

bizSAFE AWARDS 2020



Mr Howard How (right) instills the importance of safety in the company's subcontractors through training, regular site inspections and discussions on safety control measures. PHOTO: TED CHEN

Making safety a priority

As a bizSAFE Mentor, Boustead Projects E&C walks the talk and trains others to do the same

BY JILLIAN WONG

The design-and-build arm of mainboard-listed Boustead Projects Limited, Boustead Projects E&C is one of only eight bizSAFE Mentors and also a bizSAFE STAR. The bizSAFE STAR is the highest qualification that can be attained in recognition of a company's workplace safety and health management programmes in Singapore.

Since starting on the bizSAFE programme in 2008, Boustead Projects E&C has clinched 18 Workplace Safety & Health (WSH) awards. Its services are focused on providing turnkey design-and-build expertise for custom-built facilities. Some of its projects include the green business park Alice @ Mediapolis and logistics facility Bollere Logistics Blue Hub.

The company was invited by the Workplace Safety and Health Council to be a mentor to other construction companies in 2011. Currently, Boustead mentors approximately 160 subcontractors.

Mr Howard How, director of Environmental, Health & Safety at Boustead Projects E&C, shares more about his company's workplace safety journey.

What motivates Boustead Projects E&C to become a bizSAFE Mentor?

The joy and happiness of seeing all our subcontractors carry out and complete their job without any accidents and being able to go home safely is enough motivation for us to become a bizSAFE Mentor. Being a mentor gives us

the confidence to implement best practices and programmes for our contractors.

As a bizSAFE Mentor, how do you guide enterprises under your charge in achieving and upholding workplace safety standards?

We guide our subcontractors through training, weekly site inspections and discussions on relevant safety control measures. We also identify hazards based on our on-site observations and advise our clients and stakeholders on solutions.

We advise and train all our subcontractors to implement safe work practices to comply with regulatory requirements, and ensure proper risk assessment is in place before hazardous work is undertaken. For instance, our subcontractors take part in the Safety Behaviour Observation programme where a nominated safety committee member carries out safety observations and intervenes whenever unsafe practices are identified on-site. This helps workers on the ground learn from one another on how to work in a safer manner.

By mentoring our subcontractors, we hope to build a successful culture of safety in our company and develop passionate, committed and competent personnel dedicated to instilling a strong safety culture.

How does Boustead Projects E&C adapt its systems and safety practices to keep up with technological changes?

To adapt and keep up with new technology, we have made significant changes to the way we work. We digitised our safety systems in 2015 and did away with hardcopy documents. Most of our safety documents are stored online in a system, called iBOSS (Integrated Boustead Online Safety System). This year, we look forward to using drones equipped with artificial intelligence to carry out worksite safety inspections.

Last year, you shared that Boustead Projects E&C plans to open a training centre to advocate workplace safety. How is that coming along?

We have already collaborated with a training centre to carry out a Safety Induction Course for all our workers. We will be partnering with another training centre this year to carry out safety training on working at height.

What advice do you have for bizSAFE mentees to ensure a safe workplace for their employees?

Embrace safety as much as you embrace progress in the workplace. Never take shortcuts to save time and never compromise on safety requirements. For safety practitioners, ensure all works are done properly and safely.

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