

bizSAFE CONVENTION 2019

Howard How (left), EHS director at Boustead Projects, believes in the company's responsibility as a bizSAFE mentor.
PHOTO: TED CHEN



Safety first and foremost

As one of only nine bizSAFE mentors, Boustead Projects advocates workplace safety and health through various schemes

Boustead Projects E&C Pte Ltd — a wholly-owned design-and-build subsidiary of industrial real estate solutions provider is one of only nine bizSAFE mentors in Singapore.

To qualify as a bizSAFE mentor, an organisation must have excellent safety records and receive Workplace Safety and Health (WSHP) Awards Performance for three consecutive years.

Mr Howard How, environment, health and safety (EHS) director at Boustead Projects, explains how the company puts safety first.

What responsibility does Boustead Projects have as one of only nine bizSAFE mentors?

Being a bizSAFE Mentor, it gives us tremendous responsibility to steer our subcontractors to a much higher level of workplace safety and health standards by providing them with training, regular site meetings and discussions on safety control measures.

We advise and train all our subcontractors

to implement safe work methods that comply with regulatory requirements and ensure proper risk assessment is in place before hazardous work is undertaken.

We hope our efforts will help raise the overall safety standards of subcontractors across the construction industry. By mentoring all our subcontractors, we hope to build a successful safety culture in our company and at the same time develop passionate, committed and competent personnel who genuinely want to instil a strong safety culture.

What is the WSHC Safety Advocate Programme?

It is a voluntary programme where companies of any size can adopt in-house personnel to create support for WSH across all levels of the company. The company identifies suitable employees and empowers them to engage their peers to improve WSH in their company. These WSH advocates can be anyone who devotes extra effort to keep their work environment safe and healthy.

Through a lead-by-example approach at all levels within the organisation, a positive WSH mindset can be realised. Over time, everyone at the workplace should become a WSH advocate.

What plans does Boustead Projects have in place for the future to further workplace safety?

We believe training helps ensure that our workers are sufficiently competent to work safely, and we plan to set up a training centre in the near future to enhance our workplace safety and health advocacy.

We continually improve our management system by implementing programmes to eliminate hand injury, eye injury and other hazardous activities that may have resulted in near misses or actual injuries in the past. We also strive to learn from past accidents and come up with measures to try to prevent accidents from recurring.



Small actions, big payoff

At Megastone Holdings, attention to every safety detail has resulted in an enviable track record

BY LUKE TAN

Does picking up your workers from somewhere other than their designated pick-up point sound like a potential safety issue?

Most companies might not bat an eyelid — but not Megastone Holdings.

Its director Mr Chua Chian Hong, 67, recalls how a staff member recently spotted a company driver taking a shortcut to pick up workers at the driveway entrance of their dormitory, instead of at the designated pick-up area located further away.

"Foreign-worker dormitories can be busy places," he explains. "When workers board vehicles at non-designated areas, mishaps

Megastone's management team is responsible for upholding its impeccable safety record.
PHOTO: TED CHEN

can occur. In this instance, we cautioned the driver and helped him to understand the severity of the issue."

Mr Chua believes that this is testament to Megastone's belief in taking personal ownership of even seemingly minor safety issues.

"Everyone has a part — no matter how small — to play in achieving a zero-accident work culture here," he adds.

Rock-solid record

Established in 1995, Megastone Holdings constructs and maintains civil engineering and infrastructure facilities.

After joining the Singapore SME 1000 ranks in 2012, the company added another accolade to its list of achievements this year. It scored a repeat win of the bizSAFE Enterprise Exemplary Award, after winning it last year.

Megastone also regularly clinches safety awards given out by the Land Transport Authority and Changi Airport Group. In fact, it has won the latter's Safety Recognition award for five years in a row since 2015.

Stars in the team

The company's success also extends to its employees, including Mr Vikneshwaran Sammandan. The WSH officer received a bizSAFE Champion Award for playing a key role in WSH efforts and the implementation of the bizSAFE programme in his company.

"These awards are a recognition of our safety efforts, and indicate that we are aligned to the best WSH standard," he says.

Megastone has made it a point to involve employees such as Mr Vikneshwaran in various local safety seminars and forums, where they have helped the company to share its domain knowledge.

The 35-year-old says: "We work as a team, and these awards will spur all of us to do better in our journey towards a safer workplace."

Looking into the details

Besides nipping safety issues in the bud, the company also focuses on its employees' health and wellness.

Staff can go for medical check-ups, have access to badminton courts and enjoy a bi-monthly "fruit day". A Quality, Safety, and Environment (QSE) app helps to reduce time spent on safety inspections and paperwork.

As Mr Seah Kok Hua, 57, the senior manager overseeing Megastone's total workplace safety and health, puts it: "Our safety, health, and wellness efforts and programmes are there to ensure that employees have a safe and secure environment to work in."