

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

24 October 2013

CEA Maps Professional Development of Real Estate Agency Industry

The Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) has introduced the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Training Roadmap, a structured and comprehensive framework to guide Key Executive Officers (KEOs) and salespersons in building up their capability and professionalism.

2. Under CEA's CPD scheme, KEOs and salespersons are required to fulfil mandatory training of six credit hours a year for licence and registration renewal, of which at least three credit hours must be on core subjects. Developed in consultation with the industry and training providers, the new training roadmap aims to bolster the scheme by giving a clearer direction on core courses that are suitable for KEOs and salespersons of varying years of experience, and encouraging them to attend a balanced mix of training courses on different subject matters. The roadmap also provides guidance to CPD training providers in tailoring courses and materials suitable for different target groups in the industry. Courses will be categorised according to knowledge areas essential to the conduct of estate agency work, and expertise levels of KEOs and salespersons. The CPD Training Roadmap will take effect from the annual 2014 CPD cycle which commenced on 1 October 2013.

3. Said Chan Mun Kit, Director (Regulatory Control) of CEA: "CEA has been continuously expanding the depth and breadth of CPD courses. We have

also put in checks to ensure quality training, such as requiring CPD course providers to ensure that their trainers are qualified and have the necessary expertise to conduct the lessons effectively. But we felt that more had to be done to address the diverse learning needs of the industry and encourage a culture of constant learning.

4 In the last six months, we have been working closely with the industry and training providers to understand the evolving demands in different training areas. The CPD Training Roadmap will give KEOs and salespersons a systematic framework to guide them in planning their training so that they can continue to grow professionally and conduct estate agency work competently and ethically. This will help to enhance the industry's professional stature and instil greater public confidence in salespersons."

Charting a progressive training pathway

5. Under the new training framework, courses are grouped into three categories: professional ethics, Estate Agents Act and Regulations; laws and government policies related to estate agency work; and practice-related knowledge and issues. From 1 October 2013, KEOs and salespersons are required to attend at least one core CPD course under each of three categories over three consecutive CPD cycles. Those who fail to fulfil the training requirement will not be able to renew their licence and registration at the end of the third CPD cycle.

6. The CPD courses in each category are pegged at three levels of expertise to match the needs of salespersons of different experience levels or at different stages of their careers. Salespersons can choose the level of courses that is appropriate for them and develop their knowledge in a specific subject progressively by choosing to attend courses on the same subject at a lower level before going to the next higher level.

7. For salespersons who wish to pursue more in-depth learning in specialised areas, CEA has identified courses of special interest such as

commercial or industrial property, collective or en bloc sale, and dispute resolution. The roadmap also features courses that are recommended for salespersons to attend such as courses on the latest regulatory changes and updates like CEA's Practice Guidelines on the Professional Service Manual (PSM).

8. The CPD Training Roadmap will be reviewed yearly and updated when necessary. Together, the courses under the CPD Training Roadmap will progressively prepare KEOs and salespersons for evolving challenges in the real estate agency industry and enhance the industry's development and achievement of higher standards of ethics and professionalism.

Annex A: Overview of CPD Scheme

Annex B: CPD Training Roadmap

About Council for Estate Agencies

The Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) is a statutory board established under the Estate Agents Act to regulate and promote the development of a professional and trusted real estate agency industry. The key responsibilities of CEA are to license estate agents and register salespersons, promote the integrity and competence of estate agents and salespersons, and equip consumers with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions in property transactions. For more information, please visit: www.cea.gov.sg.

Overview of CPD Scheme

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme was implemented in 1 April 2011 as one of CEA's key regulatory initiatives to raise the professional standards of the real estate agency industry. Under the scheme, KEOs and salespersons are required to undertake mandatory CPD training of six credit hours in each CPD cycle, which is one year-long, for licence and registration renewal. A minimum of three credit hours must be on core CPD subjects.

