any visual forms of distinction from the regulars when they are on duty. I thought that was a useful suggestion and I immediately conveyed it to Commissioner Eric Yap. Commissioner

SCDF must have given it serious consideration because the suggestion became a reality almost immediately! This move has definitely helped the CDAU volunteers forge a stronger sense of identity with the SCDF.

### **You are regarded as the indefatigable Chairman of the HTVN. What motivates you to do what you do?**

I always believe that I should do more than what I am supposed to do.

In fact, I have always been like this since young. During my school days, I took part in many co-curricular activities such as sports, debate, drama as well as student leadership positions. When I was a Member of Parliament, I implemented quite a few “out of the box” activities to enrich the lives of Nee Soon East residents too.

I subscribe to the principle that a person should always stretch his own capabilities to contribute the best that he can. As I grow older, it has inevitably become a passion of mine to want to do my best and to do more for others. I am 60 years old now and this passion helps me to live life to the fullest.

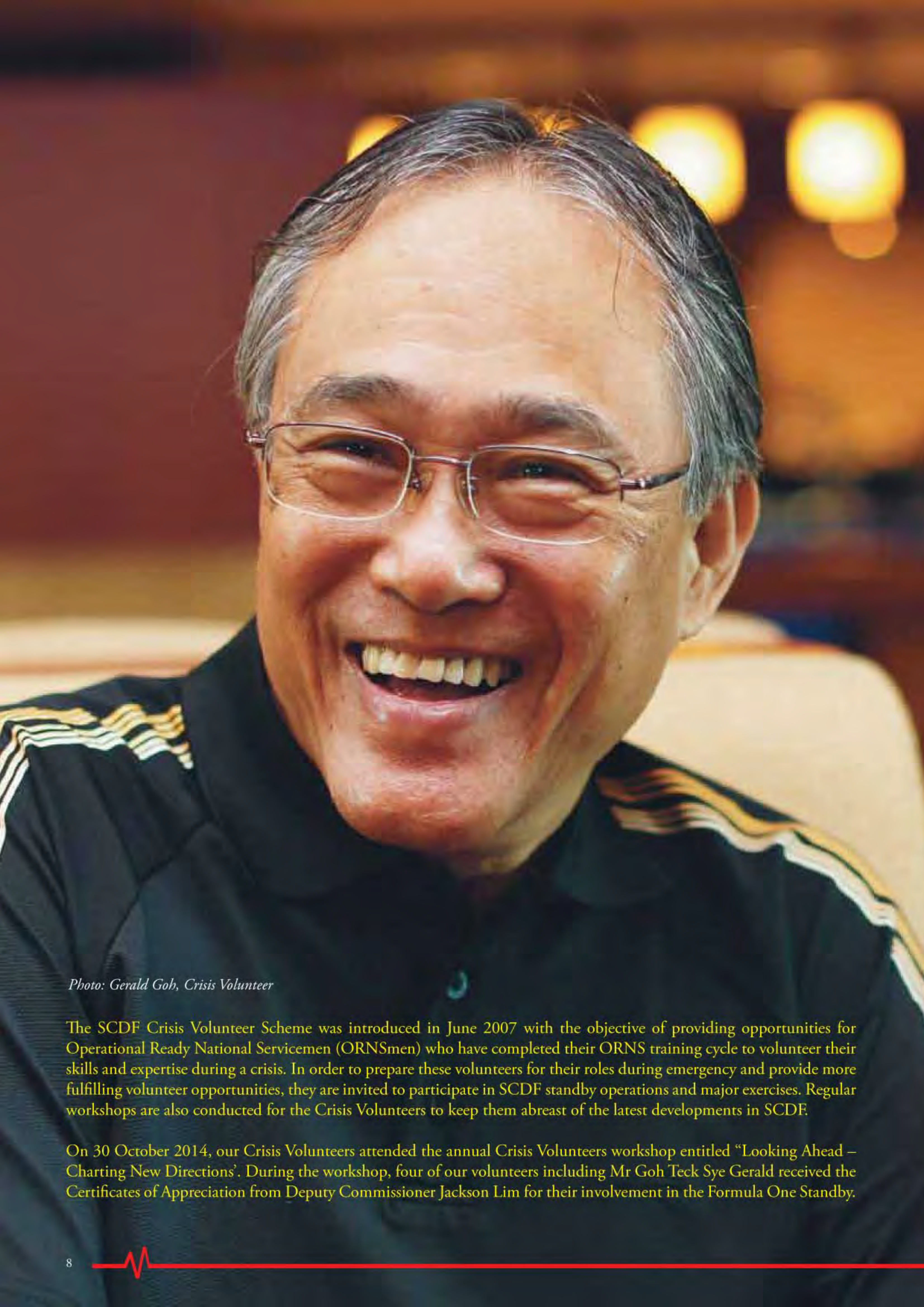
### **What is your wish for the HTVN?**

I hope that the Home Team volunteer movement will grow from strength to strength, where in every family, there is someone who is trained and equipped with skills and knowledge that ensures a safer and more secure Singapore.

I hope to see growth, not just in the number of volunteers but also in the quality of the volunteer programmes and the contributions required of a volunteer. In particular, I would encourage more SCDF Operationally-Ready National Servicemen to consider joining us as volunteers. They are well-equipped with life-saving skills that are valuable to our mission of keeping Singapore safe and secure and it should definitely be put to good use. 🚒

Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee was formerly the Senior Minister of State in the Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Home Affairs, and a Member of Parliament representing the Nee Soon East Single Member Constituency. He is currently the Chairman of the Home Team Volunteers Network (HTVN).

Launched on 15 July 2011, the HTVN aims to provide the overall guidance to the various volunteer schemes in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) through fostering a stronger common identity among these volunteers.



# Crisis Volunteer

Photo: Gerald Goh, Crisis Volunteer

The SCDF Crisis Volunteer Scheme was introduced in June 2007 with the objective of providing opportunities for Operational Ready National Servicemen (ORNSmen) who have completed their ORNS training cycle to volunteer their skills and expertise during a crisis. In order to prepare these volunteers for their roles during emergency and provide more fulfilling volunteer opportunities, they are invited to participate in SCDF standby operations and major exercises. Regular workshops are also conducted for the Crisis Volunteers to keep them abreast of the latest developments in SCDF.

On 30 October 2014, our Crisis Volunteers attended the annual Crisis Volunteers workshop entitled "Looking Ahead – Charting New Directions". During the workshop, four of our volunteers including Mr Goh Teck Sye Gerald received the Certificates of Appreciation from Deputy Commissioner Jackson Lim for their involvement in the Formula One Standby.

#### How did you come to know about the SCDF?

During the period of merger between the Singapore Fire Service and then Singapore Civil Defence Force, I was posted from the Singapore Armed Forces to the join the Singapore Joint Civil Defence (SJCDF) Force as an Operationally-Ready National Serviceman (ORNSman).

#### Which vocation were you posted to?

As an ORNSman, I served with the Construction Brigade. In the past, the Construction Brigade was a National Service (NS) vocation of the SJCDF. In total, I served three In-Camp-Trainings with the Construction Brigade before its abolition.

