

CAAS and CPFB bagged NTUC 50 Model Partnership Awards

“One can be easily overpowered. Two can defend themselves but can still be broken with more force. When there are three, there is strength and it is difficult to break. Together, there is more resilience and we can fight off stronger forces.” – NTUC’s e2i CEO Ang Hin Kee on the theme of partnership in his opening address.

As part of NTUC’s 50th anniversary celebrations, the NTUC 50 Model Partnership Awards was a special occasion to recognise partnership efforts in moving towards productivity driven growth and striving for better jobs and better lives.

Under the Institutional Category, it recognises organisations which worked with partners to hire vulnerable workers, redesign jobs or employ better methods to raise productivity, share productivity gains with workers, and help create a more inclusive workforce.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) and Central Provident Fund Board (CPFB) were among the 50 organisations which received Model Partnership Awards from the NTUC at Downtown East on 21 May 2011.

The awardees and their partners who supported them were honoured as role models for their exemplary partnerships which raised productivity, enhanced skills and improved employment.

Institutional Awardee: The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS)

Institutional Partners: AUPE and CAAS Staff branch of AUPE



Civil Aviation Authority management officials with their partners from AUPE received the Model Partnership Awards from Guests-of-Honour. (From left) Mr George Devaprasad Zaccheus, Chairman, AUPE CAAS Staff Branch, Mr Stephen Lee, President, Singapore National Employers Federation, Mr Victor Tan Yong Meng, Chief of Singapore Air Traffic Control Centre, CAAS, Mr Lim Swee Say, NTUC Secretary-General, Mr Yeo Chun Fing, AUPE Deputy General Secretary, Mr Gan Kim Yong, then Minister for Manpower and Mr Peter Wee, Director of Human Resource & Corporate Services, CAAS.

Previously, Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs) were on a split shift system with long night shift hours. ATCOs had to stay back after their night duty or return to office on their off days to attend training related to ATC operational work. There was little opportunity for ATCOs to interact with management. There was also a build-up of unrecorded leave over the years when ATCOs were compensated with unrecorded leave when they attend training on their non-working hours/days,

Since January 2009, the CAAS had worked together with the Union to improve the shift system of the Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs). A new comprehensive shift system was implemented with in-service training built into the roster so that ATCOs attend training as part of their shift roster.

The improved shift system has brought about a better skilled ATCO workforce which can deal with the increasing complexity in airspace and aerodrome management. Productivity has also improved as ATCOs are better able to cope with the introduction of new ATC procedures and air traffic management technologies which are aimed at enhancing safety, efficiency and capacity of air traffic services. ATCOs are also given opportunities to display their other attributes such as leadership and creativity by participating in projects during the interactive in-service training sessions.

Another positive outcome of the in-service training is the improved communication between ATCOs and unit heads/management outside their operational duty periods. They fostered closer rapport and bonding as they engaged in open discussion on proposed ATC initiatives and procedures. The regular communications on organisation developments and programmes also allow ATCOs to keep abreast of developments within the organisation and better understand how to contribute towards CAAS's mission, vision and values.

AUPE played an important role in assisting to communicate with the ATCOs to support the changes in the shift system in particular the in-service training by explaining the rationale and benefits. The branch representatives also provided useful, invaluable and constructive feedback on the revisions which incorporate the in-service training and worked tirelessly with CAAS and AUPE in seeing through the whole review.



E2i CEO Ang Hin Kee (in red) poses with CAAS management and union officials for an album shot.

Awardee: Central Provident Fund Board (CPF)

Institutional Partners: NTUC-Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (NTUC-UCCW)
Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC)



Central Provident Fund Board officials together with representatives from UCCW and CDAC receive the Model Partnership Awards from Guests-of-Honour. (From left) Mr Goh Chim Khim, Executive Director, CDAC, Mr Stephen Lee, President, Singapore National Employers Federation, Ms Evelyn Ang, Chairperson, AUPE Central Provident Fund Workers Branch, Mr Lim Swee Say, NTUC Secretary-General, Mr Gan Kim Yong, then Minister for Manpower, Ms Jennie Yeo, Deputy Director, UCCW, NTUC and Ms Janice Lai, Deputy Director, Self-Employed Scheme & Workfare Department, CPF.

The Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) Scheme was introduced in 2007 to encourage older and low-wage workers to stay employed by supplementing their wages and helping them improve their retirement adequacy. In 2010, the WIS Scheme was further enhanced with an increase in the qualifying income cut-off and maximum WIS quantum.

Typically, about 20% of WIS recipients are self-employed persons who need to take some actions such as declare their income and contribute to their Medisave in order to benefit from WIS. CPF's challenge is to reach out to these self-employed persons and to put across the WIS scheme simply so that they would know about the scheme. Another challenge is to convince them to make Medisave contributions to build up their CPF savings and to benefit from WIS, even if they may prefer to have more cash in hand.

Besides the traditional mass media approaches, the team at CPF constantly explores new ways to spread the WIS message. It was during one of the brainstorming sessions that they came up with the idea of conveying the WIS message through a getai-style skit.

The 10-minute skit featured two flamboyantly dressed “Banana sisters” who interacted with three other street characters – a taxi driver, a coffee shop assistant and a tai-tai wannabe, who raised questions on WIS and the uses of Medisave. It was performed by CPF’s staff in bazaar Mandarin peppered with dialect, and raised real-life issues that low-wage workers could relate to.

CPF introduced the skit at the Chinese Development Assistance Council’s (CDAC’s) “Healthy Living, Active Planning” Family Carnival on 4 July 2010. It also worked with CDAC to conduct WIS briefings and sign-up exercises at several of its events for older low-wage workers.

The CPF team also collaborates with other partners like NTUC’s Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) and People’s Association to identify suitable platforms for the skit performance so as to maximise outreach to the older low-wage workers. It was invited to several UCCW’s seminars and events. It also put up a Chinese New Year edition of the WIS skit at the River Hongbao 2011 which attracted the more mature Chinese populace and media coverage.

The getai-style skit was well received by the media and public alike. As a result, CPF enjoyed good media coverage which amplified the effectiveness of the skit outreach approach to spread the WIS message.

Due to the popularity of the getai-style skit, CPF came up with a Malay variant to reach out to the Malay low-wage workers. The first Malay skit was successfully performed at the UCCW-organised “Excel with U” seminar on 13 November 2010.

A total of 800 people attended the Awards Ceremony. Prior to the ceremony, all awardees were given the all-star treatment at an exclusive closed-door evening party with their family members and guests at Downtown East on 20 May 11.