

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR HO CHEE KIT, PRESIDENT OF THE RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) (RAS) AT THE LOO (LET'S OBSERVE OURSELVES) AWARDS CEREMONY ON WORLD TOILET DAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2019, 2.00PM, AT HEARTBEAT@BEDOK**

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A very good afternoon to:

Our Guest of Honour Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources

Mr Edward D'Silva, Chairman of Public Hygiene Council

LOO Awards recipients, partners, supporters and distinguished guests

As we commemorate World Toilet Day today, I wish to warmly welcome all of you to our LOO Awards. It is indeed heartening for me to see award recipients from diverse sectors and backgrounds, organisations from public to private sectors and individuals from young to old. Congratulations, exemplary award recipients! Your outstanding contributions are crucial to the sustainability of quality toilet standards in Singapore.

**Objective of Happy Toilet Programme: Providing Better User Experience**

The Happy Toilet Programme or HTP was launched during the SARS outbreak in 2003 not only to sustain good toilet hygiene standards and to boost public confidence, but also to provide a better user experience for everyone. It focussed on design, cleanliness and maintenance. Five years later in 2008, the

programme was revamped to include another two key areas namely effectiveness and user satisfaction. The HTP is a grading system, starting at 3 stars, to 4 stars, 5 stars and a maximum of 6 stars. The higher the grading, the better the user experience.

### **Evolution of Happy Toilet Programme: Striving for Higher Standards**

In recent years, the toilet standards of Singapore have seen significant improvements since we introduced the highest accreditation of 6-star rating in 2015 and launched the 4th edition of the Guide to Better Public Toilet Design and Maintenance last year. The HTP is not only a testimony to owners' commitment to providing toilets of recognised standards; it also serves as a testimony to cleaning service providers' commitment to maintain toilets of recognised standards.

In recent years, there have been owners who have indicated HTP as a required standard to meet when offering contracts to cleaning service providers. At the same time, there are also cleaning service providers, in their bid to offer quality services, indicating experience with HTP when tendering for contracts. This is indeed an encouraging trend as this will translate to better standards for everyone.

### **Future of Happy Toilet Programme: Adopting Smart Solutions**

Currently, only 6-star toilets need to meet the criterion on the adoption of the holistic four components; Detect, Feedback, Eliminate and Clean or DFEC smart solutions to increase productivity and efficiency. "Detect" means the use of

sensors to detect and monitor any defects or situations, “Feedback” means the use of interactive feedback systems for defects or situations which cannot be effectively monitored by sensors, “Eliminate” means the use of green sanitisers, deodourisers such as ozonated water and protective coatings to eliminate odour, germs and stains. “Clean” not only means the adoption of technology to facilitate toilet cleaning but also the adoption of facilities for self-cleaning by users such as the use of bidets and taps integrated with fast and hygienic hand-drying functions for effective hand washing.

In our bid to support the nation’s move towards a smart nation, with effect from April next year, 4-star toilets will need to adopt at least one of the above DFEC solutions while 5-star toilets will need to adopt at least two of the above DFEC solutions. The assessment criteria of 3-star toilets will remain the same. The required scores for the respective star-ratings will also remain the same. This means, out of the total score of 108, a minimum score of 60 for 3-stars, 86 for 4-stars, 96 for 5-stars and 104 for 6-stars will be required. These revised criteria will not only encourage the adoption of smart solutions but most importantly translate to better productivity and efficiency in toilet maintenance.

## **Conclusion**

Before closing, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to Guest of Honour Dr Amy Khor, our LOO Awards judging panel from the National Environment Agency and Public Hygiene Council, award recipients, venue partner Heartbeat@Bedok, partners, supporters and distinguished guests, for taking time to commemorate World Toilet Day with us. Our vision of “A Gracious

Society Embracing in Restroom Excellence” can never be actualised without your continued support. Let’s continue to work together towards our vision.  
Thank you.