#### What kind of training did you undergo?

Together with my peers, we went through the full firefighting and rescue training programme. I must say that these skills are still pertinent to me especially as a Crisis Volunteer today. In fact, this is also the main reason why I signed up to be a volunteer.

#### Share with us your experience as a Crisis Volunteer.

Crisis Volunteers may be activated during the occurrence of big crises. Fortunately, we live in a very safe and secure environment. To ensure that our skills and knowledge remain relevant, we are also activated for stand-bys.

Recently, I was activated for a stand-by operation at the

Formula One race. Not only was it an opportunity for me to communicate with the full-time staff of the SCDF, I also had the first-hand experience to understand how it is like to work closely with these professional Lifesavers.

I must say that it is a challenging role because the SCDF is very operational but this is also the reason that makes me proud to be an SCDF Crisis Volunteer.

#### As a volunteer, what is something special about the SCDF?

Overall, the morale of the full-time staff is very high and they are also very appreciative of the Crisis Volunteers. Everyone is very committed and while they have expertise in difference traits, they work together cohesively even with the volunteers.

The SCDF is also special in that its staff is very open to hearing the suggestions by the volunteers. This is good as it allows us to bring to the SCDF the perspectives of a layman. Such assimilation enables the SCDF to serve Singapore better and more efficiently.

#### Apart from your role as a Crisis Volunteer, do you contribute in other ways too?

I am also an active fire safety manager and I take the effort and pride to renew my certification annually. Keeping Singapore Fire Safe is everyone's responsibility.



## More than just a Handsome Pilot

Prior to his relocation to Singapore, CPL (V) Jackie Ng has already acquired various experiences from his volunteering work with different organisations worldwide.

As a Silk Air Pilot, CPL (V) Jackie Ng continues to pursue his belief in giving back to the society by playing his part to keep Singapore fire safe.

### **So Mr Handsome, tell us more about yourself.**

I was born in Hong Kong and my family migrated to Australia when I was 13 years old. When I graduated from school, I joined the Aviation Corps of the Australian Army and worked there for seven years. It was definitely an interesting career.

At the same time, I was also a volunteer with the New South Wales State Emergency Services in Australia. As a rescue member with the road safety branch and I was deployed as the first responder to any road accidents that happened within my vicinity. I recalled being deployed to assist the firefighters to evacuate the residents during a major bush fire in New South Wales.

### **Do you volunteer your services in the flying industry too?**

After my career with the Australian Army, I moved to Hong Kong for a few years where I volunteered with the Air Cadet Corps as a flight instructor. I worked with a lot of teenagers and young adults who were interested to find out more about being a pilot and cabin crew.

### **Why did you join Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU)?**

I joined the CDAU about a year ago as a Fire Safety Enforcement Officer because I am very passionate about giving back to the community in every little way possible.

### **Any interesting experiences?**

Definitely! As a CDAU Enforcement Officer, we work closely with officers from the SCDF Central Enforcement Department. On a usual day, we will be deployed to several premises to conduct regular enforcement checks. At times, we also get the opportunity to work together with other ministries such as the Singapore Police Force, Urban Redevelopment Authority and Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore during joint operations.

It has been an eye opening experience for me because I get to understand the perspectives from the different ministries and agencies. Most importantly, I get to witness how these organisations with different duties are able to work together towards a common cause of keeping Singapore safe and secure.

### **How is it like as an Enforcement Officer?**

As enforcement is a niche specialisation, we are required to undergo a five-days CDAU Enforcement Officer Course to

learn the fundamentals of fire safety before being deployed to the ground. As the saying goes, practice makes perfect. Continuous learning takes place when we are deployed to real operations alongside veteran SCDF enforcement officers. From time to time, I do read up on the Fire Safety Codes but the easiest way to muster this trait is to consult and learn from the experts from the SCDF.

As an Enforcement Officer, I also get to see a very different side of Singapore. When conducting our regular checks at foreign workers' dormitories, we witnessed the kind of living conditions that they reside in. In some premises, it can be cramped and overcrowded and enforcement actions were duly taken.

Together with the SCDF team, we did not just take the enforcement actions required but also explained to them the risks involved and the precautionary measures to be taken.

It is not an easy or cosy task. Sometimes, it can be a bit of a challenge but I feel satisfied for that at the end of the day I know that this little yet meaningful gesture can save lives.

### **Do you enjoy flying?**

One hundred percent! I had my private flying license when I was 18 years old and I never looked back ever since. I started off by flying a smaller aircraft. Today, I am given the privilege to fly bigger ones.

Of course, that means greater responsibility too. In essence, flying is a very dynamic job because every flight and destination is different. The co-pilot and cabin crew that you work with is always different too. Yet, we are very strong in team work and focused on one goal which is to bring our passengers to their destination safely.

### **Any similarity between a pilot and a volunteer?**

As a flight commander, you have the due responsibility to take the aircraft down safely, with all passengers on board. To do that, it is important to work together closely with the ground staff to ensure a smooth flight.

As a volunteer, I am also expected to have the same level of commitment and concerted efforts because what I do is none other than Life Saving. 🚒

# Teacher catch Faulty Exit Lights!



CPL (V) Syaheer had aspired to don a uniform since he was nine years old. After serving his National Service with the SCDF, he continues to play his part as a CDAU Fire Safety Enforcement Officer while he pursues a career as a teacher.

Photo: CPL (V) Muhammad Syaheer Bin Noorhalim, CDAU Fire Safety Enforcement Volunteer

## Where did you first learn life saving skills from?

I learned First Aid and CPR skills from the Red Cross Society of Singapore when I was in primary school. With these skills, I volunteered as a safety officer at various events and youth camps during my younger days. When I was in Polytechnic, I was certified as a Community Emergency Response Team Junior by the People's Association.

My skills were honed when I started serving my full-time National Service (NS) with the SCDF. Other than just basic First Aid and CPR skills, I also learned firefighting

and rescue work as well as the use of an Automated External Defibrillator.

As a Fire Safety Enforcement Officer of the CDAU, I am also learning new life saving skills every time I am deployed to conduct regular enforcement checks. I see it as a form of lifelong learning.

## Why did you decide to join the CDAU?

I felt that the life saving skills that I have learned should be

put into good use. To me, the work required of a CDAU Fire Safety Enforcement Volunteer is very interesting because of its hands-on nature. As a volunteer, I am also empowered to conduct enforcement checks and walk the ground with the SCDF regular officers. The blurring of distinction between the SCDF regular officers and volunteers is definitely a big plus point for me.

## Any interesting experiences to share?

Once, we conducted enforcement checks at a workers' dormitory in the evening. The workers were busy cooking

dinner while chatting amongst themselves after a hard day at work. When they first saw us in our uniforms, they thought that we were there to penalise them. We assured them that we were there to ensure their safety instead.

We found minor fire safety hazards and we started to talk to them about the importance of keeping the place fire safe. We explained to them that we were aware that they worked very hard daily and we wanted them to be able to reside in a living condition that is not highly vulnerable to the outbreak of fire.

It took some time for them to put their guard down but they did eventually. One of the workers even offered us some food as he was afraid that we were hungry. Of course, we declined the offer politely.

It definitely brings out the human side of life whenever I experience such goodness in people from all walks of life and nationalities. It has been a very humbling experience.

