



27 November 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Launch of SMRT- Temasek Cares AED on Wheels
100 AED-equipped SMRT Taxis to ply Singapore roads**

1. SMRT Taxis and Temasek Cares, supported by Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF), Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC) and the National Taxi Association (NTA), today launched the SMRT – Temasek Cares AED on Wheels programme. Minister Chan Chun Sing, Prime Minister’s Office and Secretary-General of the National Trade Union Congress, was the Guest of Honour at this event.
2. This is a three-year pilot programme where 100 SMRT taxis have Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)¹ installed in their vehicles. These specially-equipped taxis will increase the availability of AEDs in the community. In the event of sudden cardiac arrest, an AED can be delivered quickly to the scene, thus helping to improve the chances of survival for the victim. The programme to ‘mobilise’ AEDs through taxis on such a scale is a first-of-its-kind in Southeast Asia.
3. Participating SMRT taxi drivers will be alerted, through the myResponder mobile app, by SCDF’s 995 Emergency Call Centre, of cardiac arrest cases within a 1.5-kilometre radius of their taxi’s location. Drivers who are able to respond will confirm their participation through the app (up to a maximum of 2 taxis) and drive the taxi to deliver the AED to the specified location.
4. Participating taxi drivers are trained by SHF on the use of the AED, as well as proper cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques. In a cardiac arrest case, the taxi drivers will be able to support the community first responders already at the scene reviving the victim.
5. Mr Richard Magnus, Temasek Cares Chairman, said, “Immediate attention is critical when a person’s heart stops. His or her life can be saved. CPR can make a

¹ An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a portable device that checks the heart rhythm. It can also send an electric shock to the heart to try to restore a normal rhythm, in cases of cardiac arrests.

big difference. Aided by the use of an AED – an electronic device which helps restart the heart – many lives can be saved. The SMRT – Temasek Cares AED on Wheels initiative will increase the availability of AEDs in the community. I am proud of this pioneer batch of SMRT taxi drivers who have volunteered for this meaningful programme to build community resilience.”

6. Mr Desmond Kuek, SMRT President and Group CEO said, “This landmark partnership between SMRT Taxis, Temasek Cares, Singapore Heart Foundation, the Singapore Civil Defence Force, and National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council makes every AED-equipped SMRT taxi a potential life-saver. In situations involving cardiac arrest, every minute counts. Given the distance and the area covered by our taxi drivers daily, they would be better placed to render assistance as community first responders. The AED on Wheels programme is a meaningful initiative to equip our taxi drivers with the necessary skills and equipment to make a positive impact on society and, most importantly, help to save lives.”
7. In 2014, cardiovascular disease accounted for 29.9% of all deaths in Singapore. Sudden cardiac arrest can happen anytime, anywhere and to anyone, and so expedient and appropriate use of the AED is key, when responding to cardiac emergencies. With the AED on Wheels programme, SHF wants to empower taxi drivers with up-to-date knowledge, skills and confidence to perform CPR effectively and safely,” said Mr Vernon Kang, Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Heart Foundation.
8. Mr Alan Loh, Chairman of NFEC, said, “If someone has a cardiac arrest, the fastest response is actually the help you can get from a bystander. The myResponder mobile app leverages on this ‘bystander effect’ by linking a network of trained community first responders who are able to respond quickly to cardiac arrest cases in the community alerting them to the nearest available AEDs prior to the arrival of the ambulance. With robust community response, we are closer to building ‘a Nation of Lifesavers,’ where the community renders prompt assistance to our loved ones, neighbours and strangers during an emergency. We applaud SMRT for its strong support towards this noble cause and look forward to the participation of more public transport operators.”
9. SMRT taxi driver Mr Simon Ngiam Shu Leng, 45, one of the participants of the programme, said, “I was very interested to take part in this project when I first heard about it. To be able to play an active role in society by saving lives is very

important. You will never know when you can provide emergency aid to someone who needs it urgently when you are plying the roads.”

