**OPENING ADDRESS BY MR RICHARD CHEE,**
**CHAIRMAN OF SMa BUILDING PRODUCTS & CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS INDUSTRY GROUP**
**At the New Innovations and Technologies in Building Products' Seminar**
**22 September 2011, 12.30pm**
**The Pines**

**Honorary Chairman for Chartered Management Institute Singapore,**
**Mr Liau Beng Chye,**

**Vice Chairman for Chartered Management Institute Singapore & CEO for South Beach Consortium,**
**Mr Aloysius Lee,**

**Members of the Specialists Trade Alliance of Singapore**

**Fellow Members of the Singapore Manufacturers' Federation**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good morning**

1. Welcome to the "New Innovations and Technologies in Building Products" Seminar. Thank you for taking time off your busy schedule to join us at this event.

2. In the last couple of months, the performance of various sectors in Singapore has been stunted by a slowdown in the global economy. Fortunately for us, the domestic construction industry still remains buoyant with many national projects slated for construction. These include the South Beach Consortium Project, new National Stadium, new National Art Gallery, redevelopment of the Capitol Theatre heritage building and the large number of Build-To-Order flats.

3. Despite the busy times ahead, we should still be on our toes to stay abreast of the challenging economic climate.

4. At the Singapore Manufacturers' Federation or SMa, we play an active role in driving the competitive and sustainable growth of local manufacturing and manufacturing-related industries. We strongly believe that sustainable growth, and even a quantum leap, can be achieved if we adopt more productive and innovative processes.

5. Through our Centres of Excellence, we offer a holistic suite of productivity and innovation solutions for our members at a discounted rate.

6. For example, the Enterprise Development Centre @ SMa offers consultancy services for members who would like to apply for Government Assistance Schemes to enhance their competitive edge.

7. The Centre for Corporate Learning, on the other hand, offers WDA-funded productivity programmes, such as the WSQ Certified Productivity and Innovation Manager programme to help companies innovate and review their processes, so as to raise productivity. Through this programme, over 13 companies have successfully raised their productivity by an average of 15 per cent over a span of 6 months. A more compact version called WSQ SME Qiang was launched mid this year especially for SMEs.

8. Currently, our membership stands at a strong 2,800 companies from MNCs to SMEs. As a SMa member, you will be invited to participate in numerous on-going programmes such as trade mission, seminars, conferences, networking and business matching sessions. Through these activities, you will be able to gain access to a wider scope of local and international business contacts.

9. To better serve these companies in their diverse industry-specific needs, SMa has categorised them into 11 industry groups. One of which is the Building Products and Construction Material industry group or BPCM IG that I chair.

10. Regular meetings are held to share and discuss industry developments, as well as issues faced by members. Whenever possible, we will also organise meetings with developers, giving our members exclusive opportunities to gain insights to upcoming projects and potential business leads.

11. Members are also invited to take part in free networking sessions and business seminars where we promote and share best industry practices. Today's seminar, with a strong focus on innovation, is organised with the same objective in mind.

12. Among us today are some of SMa's member-companies from the BPCM IG, who will be sharing with you their views on industry trends, as well as best practices in product innovation. I would also encourage you to visit their booths later to understand how their products and innovations can value-add to your projects and give you a competitive edge over your competitors.

13. Very often in the building and construction industry, we think of innovation in terms of design and the safety features of the projects. Moving forward, it will be insufficient to consider just these elements.

14. In 2009, the Building and Construction Authority announced a masterplan that targets to make 80 per cent of the Singapore buildings green by 2030. By achieving this target, Singapore will be able to make an annual savings of $1.6billion in terms of energy cost reductions.

15. It has since become a mandate for all new buildings to meet a minimum environmental sustainability standard. Just recently, this minimum Green Mark standard has also been extended to include old buildings as well.

16. To propel the industry towards this goal, we have also put special thoughts into today's seminar by inviting professionals who have served as consultant or leader for various notable green buildings, to share with us their experience in the construction of sustainable buildings.

17. On this note, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the guest speakers – Mr Tang Pei Luen, Professor Lee Siew Eang and Mr Wong Chung Jeu – for taking time off their busy schedule to share their knowledge with us.

18. Last but not least, this seminar would not have been possible without the kind support of the following sponsors in alphabetical order:

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19. I wish all of you an insightful and fruitful day at this seminar. Thank you.