## You were involved in the year end Enforcement Blitz conducted by the SCDF. Share with us your experience.

The Enforcement Blitz is unique by itself because it is a 'surprise check'. The first stop was a shopping mall. Some of the common violations that we found include blocked escape routes and common passageways. It is important for common passageways to remain clear of obstruction in order to facilitate smooth evacuation during an emergency.

The second stop was an entertainment outlet and it was my first time conducting enforcement checks in such premises. We found emergency lights that were faulty. This means that in the event of a fire, the patrons may face difficulty in evacuating and this is very dangerous!

## Do you share your experiences with your students too?

Of course! Apart from just teaching, I am also the Head of First Aid in Loyang Primary School. This means that I am tasked with the role of a First Responder should anyone be injured.

During this year's Total Defence Day on 15<sup>th</sup> February, I brought along my SCDF uniform and took the opportunity to share with my students the importance of fire safety.

The students were very inspired by the knowledge which they had acquired during the sharing session. It makes my teaching career a whole lot more exciting and meaningful too. 🙌

# NOT YOUR AVERAGE STEWARD

## How was it like serving your National Service with the SCDF?

I served as a Full-Time National Serviceman (NSF) ROTA (Shift) Commander at the Bukit Batok Fire Station. Before that, I had to undergo the Basic Officer Course (renamed to ROTA Commander Course). The training was tough and mental resilience was crucial.

As a ROTA Commander, I attended to many fire and rescue incidents. The most memorable incident was a fire that occurred in a very old house. After putting out the fire, the owner of the house who was in her eighties shared with me that her house was once filled with many memorable old items and each of them meant a lot to her. Instead of returning to the fire station immediately after the fire was put out, my team and I stayed behind to hear her out. We knew that she was still in a state of shock and our presence gave her the assurance that she very much needed.

A few days later, we received a word of thanks from her. I will always cherish this experience.

## You also received a PRIDE and CARE Award during your NS. Tell us more.

I was travelling along the expressway when I spotted a road traffic accident. A motorcyclist biker was knocked down lying on the road motionlessly. I immediately stopped and rendered assistance to him while waiting for the arrival of the SCDF ambulance. He was slightly conscious but bubbles were foaming from his mouth. To prevent him from choking, I placed him on my lap.

The SCDF ambulance arrived and he was conveyed to the hospital.

As a result, I was also late for my first day of work at the Bukit Batok Fire Station. Initially, I was worried that I would be reprimanded for not being punctual. Little did I know that I would be nominated and awarded with the SCDF PRIDE and CARE Award for assisting the biker!

Beyond that proud moment, I must say that my experience exemplified the importance of a Community First Responder in providing immediate assistance to those who are in distress.

## Why did you join the CDAU?

To be honest, I have never thought that I would become a firefighter. When I became one, I never looked back ever since.

When I completed my NS, I joined the airline industry. At the same time, I missed dearly the days that I spent at the fire station. That was when I decided to join as a CDAU firefighter volunteer.

## Were there times when the cabin crew sought for your help because they knew you were once a firefighter?

Yup! I think my presence does give a sense of confidence and assurance to my cabin crew especially when unexpected events occur. Each time I meet a passenger who is not feeling well, I know what I should do to provide him with the comfort and care that he or she would need at that point in time. It is all about intuition and my work as a firefighter has helped me with that.

Over the years, I have come to realise that it is more than just being able to fight fire. It is also about your trained intuition in knowing how to assure people who are in need.

## Share with us your experiences as a CDAU volunteer.

I am currently serving at the Woodlands Fire Station as a CDAU firefighter and I must say that it has been a very unique experience so far. As a CDAU volunteer, I get the opportunity to mingle with the regulars, the Operationally Ready National Servicemen as well as fellow CDAU volunteers. It has definitely been an exceptionally enriching

experience so far because I get to meet people like me with a similar goal of keeping Singapore Safe and Secure.

## How have you contributed to the SCDF as a CDAU Volunteer?

I spent a few years working as a steward in the airline industry as it has always been a dream of mine to see the world. Now that I have achieved that, I am currently pursuing another dream of mine which is greatly influenced by my love for firefighting.

I have recently joined the oil and gas industry as a Fire

Safety Officer. With the knowledge and skills that the SCDF has equipped me with since my NS days, I am now able to provide my expertise to an industry that pays a lot of emphasis on fire safety. More often than not, there is more that meets the eye. Every safety precaution taken will help save a life and prevent the occurrence of unnecessary mishaps.

During my course of work, I came to notice that there are many rare chemical signage placed around the vicinity of a typical oil and gas company. These chemical signage are hardly seen in other buildings but they act as important guidelines to both firefighters and paramedics who may be required to respond to an incident within the vicinity. I feedback my observation to the Commander of Woodlands Fire Station and since then, I have been sharing this knowledge with the fire station staffs during the night lectures.

## What is the biggest take away as a CDAU volunteer?

To help those who are in need and make a difference in their lives. 🚒



Photo: CDAU Firefighter Volunteer, LTA (V) Muhammad Eusoff Bin Muhammad





# Your **MACHO** and Caring Policeman

Photo: SSG (V) Vincent Lim (Left), Medical Orderly (Medic) from the CDAU Emergency Medical Services

### **Why did you join the CDAU as a medic.**

I served my full-time National Service (NS) with the Singapore Police Force (SPF) as a medic and when I completed my NS, I realised that I enjoy the work very much as I found it a very noble thing to do. That was the reason why I decided to join the CDAU as a medic. I see it as an avenue that allows me to put these life saving skills into good use.

### **Did you have any working experience with the SCDF prior to that?**

During my training phase as a Full-Time National Serviceman (NSF), I had opportunities to meet the medics from the SCDF. Then, the training was centralised but the mix of NSFs from the different Home Team departments allowed us to understand the medical landscape better. As a police officer, I also work closely with both the firefighters, paramedics and medics during major operations.

### **Share with us your experience as a CDAU medic.**

Since 2008, I have been serving at the Ang Mo Kio Fire Station. Every call is unique simply because everybody has different needs.

Once, my crew and I attended to a little girl with a medical history of fits. Upon our arrival, her father informed us that she had already been given a dosage of medicine to curb her fits. During our assessment, she seemed lifeless. I started to perform CPR on her while the paramedics attended to her with other vital treatments. Her father was exasperated and I can imagine how terrible he must have felt then. Of course, we calmed him down and reassured him that everything was under control.

On another occasion, we attended to an elderly lady who was just discharged from the hospital not too long ago. While we were on our way to the hospital, she started to share with us her fear of not being able to live past Chinese New Year. As a great grandmother, she looked forward to cooking for her family members and hope to get well before the festive season.

Apart from prescribing the right treatments

to our patients, it is also important to be caring and empathetic towards them. While treating them, we would lend them a listening ear or even our shoulders to cry on if need be.

### **What is the most important attribute that you think a CDAU medic should have?**

It is important for us to always be professional and to never judge anyone regardless of their condition. For example, a drunken patient may not necessarily be a troublemaker. When treating someone in need, we must never look at them through coloured lenses. Our role is to provide assistance and assurance to those in need and it is our responsibility to treat all of them equally.