10. Temasek Cares is providing a grant of \$376,500 to support the SMRT – Temasek Cares AED on Wheels programme from the Temasek Emergency Preparedness Fund (T-PREP Fund) as part of its ‘Stay Prepared’ initiative. If the pilot is successful, the programme will be extended to more taxis in the community.

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About SMRT Taxis

SMRT Taxis is one of the leading taxi operators in Singapore with over 25 years of experience. We manage and lease a fleet of more than 3,500 taxis.

At SMRT Taxis, the welfare of our taxi partners is a top priority and we are constantly developing new initiatives to better meet their needs such as help them mitigate costs and increase their earnings. “***We take better care of you***” is our ongoing commitment to our taxi partners. The range of activities includes a Bursary award that helps provide financial support for the education of their children and a newly-launched Helping Hand Fund that helps taxi partners tide over financial difficulties.

We continue to focus on raising service levels with our customer-centric approach. We conduct Customer Service & Road Safety courses for our taxi partners so that each would be able to provide exemplary service. We are proud to have an increasing number of our taxi partners receive the Singapore Experience Award, National Excellent Service Award, National Courtesy Transport Gold Award, NTUC 50 Model Partnership Award, Land Transport Excellence Award and SMRTnI Service Excellence Award etc.

As part of our environmental sustainability efforts, SMRT Taxis has introduced the environmentally-friendly and fuel-efficient Toyota Prius Hybrid taxi to expand our “green” fleet.

For more information, please visit www.smrt.com.sg.

About Temasek Cares

Temasek Cares CLG Ltd is a Temasek funded non-profit philanthropic organisation that aims to help improve the lives of underprivileged individuals, families and communities in Singapore; and to build the capability and capacity of all people in Singapore to be prepared for emergencies. Set up in 2009 as an Institution of a Public Character, it works in partnership with various voluntary welfare organisations, non-profit

organisations, government agencies, Ministries and other institutions to support programmes that contribute to the well-being, dignity, livelihood, and emergency preparedness of its beneficiaries.

'Stay Prepared' is an initiative by Temasek Cares to help build the resilience of the Singapore community to cope with emergencies. It is supported by the Temasek Emergency Preparedness Fund which was set up in 2014 with an initial endowment of \$40m from Temasek, to commemorate its 40th anniversary. The value of the endowment was increased to \$75m in April 2015 to support new programmes aimed at building up the resilience of Singaporeans and the community e.g. establishing a trauma network for the wider community and a central registry of community first responders.

For more information, please visit www.temasekcares.org.sg.

About the Singapore Heart Foundation

The Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) is a non-profit charitable organisation at the forefront of the battle against heart disease in Singapore. Since its inception in 1970, the Foundation has grown into a well-established and reputable organisation with local and international links.

SHF fulfils its mission through educational programmes highlighting preventive measures against heart disease to the public. SHF supports community-based research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the landscape of heart disease in Singapore. SHF also focuses on rehabilitative and preventive care for recovering heart patients and at-risk individuals. In addition, SHF offers financial assistance to needy heart patients for emergency relief as well as for treatment.

For more information, please visit www.myheart.org.sg.

About Singapore Civil Defence Force

The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) is a uniformed organisation under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The main role of SCDF is to provide fire-fighting, rescue and emergency medical services; mitigating hazardous materials incidents, as well as formulate, implement and enforce regulations on fire safety and civil defence shelter matters.

For more information, please visit www.scdf.gov.sg.

About the National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council

The National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC) works closely with the SCDF and the Community-at-large in promoting fire prevention and civil emergency preparedness to make Singapore safe and secure.

The NFEC is committed to educate the public on the dangers of fire, proper use of the emergency services and the importance of emergency preparedness. The Council also involves the public in implementing fire prevention and emergency measures against the loss of life and property. The NFEC also actively promotes a greater sense of self-reliance and preparedness towards civil emergencies.

About National Taxi Association

Formed on 26 June 2010, the National Taxi Association (NTA) is an association for all Taxi Drivers in Singapore. We currently have some 20,000 members. NTA's objectives are to be the unified voice for Taxi Drivers in furthering their interests and to enhance the social and economic well-being of Taxi Drivers. For more information, please visit www.nta.org.sg.