

**Speech for Er. Edwin Khew, President of The Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES) at
the 'Technology Enhanced Workplace Safety and Health Management' Seminar at Holiday
Inn @ Orchard City Centre on Friday, 23 March 2018 at 9:00am**

Distinguished Guests;
Members of IES;
Fellow Engineers;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning.

1 Thank you for joining us at today's seminar. The Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES) has organised this seminar to encourage greater use of technology in enhancing workplace safety and health, an important component in realising Singapore's Vision Zero movement.

Singapore's progress in WSH

2 Singapore embarked on the journey towards greater Workplace Safety and Health, or WSH, in 2005. Over the years, we have made significant progress as a nation, with workplace fatal injury rate dropping from 4.9 per 100,000 employed persons in 2004 to 1.2 per 100,000 employed persons in 2017. This is a notable achievement and one that has happened ahead of the 2018 target of 1.8 per 100,000 employed persons, set under the WSH 2018 national strategy.

Role of technology in enhancing WSH management

3 A pivotal enabler of this progress is technology. The adoption of various emerging technologies across different industries has significantly transformed the WSH landscape. Technologies have eliminated hazards and minimised risks across the construction, transportation, storage, manufacturing, marine and other sectors, contributing to a culture of safety for many organisations within sectors which have traditionally contributed to high

fatality rates. For example, pre-fabricated pre-furnished volumetric construction, or PPVC, has significantly reduced WSH risks at construction sites, by enabling majority of the work to be done in a controlled factory environment. Other examples include mandatory installation of data loggers in mobile cranes to monitor the performance of crane operations; and facial recognition and access pass control to control authorised entry into designated work areas.

More can be done to prevent workplace injuries and health through technology

4 As Singapore forges ahead towards a workplace fatality of less than one in the next ten years, technology will continue to play a prominent role. In fact, the new national WSH plan, 'WSH2028', has identified moving the industry towards greater adoption of technologies as one of its five focus areas.

5 Many kinds of new technologies continue to emerge to support WSH management. A notable example is Internet of Things, or IoT, technologies that allow workers to make use of digital, real-time data to prevent injury or expedite emergency response. For instance, data from wearable wireless sensors can be used to prevent accidents by monitoring employee fatigue levels, suggesting rest periods and sending alerts when people are moving too close to moving equipment – all in real time.

6 IES hopes to see more companies exploring and investing in such technological innovations to promote the health and safety of employees at all levels in their organisations. It will not only help you fulfil your responsibility as an employer, but drive your business towards greater productivity and growth and therefore profitability.

IES' commitment to support WSH excellence

7 All of within this room, play a big role in harnessing technologies to keep injuries and ill health at the workplace to a minimum. As the national society of engineers in Singapore, IES is committed to help engineers across different industry sectors enhance their capability and competency so that they can keep our workers safe and in good health. The IES Health and Safety Engineering Technical Committee has been leading our efforts in this area and I

will like to thank the chairman, Mr Vincent Ng, and his committee for their effort in promoting WSH through many seminars and workshops being organised including this Seminar today.

8 Today's seminar is a prime example of their work. They have selected 'Technology Enhanced WSH Management' as the seminar theme to illustrate how technology can bring about smarter, more effective WSH management. We hope that the sharing of knowledge, challenges and best practices at this seminar will enable all of you to be better equipped in using technology to improve WSH management in your individual workplace.

9 In conclusion, I would like to thank all our speakers today for sharing their knowledge and insights for the benefit of the industry; and to all of you for your support and participation. Together, we can learn from each other and move Singapore towards greater WSH excellence.

I wish everyone a rewarding seminar. Thank you.