### **So what does a CDAU medic do?**

Basically, we assist the paramedics to prepare the treatment required. Sometimes, we help to prescribe treatment to the patients and look out for vital signs through their blood pressure and temperature. We also perform CPR on patients and administer the use of the Automated External Defibrillator when required.

### **You have joined the first CDAU Firefighting Course. How has it been so far?**

The course is conducted three days a week after working hours. We learn basic firefighting and rescue skills. It is also the first time I get to experience how it is like being in a Bunker Gear (firefighting gear). I must say that it has been a very enriching experience so far.

### **Are there any differences between being a SPF officer and a medic?**

While it is a different spectrum of work altogether, it boils down to the same core values of Courage, Loyalty, Integrity, Fairness and of course, PRIDE and CARE.

At the end of the day, it does not matter if I don the SPF or SCDF uniform. We may be departments with different core functions but we work towards the common goal of helping those in distress. 🚑

## Central Fire Station - A Nexus of Sophistication and Rich Tradition

There is more that meets the eye.

Under the command of Fire Brigade superintendent Montague Pett, the construction of the Central Fire Station was completed in 1908. Then, the Central Fire Station also housed living quarters to provide accommodation for the firefighters.

It is amazing how this century old fire station that survived bomb hits during World War II sits along the bustling roads of Hill Street today.

Its current colourful façade and every layer of its compound have a story of its own to tell. Who would have known that the distinctive colonial style fire station is akin to a Russian nesting doll with layers within layers of surprises found in it.

In 2001, the Civil Defence Heritage Gallery was built within the premises of the Central Fire Station. As its name suggests, it aims to help its visitors trace all the way back to the 1800s to get an insightful peek into the firefighting and civil defence heritage in Singapore. With this enriching knowledge to share,

it also hopes to heighten public awareness of civil defence.

As you enter the Civil Defence Heritage Gallery that has bagged the Best Singapore Exhibition Award at the inaugural Museum Roundtable (MR) Awards ceremony in 2011, you will first be greeted by some vintage fire engines from the early years of Singapore.

While both the Central Fire Station and the co-located Civil Defence Heritage Gallery are humble in size, they carry stories of remarkable fires and rescue operations of epic proportion.

Located adjacent to the Civil Defence Heritage Gallery is the Emergency Preparedness Centre which was officially opened on 2 February 2015 by Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Mr Teo Chee Hean. As the newest addition to the oldest fire station in Singapore today, the EPC is the first purpose-built and one stop civil defence education centre locally.

This 'new kid' of the block is not to be underestimated. It harnesses one of the most advanced digital visual technologies

to impart emergency preparedness knowledge and skills to its visitors. With a 3-Dimensional state-of-the-art virtual reality simulator, it excites the visitors with an immersive experience of natural disaster scenarios such as earthquake and tsunami.

You may wonder on the need to have this interactive and visually stimulating exhibits civil defence education centre. The rationale for it is that we live in a highly inter-connected world.

Whether it is a natural or man-made disaster and regardless of its type and magnitude, the catastrophic consequences – disruption of utilities and food supplies, shattered homes and loss of lives- are potentially devastating. It is almost impossible to totally prevent the onset of any disasters be it man-made disasters in Singapore or natural disasters when we are travelling overseas and thus, the need for the Emergency Preparedness Centre becomes the heart and spirit of a resilient and prepared Singapore.

*(Left to Right): At the official opening of the SCDF Emergency Preparedness Centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2015, CDAU Heritage Gallery Volunteer WO (RET) Yussof Shariff shared with Deputy Prime Minister Mr Teo Chee Hean and COMR Eric Yap his experience of being deployed to the MacDonald House bombing incident that happened at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank Building (now known as MacDonald House) in Singapore in 1965.*

*Vehicle on the Right: The vintage 1950s Merryweather Turntable Ladder (Fire Engine) from the Singapore Fire Brigade was deployed to the MacDonald House bombing incident in 1965.*



Photo: (Foreground) Civil Defence Lionhearter Volunteer (left) facilitating a Heimlich Manoeuvre demonstration by Guest of Honor Mr Mohd Yusoff Jacobs, Jalan Kayu C2E Chairman (right).



Ms Tan Shi Hui  
Community Management Team Leader (Community Preparedness and Response Branch)  
Volunteer and Community Partnership Department

As DPM Mr Teo Chee Hean mentioned in his speech during the official opening of the EPC, the key fundamentals of emergency preparedness in Singapore are to develop capabilities and capacities, enhance readiness through training and exercises and to engage the community.

### Engaging the Community

Since the colonial times of the Singapore Fire Brigade, the aspirations to continually and proactively educate the public and equip them with vital emergency preparedness skills have always been running in the veins of SCDF officers.

Who would have known that more than a century later, the official opening of the EPC would fall coincidentally on the same year of the nation's Golden Jubilee celebration - how befitting in reflecting the nation building role of the SCDF over the decades in preparing Singapore towards being a resilient and emergency ready nation!

The EPC is more than just a visitor centre that harnesses the latest technology in its hardware to provide an immersive experience. Each exhibit and simulator is akin to an educator that will impart vital lifesaving skills such as CPR, use of AED and first aid. Intrinsicly, the rationale of the EPC goes beyond just the hardware.

The mere use of words or verbose literature can never adequately amplify the true significance of lifesaving skills. The CPR is not merely an action that involves the

pressing of the chest of a cardiac arrest victim and first aid is not all about bandaging. Instead, its importance lies in the promulgation of the 'heartware' and willingness of us human beings to provide comfort to the distressed and give a chance to a victim of cardiac arrest to live on.

Mr Wallace Chew, BBM, a veteran grassroots leader and formerly a patron of the Civil Defence Executive Committee (CDEC<sup>1</sup>) said that the EPC is a good example to illustrate how the efforts by the SCDF in community engagement have evolved since its establishment in 1982.

Mr Saïd Faizal, Executive Director of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) who was a special guest at the official opening of the EPC shared that he was very impressed with the amount of efforts that had been put into building this learning centre for emergency preparedness. He added that it is important for Singapore to engage the young in learning emergency preparedness through interactive and innovative ways. He stressed that as this is also the first such centre in ASEAN, it is definitely a good resource for many to learn from.

While the EPC sits within a fire station that has been gazetted as a national monument and next to an award winning heritage gallery, its invaluable yield has already been harvested since the first day it engaged its visitors in emergency preparedness and nurtured them to be our Community First Responders. 🚒

<sup>1</sup> The CDEC, the predecessor to C2E promotes community awareness of civil defence and helps maintain a competent civil defence capability in the constituency. It organises activities and exercises and prepares residents to overcome emergencies.

The Neighbourhood Active Responder Programme (NEAR) is a collaboration among the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and People's Association to train volunteers in Life Saving and other emergency skills. It aims to encourage the community to take greater ownership in emergency preparedness and response by leveraging on trained volunteers who are within or near an emergency situation to make that timely lifesaving intervention before the arrival of emergency services. The pilot programme also targets to deter and detect crime and fire incidents.

Launched on 21 March 2015, Guest of Honour Mr Masagos Zulkifil (then Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs) said that the "NEAR represents a fundamental shift in the roles that volunteers play in the community - from passive to active first responders".