Salespersons can choose to attend any of the CEA-approved core CPD courses based on their own assessment of their training needs or with guidance from their KEOs. CEA has advised that KEOs should identify the different training needs of their salespersons and address the identified learning gaps of their salespersons by encouraging them to attend the relevant courses. KEOs can also work with qualified trainers to develop and tailor different courses for their salespersons according to identified training needs.

In the past year, CEA has been enhancing the CPD scheme by implementing various requirements targeted at CPD course providers. CPD course providers now have to be responsible for providing quality training to their participants, ensuring accuracy of their training materials and maintaining the quality of the courses. They have to ensure that their trainers are qualified with sufficient expertise to teach the subject. Similarly, the trainers are expected to have the necessary knowledge and conduct the lessons effectively to enhance the participants' learning. Other requirements, such as stating course contents clearly in publicity materials and obtaining course participants' feedback using CEA's standardised feedback form, must also be met.

CDP Training Roadmap

Starting from the 2014 CPD cycle which commenced on 1 October 2013, KEOs and salespersons are required to attend at least one core CPD course under each of three categories, C1 to C3, over three consecutive CPD cycles (i.e. a three-year period). Each cycle spans one year, from 1 October in the current year to 30 September in the following year.

KEOs and salespersons can choose to attend courses from the three categories in any order within the three-year period. Those who fail to fulfil the training requirement will not be able to renew their licence and registration at the end of the third CPD cycle. For newly registered salespersons, the exemption from CPD requirement in the first year will continue to apply.

a. Core CPD Course Categories

- **C1** focuses on developing and enhancing the professional ethics of KEOs and salespersons, and promoting their knowledge of the Estate Agents Act and Regulations.
- **C2** is designed to keep KEOs and salespersons abreast of the latest laws, government policies and regulations related to estate agency work and property transactions.
- **C3** is aimed at raising the professional standards of KEOs and salespersons through learning best practices relating to estate agency work and deepening of knowledge of CEA's practice guidelines.

b. CPD Course Levels

Salespersons can choose the level of courses that is appropriate for them.

- **Level 1** courses focus on laying the foundation for essential knowledge and enabling salespersons to develop their competencies as well as good ethics and professionalism. These training courses are targeted

at salespersons who are new to the industry or are in their early years of their careers, and need to build their professional knowledge.

- **Level 2** courses enable the salespersons to gain advanced knowledge related to real estate, and acquire problem solving and management skills to manage a team effectively. Experienced salespersons who are at the advanced level or functioning as team leaders with supervisory responsibilities will benefit from these courses.
- **Level 3** courses are aimed at KEOs, practising directors/partners and salespersons in senior management positions. These training courses seek to enable them to explore the finer details of real estate disciplines, such as deeper knowledge in professionalism, ethics, law, practice management, governance and complaint management. These courses will also prepare them for their management roles by allowing them to acquire leadership and senior management skills to manage and lead an estate agent.

c. Recommended and Special Interest Courses

- **Recommended CPD Courses** mainly focus on government regulations relating to property transactions and estate agency work, including latest regulatory changes and updates like CEA's Practice Guidelines on the Professional Service Manual.
- **Special Interest CPD Courses** on selected topics such as commercial or industrial property, collective or en bloc sale, dispute resolution, among others.

Examples of Core CPD Courses

Level 1	<u>Core Category 1</u> Professional Ethics, Estate Agents Act and Regulations	<u>Core Category 2</u> Laws, Government Policies and Regulations related to Estate Agency Work	<u>Core Category 3</u> Practice-Related Knowledge and Issues
For Salespersons at Initial / Intermediate level to acquire Professional Knowledge	Professional Ethics; Ethical Responsibilities of Salespersons incorporating Code of Ethics & Professional Client Care <i>(Recommended)</i> Estate Agents Act and Regulations <i>(Recommended)</i>	Rules, Policies and Procedures - HDB Resale/Subletting Transactions - Private Residential Property Transactions (Sale & Lease) - CPF and Taxation Policies <i>(Recommended)</i> Conveyancing Knowledge for Sale Transactions / Law pertaining to Tenancy <i>(Recommended)</i> Personal Data Protection Act and its impact on Industry <i>(Recommended)</i> Rules, Policies & Procedures for Commercial / Industrial / Foreign Property Transactions (Sale & Lease) <i>(Special Interest)</i> Government legislation and regulations pertaining to real estate such as Housing Developers (Control & Licensing) Act; Land Titles Act	CEA Practice Guidelines such as: - Professional Service Manual <i>(Recommended)</i> - Prevention of Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism <i>(Recommended)</i> - Ethical Advertising - Use of Prescribed Estate Agency Agreement Forms - OTPs and Sales and Purchase Agreements Real Estate Seminars/ Congress on core subjects

