

## MAXIMISING TEAM POTENTIAL

The greatest resource of CEA is its staff. Investing in them and their capabilities remains its priority. The Council also strives to build a stimulating workplace that enables staff to pursue excellence in their work and professional development so as to meet the challenges of the industry.





The 2012 Minister's Award winning team from CEA with Minister for National Development, Khaw Boon Wan (centre). (Photo: MND)

In FY2012, CEA continued to roll out different staff initiatives to equip and empower its employees with core competencies and capabilities, create a nurturing work environment that supports teamwork and work excellence, and encourage employee engagement and work-life balance.

## STRENGTHENING COMPETENCIES & CAPABILITIES

To build a competent team to meet current and future demands of the industry, CEA focused its efforts on human resource planning and staff recruitment services. As at 31 March 2013, it achieved an effective staffing rate of 89%.

CEA is committed to developing a culture of lifelong learning and building up the competencies and knowledge required of

staff in their areas of work and work practices. During the year, CEA arranged for staff to attend relevant training courses and development programmes based on their qualifications and experiences. For instance, investigators attend training at the Home Team Academy. The exposure to different courses enabled staff to hone their skills such as investigation or media skills, and expand their knowledge of topics like ethical issues related to their work.

In recognition of its efforts in driving transformational change in the industry, CEA received the Minister's Award (Team) 2012 for the initiative on "Licensing of Estate Agents and Registration of Salespersons". A team comprising staff from various Divisions was tasked to build a system from scratch to handle applications for licence and registration, as well as fee payment. During the months of preparation, the team worked overtime in the office and even at home during the festive period. The hard work and perseverance of the

team enabled the system to be completed on time for the mass licensing and registration exercise in October 2010. At the end of the exercise, close to 1,500 estate agents and over 31,000 salespersons were transited successfully to the new regulatory system. The team continued to enhance the system incorporating complaints, debarment and reconsideration processes. As part of the system, a public register was also set up for consumers to obtain information about estate agents and salespersons before engaging them.

CEA is a corporate participant in the Ministry of National Development (MND) Family Scholarship programme, which aims to promote design-thinking competencies and inculcate an innovative culture among MND agencies. A Singapore Polytechnic Diploma scholarship was awarded to student Kao Hwee Ling, who will join CEA when she completes her course of study in business innovation and design.

## BUILDING A STIMULATING WORK ENVIRONMENT

In FY2012, many internal processes for office administration were streamlined to achieve better efficiencies across the organisation. Key improvements included setting up the



Visit by the HDB Legal Department.

digital document registry and the CEA intranet for knowledge management and information sharing. These contributed towards building a stimulating work environment that empowers staff to strive for work excellence and productivity improvements.

In line with ensuring good corporate governance, CEA conducted its first internal audit of the licensing operations. It also reviewed the performance of its appointed information technology (IT) vendor to ensure that all contractual obligations were met.

CEA implemented various schemes in FY2012 to deepen the sense of well-being among staff members, including flexible working hours and



CEA Executive Director, Chionh Chye Khye (right) receiving the NTUC Certificate of Appreciation from Head (Strategies and Planning/Youth Lab) of NTUC Youth Development Unit, Alex Yam. (Photo: MND)

telecommuting. The aim of these family friendly schemes is to motivate employees and promote a balanced lifestyle. CEA employees also benefitted from a health screening exercise as part of its staff welfare scheme.

To build a conducive workplace for a bigger workforce, CEA renovated its work spaces to enhance the layout of its expanded office space. A "Blue Sky Day" on the last Friday of every month was also implemented to encourage employees to leave the office punctually at the end of the work day in order to spend time with their family and friends.

As part of its commitment to make a difference in the Singapore community, CEA conducted its own "Our Singapore Conversation" sessions. The views shared by staff were contributed to the National Conversation.

CEA also participated in the President's Challenge 2012 charity drive. Staff donated generously and contributed to the more than \$11 million raised by the Ministry of National Development and its six statutory boards during the event.



CEA Executive Director, Chionh Chye Khye (left) with scholarship recipient, Kao Hwee Ling.



Building a conducive work environment that encourages work-life balance.

## LEARNING EXCHANGES

CEA welcomes opportunities to share with visitors its experience and challenges in regulating the real estate agency industry in Singapore. On 30 May 2012, CEA hosted an educational visit by the Legal Department of the Housing & Development Board. The visitors were briefed on the Council's corporate history, complaint management system, legal case studies and consumer education efforts.

To promote mutual exchanges between regulatory agencies, CEA visited the Council for Private Education (CPE) on 31 October 2012 to learn more about its best practices in regulation, industry development and consumer education. In turn, CPE visited CEA on 22 November 2012 to better understand CEA's customer services, licensing operations, media communications and public outreach strategies. CEA will be planning further exchanges with CPE in 2013 to understand its EduTrust Certification Scheme. This is to help CEA plan and frame its own certification scheme for the real estate agency industry.



"Our Singapore Conversation" session with CEA staff.

## LOOKING AHEAD

To achieve organisational excellence, CEA is not only investing in people development programmes, but also putting in place an integrated IT infrastructure to support the effective use of IT and proper documentation of work procedures. These tools are critical to enabling and enhancing knowledge management across the organisation.

Schemes for managing staff suggestions and recognition of good front line services will be implemented in the coming year to provide a platform for employees to contribute their best ideas towards achieving its corporate goals and to recognise good work done by staff. It is also formulating a series of business continuity plans to ensure the robustness of CEA's operations.

The Council will continue to empower its people with the right skills and knowledge, and promote a positive work culture so that the CEA team is primed to drive the transformation of the real estate agency industry.



CEA Deputy Executive Director, Soh Kee Hean (left) receiving the President's Challenge 2012 token of appreciation for CEA from President Tony Tan Keng Yam.