These Neighbourhood Active Responders will be deployed on weekends between 1000hrs and 2200hrs from designated response stations such as the Residents' Committee Centres to augment the SCDF by providing first response to residential fire incidents and medical cases requiring first aid treatment, including cardiac arrest cases. Occasionally, they will also be roving around the constituencies in bicycles equipped with first-aid kits, fire

extinguishers and Automated External Defibrillator sets.

In addition, the volunteers will also augment efforts of the SPF by performing anti-crime patrols around the constituency to detect crime or the presence of suspicious characters. Volunteers will also disseminate crime prevention advisory such as pamphlets to residents during their anti-crime patrols.

In the pilot phase of NEAR, the volunteers have been stationed at the Tampines Green Residents' Committee (RC) and Tampines East Zone 5. For a start, these volunteers comprise SCDF and SPF regulars, full time National Servicemen and Operationally Ready National Servicemen, Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit volunteers, National Civil Defence Cadet Corps Cadet Lieutenants, National Police Cadet Corps Cadet Inspectors, Civil Defence Lionhearters, "Citizens on Patrol" members and members from the RC/Community Emergency Response Teams.

To ensure that the volunteers are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills, they have also completed the training sessions jointly conducted by the SCDF and SPF on emergency response and crime prevention measures. 🚒

# Lionhearts of Padang



**What are you currently studying at the ITE College East and what made you want to join as a Civil Defence (CD) Lionhearter?**

**Fazira:** I am a final year student from the Nursing School and I joined the CD Lionhearter Club because I wanted to improve my skills as a lifesaver. As a nurse, we learn how to take care of our patients as well as administer their medical needs but our training sessions are usually confined within the hospital environment.

As a CD Lionhearter, I am given the opportunity to learn how I can also become an Emergency First Responder to anyone in need. In fact, the CD Lionhearter programme has also opened doors for me to impart the knowledge and skills that I have acquired to people outside Singapore.

It has been a very meaningful journey for me.

**Wei Jie:** As a Facilities Management student, I learned how to manage facilities such as smoke detectors and alarm systems that have been installed in buildings. I joined as a CD Lionhearter because I was curious about how to

operate a fire extinguisher and I wanted to learn more about First Aid skills too.

**Share with us your experience during your recent trip to Padang, Indonesia.**

**Fazira:** Definitely a once in a lifetime experience!

Together with Mercy Relief and our fellow ITE College Central CD Lionhearters, we went to Padang to impart lifesaving skills and knowledge to the people residing within the village. It was not all one-sided of course. We also took home with us many valuable lessons that I will remember for life.

One of the highlights of the exchange was when we had to work with the local Scouts Association to complete a simulated evacuation exercise. They taught us how to improvise the use of two bamboos and a towel to build a stretcher that can be used to evacuate a casualty during an emergency. In fact, they did it so quickly and efficiently.

We were so impressed by how they utilised domestic items

to save lives.

**Wei Jie:** During my stay in Padang, I noticed that the plants at the nursery were dwindling and most of it have dried up. One of the students shared with me that they used to grow herbs at the nursery as they are a source of livelihood to many of the residents there. Together with the other Lionhearters, we took up the challenge to rebuild the nursery to allow the herbs to grow once again. I felt

I have to say that the villagers learn very quickly.

**Wei Jie:** It is very unfortunate that they are vulnerable to natural disasters. After getting to know them, they started to share with me their experiences from the major earthquake that happened in 2009. I believe our rebuilding project in Padang would help them to rebuild their lives.

that it was one of the many ways that we can help them to rebuild their lives in the most meaningful ways possible.

It took us a few days to complete the mission. We first used bricks and cement to build a structure to demarcate an area for the herb garden. Despite the scorching sun, we managed put everything together piece by piece. It was definitely an arduous task but as we gradually witnessed the near completion of the garden, we became even more motivated.

We did it and everyone was so happy. One of them even thanked me for reviving their source of livelihood.

Just the thought of it makes me smile now.

**Wow. What are some of the Life Saving skills that you have imparted to them?**

**Fazira:** We taught them how to evacuate calmly and safely. We conducted several evacuation exercises and that helped them to understand how much more efficient it would be when it is done in a peaceful and orderly manner.

**Do you think it is important for everyone to be equipped with knowledge and skills of a Community First Responder?**

**Fazira:** Indeed. As a nurse, I witness the myriad of ailments that the patients suffer from. While it is a part of my job to witness suffering, I would want to do my best to prevent it from even happening to anyone.

Early intervention can help someone feel better, recover faster and sometimes, live longer. If we can play our part, we ought to do it.

**Wei Jie:** All I can say is that we must play our part even if it means rendering assistance to a perfect stranger. That stranger is also a father, son, husband and loved one to someone else.

When it comes to saving a life, every second matters. I am glad that I am already playing my part to fulfil the SCDF Vision 2025 towards building A Nation of Lifesavers. 🇸🇬

# Never too YOUNG to become a Lifesaver

Ms Faith Yong  
Senior Officer (Community Engagement)  
Volunteer and Community Partnership  
Department

The Singapore Discovery Centre was abuzz with activity and excitement on 14 February 2015, as 11 teams comprising Junior Civil Defence (CD) Lionhearers, their family members together with team mentors from either the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps Cadet Lieutenants, CD Lionhearers or Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit volunteers gathered to compete in a Total Defence centric time-based challenge.

Graced by Guest-of-Honour, Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Chairman of the Home Team Volunteer Network, the highlights of the Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge 2015 was the involvement of family members in the fun-filled Emergency Preparedness (EP) challenge to encourage the parents/adults to learn vital lifesaving skills from the children and also enable them to better appreciate the role of the latter as champions of EP in their schools and beyond.

Jointly organised by the SCDF and the Singapore Discovery Centre, the Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge 2015 also saw a student led collaboration with the seven CD Lionhearer Clubs.

Teams were given two hours to complete a series of

challenges from nine zones within the Singapore Discovery Centre. These included rescuing a casualty on a stretcher by manoeuvring through a simulated cluttered corridor with discarded items.

### Sounds like a tough one?

The Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge 2015, saw a few teams returning for a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt at the Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge Shield. And return they did with a better and stronger strategy, which proved to be the winning formula for defending and reigning champion Xishan Primary School.

"The team (Junior CD Lionhearers, family members, team mentors) spent time to discuss which stations to proceed to first. They chose stations based on how much of a head start and time wise they would have. I followed the team closely and they worked very well together...", said Mr Addy Adha, Head of Department, Character and Citizenship Education, Xishan Primary School.

Xishan Primary School's strategy also echoes Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee's sentiments, "We want to start them young with the idea that CD skills are useful skills,



Photo: A Junior CD Lionhearer getting all geared up for the Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge 2015

not just in terms of technical and situational skills but skills for life... We hope to achieve the multiplying effect where two or three young ambassadors can spread the word both at school and at home. It's one thing just to talk about it but another to see their parents running around and being involved as one whole family in executing the EP challenge".