Level 2	<u>Core Category 1</u> Professional Ethics, Estate Agents Act and Regulations	<u>Core Category 2</u> Laws, Government Policies and Regulations related to Estate Agency Work	<u>Core Category 3</u> Practice-Related Knowledge and Issues
<p>For Salespersons at Advanced Level / Team Leaders to acquire in-depth understanding of Professional Knowledge / Problem Solving and Management Skills to Manage a Team</p>	<p>Professional Ethics; Ethical Responsibilities of Salespersons incorporating Code of Ethics & Professional Client Care <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Estate Agents Act and Regulations <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Code of Practice for Estate Agents incorporating proper systems control over supervision of salespersons and ensuring compliance <i>(Recommended)</i></p>	<p>Rules, Policies and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HDB Resale/Subletting Transactions - Private Residential Property Transactions (Sale & Lease) - CPF and Taxation Policies <i>(Recommended)</i> <p>Rules, Policies & Procedures for Commercial / Industrial / Foreign Property Transactions (Sale & Lease) <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Conveyancing Knowledge for Sale Transactions / Law pertaining to Tenancy <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Personal Data Protection Act and its impact on Industry <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Government legislation pertaining to real estate eg. Housing Developers (Control & Licensing) Act, Land Titles Act, Collective Sale/En Bloc <i>(Special Interest)</i></p>	<p>CEA Practice Guidelines such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Service Manual <i>(Recommended)</i> - Prevention of Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism <i>(Recommended)</i> - Ethical Advertising - Use of Prescribed Estate Agency Agreement Forms - OTPs and Sales and Purchase Agreements <p>Complaints Management & Dispute Resolution <i>(Special Interest)</i></p> <p>Real Estate Seminars / Congress on core subjects</p>

Level 3	<u>Core Category 1</u> Professional Ethics, Estate Agents Act and Regulations	<u>Core Category 2</u> Laws, Government Policies and Regulations related to Estate Agency Work	<u>Core Category 3</u> Practice-Related Knowledge and Issues
<p>For KEOs and Practising Directors/ Partners and Salespersons at Senior Management Level to explore finer details of real estate disciplines, advance professional knowledge and develop Leadership and Key Management Skills</p>	<p>Professional Ethics; Ethical Responsibilities of Salespersons incorporating Code of Ethics & Professional Client Care <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Estate Agents Act and Regulations <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Code of Practice for Estate Agents incorporating proper systems control over business, corporate governance, recruitment, retention, discipline control, management and supervision of salespersons and ensuring compliance <i>(Recommended)</i></p>	<p>Conveyancing Knowledge for Sale Transactions / Law pertaining to Tenancy <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Personal Data Protection Act and its impact on Industry <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Rules, Policies & Procedures for Commercial / Industrial / Foreign Property Transactions (Sale & Lease) <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>Collective Sale/En Bloc <i>(Special Interest)</i></p> <p>Government legislation pertaining to real estate eg. Planning Guidelines <i>(Special Interest)</i></p>	<p>CEA Practice Guidelines such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Service Manual <i>(Recommended)</i> - Prevention of Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism <i>(Recommended)</i> - Ethical Advertising - Use of Prescribed Estate Agency Agreement Forms <p>Complaints Management & Dispute Resolution <i>(Recommended)</i></p> <p>KEO Seminars / Real Estate Seminars / Congress on core subjects</p>