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To the News Editor

Please attribute all comments and citations to Mr Douglas Foo, President of the Singapore Manufacturing Federation and Nominated Member of Parliament.

SINGAPORE MANUFACTURING FEDERATION ON BUDGET 2019

18 February 2019 – Mr. Douglas Foo, President of the Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF), on behalf of the manufacturing community in Singapore, applauds the Government’s recognition of the role played by Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) such as the SMF. The SMF, as a partner in nation building remains committed to the cause of enhancing the manufacturing sector’s capabilities and looks forward to continuing its stellar collaborative relationships with our members; government agencies both local and overseas; as well as with other TACs. Minister Heng’s speech on enterprise and workforce

transformation lends governmental support to the beliefs that the SMF has been advancing to our members and to the work of the SMF over the last few years.

1. The SMF, working closely with manufacturing companies in Singapore, has been actively involved in the 3 thrusts for moving the Singapore economy forward:

a. Deep Enterprise Capabilities

- i. Our SMECentre@SMF provide customised advice and guidance to SMEs on the latest government grants to give our SMEs better opportunities of success.
- ii. Through the Singapore Innovation and Productivity Institute (SIPI), the SMF transforms SMEs using our proprietary Business Model Innovation and Innovation-Driven Productivity programmes.

b. Deep Worker Capabilities

- i. PCP – The SMF administers two types of PCPs – PCP- Broad-based (manufacturing) and PCP-Overseas. PCP-Broad-based is designed to re-skill PMETs with the necessary competencies to embark on a career in the local manufacturing sector whereas PCP-Overseas is designed to re-skill PMETs for job scopes with overseas

assignments/roles. Under these 2 programmes, the SMF has trained close to 1200 trainees as at January 2019.

- ii. PMCs – The SMF also provides a certification process for Practising Management Consultants (PMCs). This certification lends credibility to employees thinking of and undergoing a career change. The total number of PMCs certified currently is over 500.
- iii. Internships – Through the SME Internship Programme, we have placed nearly 1000 interns with leading SMEs since 2013.

c. Strong Partnerships within Singapore and across the World

- i. The SMF has signed more than 180 MOUs with local and overseas TACs and government agencies for better collaboration on commercial development.
- ii. The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) representative office in Singapore tasked with bringing local companies closer to doing business with EU companies has between 2016 and 2018 organised 56 brokerage events and signed 25 EEN partnership agreements. It currently has 200 active businesses on the network.

iii. The SMF regularly leads member delegations to local and overseas trade exhibitions. In 2018, the SMF led more than 600 enterprises to participate in 41 trade exhibitions, securing total sales of over \$222.3 million.

2. The SMF is pleased that the initiatives announced by Minister Heng, continue to recognise the importance of the manufacturing sector's contribution to the economy. The SMF welcomes the support that the government is pledging to transform the industry and the SMF looks forward to working with government agencies on realising Industry 4.0. In this regard, the SMF has taken the initiative to develop a Manufacturing Digital Plan to assist SMEs on their digital transformation journey.

3. In 2019, the SMF would continue its focus on assisting companies to digitalise and sooner realise Industry 4.0 standards. The SMF has since October 2018 launched the Go Digital Project Management Services to help SMEs that want to go digital but do not have the scale, to take the first step to digitalisation. Under the programme, SMEs can tap on "mentors" or digital project managers to help them deploy technology. While the SMF recognises that digitalisation is

not an easy journey, the support announced by Minister Heng will go a long way towards facilitating the process.

4. The SMF is also seeing an increase in examples of successful implementation of Industry 4.0 across our 3000 membership base, both large and small businesses. While the SMF understands that there will be concerns in the industry with the foreign manpower reduction proposed, the SMF notes that the changes are progressive and the SMF sees such measures as good reason for businesses to accelerate their transformation plans and will continue to assist businesses in doing so.

5. On the whole, the SMF is of the opinion that this Budget is a forward looking Budget, preparing and galvanising Singapore businesses for the challenges and opportunities ahead. It is encouraging that there is increased focus at the micro level, with support to accelerate the adoption of innovative solutions, building of global partnerships, upscaling of the workforce and business transformation.

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About Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)

Established since 1932, SMF represents the interest of the manufacturing community in Singapore, driving its competitiveness and sustainable growth through serving industry-specific needs. Supported by 10 industry groups and its Centres of Excellence, SMF enhances the competitiveness of the industry by encouraging capacity development and capability building, innovation and productivity. SMF provides opportunities for companies to collaborate, network; and to grow and expand both locally and internationally. Current membership stands at about 3,000 corporate members ranging from SMEs to MNCs. For more information, please visit www.smfederation.org.sg.

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