Truly, the Junior CD Lionhearer Challenge 2015 not only brought out the EP ambassadors in our Junior CD Lionhearers, it also united everyone in the common spirit of Total Defence. 🚒



10 Years of NCDCC  
LEARN. LEAD. SERVE



Photo: LTA (NCDCC) Benjamin Peh, Parade Commander of the NCDCC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Parade



Photo: Precision Drill Display by the NCDCC Cadets from the Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Secondary School - Winner of the 2014 NCDCC Precision Drill



Photo: Mr. Wong Siew Hoong, Director-General of Education, MOE, inspecting the NCDCC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Parade and accompanied by Parade Commander LTA (NCDCC) Benjamin Peh



Photo: Launch of the NCDCC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Photobook by NCDCC Commandants, Mr. Wong Siew Hoong, Director-General of Education, MOE, COMR Eric Yap and Ms Liew Wei Li, Director Student Development Curriculum Division, MOE

Muhammad Farhanayah Bin Maza  
Reporter  
Home Team News  
Ministry of Home Affairs

Inaugurated in 2005, the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps has come a long way. Present in only 12 schools when it was first launched, it is now established in 40 schools. On 11 April 2015, the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

LTA (NCDCC) Benjamin Peh who was once from the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps (NCDCC) still returns to contribute back to the uniformed group. The honorary officer was the parade commander at NCDCC's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations held at the Home Team Academy on 11 April 2015.

Today, LTA (NCDCC) Peh also serves as a regular with the SCDF as a Section Commander at the Central Fire Station. He said: "When I was younger, I aspired to become a firefighter. So when the opportunity came for me to join NCDCC, I seized it because I knew that it would give me the chance to understand more about how the SCDF works. Indeed, the SCDF and NCDCC have given me the opportunities to learn the different

kinds of skills and knowledge of a Lifesaver".

Having been the Commissioner of the SCDF for 17 years, Mr James Tan shared that the idea of setting up the NCDCC stemmed from his observation that this particular uniformed group would help in propagating the SCDF's vision of having a trained civil defence officer in every household.

When asked how he feels with regards to the achievements of NCDCC, he said: "I am very happy with the progress made by the NCDCC. I must say that the NCDCC today has surpassed many of the original objectives, which was set for it by its founding team. Just looking at the precision drill today performed by the cadets during the parade is an affirmation of the progress it has made. The drill was not only spectacular but the regimentation, coordination and precision of the drill choreography was carried out with perfection. The NCDCC has done itself proud and I wish them all the very best in the years ahead!" 🚒



Photo: Walking down memory lane with Former Commissioner James Tan (2nd from Right) who initiated the formation of the NCDCC and the three Generations of NCDCC Commandants



Photo (Left to Right): CPT (NCDCC) Benjamin Chan receiving the Unit Overall Performance GOLD Award from Mr. Wong Siew Hoong Director-General of Education, MOE

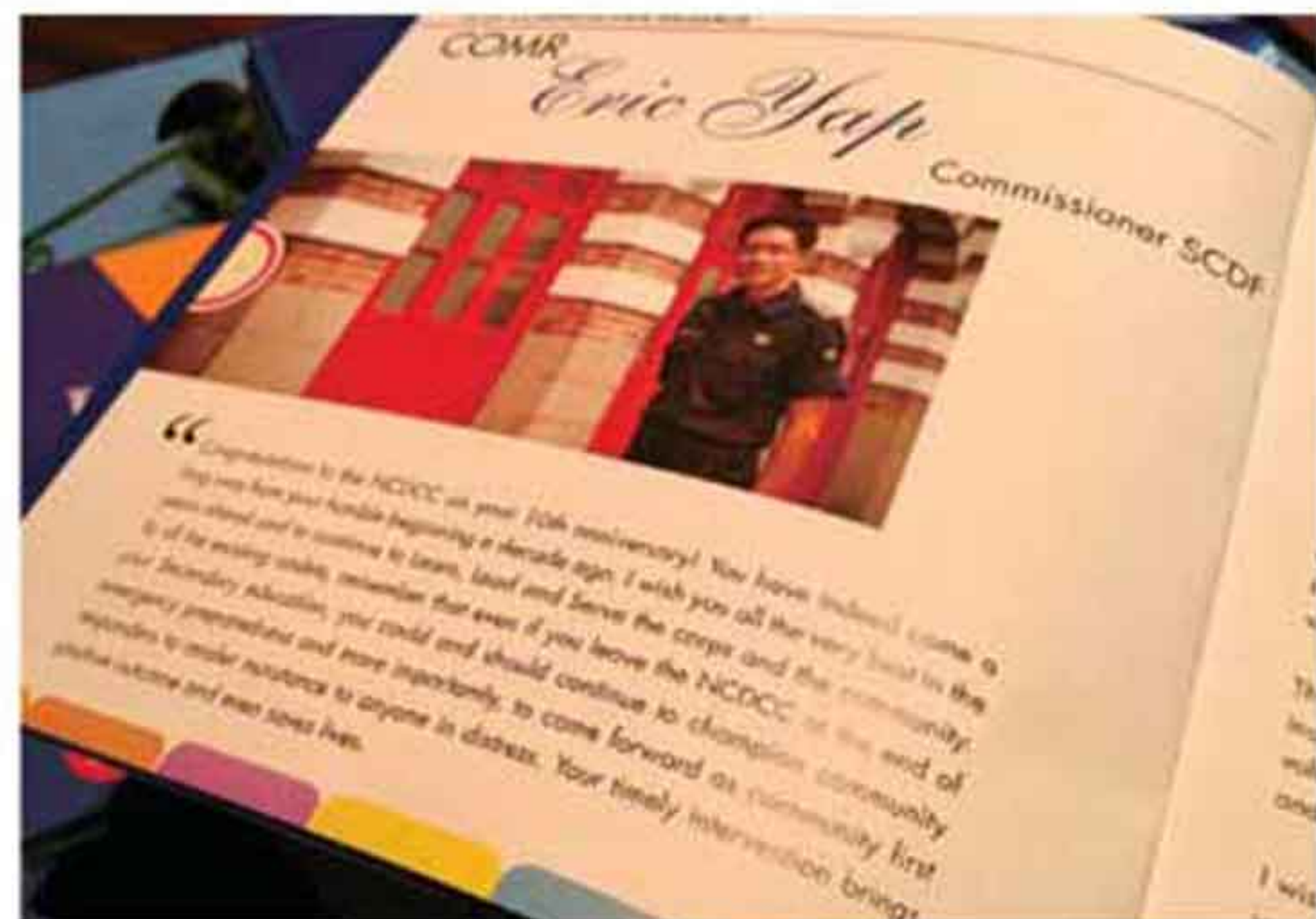


Photo: Foreword by COMR Eric Yap in the NCDCC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Photobook



# We Started from Scratch

## How was the early years of establishing the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps (NCDCC) like?

The idea to start the NCDCC was first mooted by then SCDF Commissioner Mr James Tan. The objective is to impart lifesaving knowledge and skills to our young. At that time, the concept of Civil Defence was already well established and as part of early preparation for the nation's youths in Civil Defence, the NCDCC was established.

Like any other new organisational set up, we started from scratch. We created everything ourselves - from the mission and vision statement, NCDCC pledge, NCDCC song, uniform to the training system, etc.

In 2004, I held two appointments - Director of the SCDF Training Command and Commandant of the NCDCC. As a Commandant, I was tasked to think of a motto and the design of the uniform for our cadets. I thought about it and consulted my SCDF colleagues. I must admit that I did lose a lot of sleep over it but looking back now, it was all worth it.

We agreed on the motto "Learn, Lead and Serve" and also started to design different badges to recognise the achievements of our cadets. Soon, the cadets were already wearing their uniforms proudly and you should have seen how proud I was to witness it.

I remember our first office was located at the old Police Academy and that was the most challenging time for me. Fortunately, we received the much needed help and support along the way.

The National Cadet Corps was instrumental in helping the NCDCC to establish our systems and structure. We had to write our own directives and I recalled churning out countless versions. We spent many hours late into the night cracking our heads over issues such as the many different types of badges that we should incorporate into the corps. On top of that, we also had to individually design the badges. It was no mean feat considering that I had only a small team of three to four staff officers with me. I was very fortunate to have such dedicated staff officers like Eugene Wong, who worked round the clock tirelessly with me.

At that time, I was given very clear instructions from the then Commissioner Mr James Tan that the NCDCC cadets' uniform must be very similar to that of the SCDF's. As such, we provided our cadets with the exact uniform to imbue in them the sense of belonging with the SCDF.

Starting school units was a very difficult task.

I had to literally visit every secondary school and ask for meeting sessions with the school leaders in order to create awareness and buy-in from them before we could start a NCDCC unit in their schools.

Some school leaders were very supportive and that spurred us on. For every start-up of school units, we also needed to train the teachers before the scheme could be officially started. I had conversations with then training officer Alan late into the night trying to discuss and resolve issues. There were critical decisions to be made then and I really had to consider the implications and consequences to each of the choices made.

## What are some of your special memories of the NCDCC? The first NCDCC parade, of course!

It was a lot of hard work. Gathering a platoon of firefighters is very different from managing cadets from the different schools in Singapore.

Everyone had a part to play to ensure that everything went smoothly as planned. This included the teachers, students and also the SCDF staff. As you can see, it is all about putting together the work by people of different ages and professions.

As the first parade was after four years into the establishment of the NCDCC, we saw the first cycle of cadets who had passed through training with NCDCC from Secondary 1 to Secondary 4. **We finally had our own first parade and the moment was simply unforgettable.** I had such joy and fulfilment in doing what I did that I extended my stay as the NCDCC commandant for an additional year. I did not mind the hard work as I saw the value in educating the young, imparting Civil Defence knowledge and skills as well as leadership training for them.

The passing out of the first batch of cadet lieutenants was also an event which I hold special to my heart. I had to be innovative and worked round manpower issues then. Even when I was quibbled on my decision to start the cadet lieutenant scheme, I pushed through with that decision and was glad that I stood by it.

Today, I have a great sense of satisfaction in knowing that the NCDCC has a large pool of passionate volunteers including Cadet Lieutenants who are willing to **Learn, Lead and Serve.**

## What were some of your guiding principles as a Commandant?

I always believe in being open-minded, leading by example and have a great sense of humility. I remember when I first received my posting as Commandant NCDCC, I had a lot of reservations. Then I was only left with three years of active service with the SCDF and I was also faced with some health issues. I knew then that if I were to take the job, there would be a lot of work to do and inevitably, there would also be immense stress. I took up the challenge nonetheless and never regretted it.

Let's be truthful. I do have a fair share of disappointments during my term as Commandant too but I always feel better when I think of the support that everyone else have given us over the years.

I am extremely appreciative for the teachers who came onboard and are willing to take up the challenge to contribute and grow the NCDCC from scratch.

Till today, I believe that it is this open-mindedness and mutual trust that we had adopted which has brought us so far. 🚒



“ I believe there is a learning opportunity in every circumstances and interaction with anyone out there even if it means a young student. I always remind myself to be open to suggestions and feedback provided by both teachers and students. ”

- LTC (RET) Lim Kah Seng  
1<sup>st</sup> NCDCC Commandant (1 September 2004 - 20 June 2008)



# I Started using words like “Yo” and “Cool”!



Photo: LTC Philip Tham, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandant of NCDCC (20 June 2008 - 17 May 2010)

**What is something about the NCDCC that you will always remember?**

The NCDCC motto – “Learn, Lead and Serve”.

The motto encapsulates the objective of the NCDCC and it is the cornerstone of everything that we do. We want our future leaders to first acquire Lifesaving skills and knowledge and then, lead those who are willing to learn. Finally, we want them to put these skills and knowledge into good use whenever and wherever required.

This entire process of learning does not only nurture and develop leaders but leaders with compassion and empathy to help those who are in need.

**You were from the Fire Safety and Shelter Department (FSSD) before becoming the NCDCC Commandant. Share with us your transition experience.**

During my stint at the FSSD, I worked frequently with both architects and building developers.

When I first came to know about my posting as the

NCDCC Commandant, I perceived it as a whole new area of work as my target audience has changed completely. Instead of discussing about fire-rated walls, I was drafting leadership training programmes with the teachers from the Ministry of Education. Instead of being consultant to architects for their building designs, I was planning for outdoor adventure camps and hoping that the students would enjoy them.

Over time, the light hearted and bubbly nature of the NCDCC cadets greatly influenced me to take things less seriously and to explore the fun side of life.

**How was it like to work with students so frequently?**

As the Commandant, I was also a role model for our cadets. I had to set the standards on how leadership should be like as well as the importance of discipline. While the NCDCC activities have always been fun and exciting, there was also a need to reinforce regimentation as expected of a uniformed group.

Learning is a mutual process and I have learned a lot from the cadets. For example, I learned what “Cool!” means in a conversation. At first, I didn’t really understand their colloquial and slang but I picked these up very quickly.

Personally, it has enabled me to communicate better with my daughter as she was also a teenager then. I started using words like “Yo!” and “Cool!”. It was all about speaking the right lingo.

**One good memory?**

My team and I wanted to introduce the experiential learning component to the NCDCC training curriculum. The idea was to have something like a civil defence treasure hunt race conducted in an urban setting.

Sounds easy, doesn’t it? I mean we do see a lot of such races on television. I thought it was going to be a piece of cake too and little did I know that it was going to be so tough to implement.

I wanted an urban adventure race, a race that was not only challenging but fun and exciting at the same time. To do

so, I had to put myself in the shoes of teenagers and literally walked the route that I wanted them to experience.

One morning, I drove to Bukit Timah and parked near the Ministry of Education Co-Curricular Activities Branch. Initially, I wanted to frame the route of the adventure race within the Botanic Gardens. I started walking and ended up in the heart of Orchard Road!

There were so many ideas that came to my mind and I became so immersed in the exploration journey that I lost track of time. When I was finally done with it, I realised that it was already nightfall and my car was parked too far away.

I had to walk back the entire route but I took it as an opportunity for me to vet the routes that I have originally planned for.

I will never forget that faithful day which led to the introduction of the NCDCC Urban Adventure Race, a signature annual activity of the NCDCC to this very day.

**Why did you do that?**

In order to lead well, every leader has to walk the ground first. I will not deny that it was hard work. The moment I saw my cadets completing the adventure race for the first time and thoroughly enjoying it, I felt a deep sense of satisfaction.

**What is your aspiration for the NCDCC?**

Today, NCDCC is a highly regarded and well established CCA in schools. While it is still considered to be a relatively young CCA, I definitely have a lot of faith for it to excel further.

The NCDCC is more than just a CCA and our passion will only continue to grow stronger especially with many batches of cadets evolving their NCDCC journey to become Cadet Lieutenants and Honorary Officers.

Together and in time to come, I believe the NCDCC will transform Singapore into A Nation of Lifesavers alongside The Life Saving Force. 🚒





# Lion Dancer turned Commandant



**Share with us your experiences with the SCDF.**  
After graduating from the National University of Singapore, I wanted to pursue a challenging yet meaningful career. I was delighted to be accepted by the SCDF and little did I know that I will be spending so many years with this close-knitted family.

Before taking on my current appointment, I was heading the National Service Personnel Department and due to the nature of my work then, I learned more about the mindsets of the younger generation as well as how they perceive National Service. If I can sum up my experiences in a few words, it would be "colourful, meaningful and exciting".

**How do you feel in being appointed to lead the NCDCC?**  
At first, I perceived it as a new area of work altogether but over time, I realised that everything links back to the SCDF's Life Saving mission.

The only main difference is that the profile of my target audience has changed. Instead of having to deal with the regulars, National Servicemen or even the members of public, I am now in constant contact with teenagers.

This is my fifth year as Commandant NCDCC and I am glad that I have been given the privilege to lead such a fun-loving and energetic group of young people. **It is an experience of a lifetime and I treasure every moment of it.**

**Define your role as a NCDCC Commandant?**  
As a NCDCC Commandant, I imbue the cadets with Life Saving skills and knowledge as well as character and leadership development. The former relates to the overarching vision of the SCDF in building A Nation of Lifesavers while the latter relates to NCDCC motto – Learn, Lead and Serve.

I have always been very inspired by the mission of the

NCDCC because it encapsulates the learning journey of every NCDCC Cadet.

At first, they join us as young cadets who may not know much about the culture of regimentation in uniformed groups. Over time, they start to pick up drill commands, lifesaving skills and most importantly, be fuelled by a passion to help those in distress. Once they are well-equipped, they will start to lead their juniors who are as young and clueless as they were just a few years ago. One day when they become adults, they will lead as mature leaders who will serve with a heart to help those who are in need.

While the cadets upkeep their active participation in the NCDCC, they are also required to prioritise their school work. As such, I am always very mindful of the programmes that we design for our NCDCC Cadets. We have to ensure that our cadets will be able to strike a good balance between the CCA and study commitments. At the end of the day, it is my mission to nurture young leaders who are developed holistically.

**What are some of the changes that you have introduced to the NCDCC?**  
It is imperative for the NCDCC to constantly review its existing programmes so as to stay relevant and efficient and above all, to keep our students interested.

In November 2010, we reviewed the training programme for the Urban Adventure Race that was first introduced by LTC Philip Tham, my predecessor. We decided to enhance the programme with the inclusion of unique game stations to test the cadets' ability on civil defence related knowledge and skills while bringing in the element of fun. In many ways, these stations also reflect strong semblance to a real SCDF operation.

Photo: LTC Betty Ting during her University Days as a Lion Dancer

While the cadets battle against time in the race, they would also have to demonstrate their ability to complete a life saving mission in the most immaculate manner such that the casualty is given the right amount of care and appropriate treatment.

We have received countless positive feedback from both cadets and teachers and I am proud to say that our cadets are really enjoying the revised programme. This journey of continuous reviews and improvements made to the programme is a result of the efforts and meticulous planning put in by the cadet lieutenants.

Each year, I get the most current batch of cadet lieutenants to take on the challenge of planning and creating new scenarios for the challenge stations so that each year's NCDCC Urban Adventure Race differs from the previous.

#### **How about the international partnership with the Civil Aid Service (CAS), Hong Kong?**

Since the start of the NCDCC, we have always been working closely with the CAS, Hong Kong.

Apart from the annual outdoor leadership training in Hong Kong, our cadets would also visit an elderly home there. As our students are multi-racial, some of them would initially face difficulty in communicating with the elderly who spoke predominantly Cantonese. Yet, the language barrier is not a challenge to our cadets - not for long at least! They will always find ways to brighten up the day of the elderly and in fact, some of them would continue to provide a listening ear even though they did not understand the language.

I had witnessed our cadets taking the initiative to clean and re-arrange the elderly home during our visit. There is no need to prompt them to do anything. It is always such instances that reminds me of how these cadets have grown up to become so responsible and empathetic.

Over the years, our cadets have grown up not just physically but mentally and emotionally too. The once shy and reserved secondary one students would transformed to become confident teenagers.

#### **Share with us on the partnership between SCDF and the NCDCC.**

Both the SCDF and NCDCC believe in the Life Saving Mission. While our cadets are not directly involved in the day to day firefighting and rescue operations, they are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to help those who are in need. Apart from basic first aid skills, they also learn how to conduct CPR and operate a fire

extinguisher. These are skill sets that can potentially save a life at risk.

As such, it is vital that our students are given the best training possible. To do so, our NCDCC teachers in-charge, NCDCC Honorary Officers and Cadet Lieutenants would have to complete the mandated training requirements before they become instructors to their students. In addition, the Civil Defence Academy also provides introductory courses for the NCDCC personnel including cadets who are interested in the Basic Urban Search and Rescue and Firefighting skills.

We also work very closely with the fire stations personnel as our cadets are always very curious about the day-to-day operation and the appliances at the fire stations. This year, we worked closely with the Jurong Fire Station to kick start the inaugural inter-school NCDCC Challenge. Our cadets were trained by the station personnel on the use of the rescue tools and even had the opportunity to experience the firefighters' training at the fire station.

In a nutshell, the strong SCDF-NCDCC partnership offers our cadets a realistic experience of being a Lifesaver. This partnership will definitely continue to flourish especially now that we have embarked on the journey of becoming **A Nation of Lifesavers**.

#### **We heard that you were once a Lion Dancer. Are there any similarities to the NCDCC?**

Haha! Don't remind me of that! Yes, I was once an avid Lion Dancer during my university years.

I always believe in the power of team work. In order for a lion dance performance to be top notch, besides the lion dancer having both physical strength and coordination skills, there must also be good team effort and communication between the lion dancers, drummer and percussionists.

The same quality of team spirit applies to our cadets in almost everything that they do. One good example would be the NCDCC Precision Drill Competition. To do well, the final performance requires team effort where every single one of them would need to execute immaculate, uniformed and coordinated steps to emerge as champion.

#### **What should be the take home message for all NCDCC cadets?**

It is to Learn, Lead and Serve with pride and conviction.



“ The strong SCDF-NCDCC partnership offers our cadets a realistic experience of being a Lifesaver. This partnership will definitely continue to flourish especially now that we have embarked on the journey of becoming **A Nation of Lifesavers**. ”

- LTC Betty Ting  
3<sup>rd</sup> Commandant of the NCDCC  
(18 May 2010 - Current)



*The Singapore Civil Defence Force remembers  
Mr Lee Kuan Yew,  
the Founding Prime Minister of Singapore  
—— 1923 - 2015 ——*



***SCDF***  
The Life Saving Force