

# Printing, Packing And Publishing



“Companies in the Printing, Packing and Publishing industry such as Craft Print International Limited will benefit from the extension of the Jobs Credit Scheme in 2010 as this will help them minimise the losses incurred. It will also tide them through this stage of uncertainty before the upturn arrives.

Although there are signs of recovery and orders are slowly picking up, many companies will still practise prudence as the downturn has hit them badly and affected their bottom line. However, headcount reduction is not expected in this industry.”

Tan Peng Heng, Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union President

framework. We are heartened that the rest of our companies are committed to re-employment and are striving to attain higher levels.”

## Ways UPAGE Cared

Good Labour-Management Relations also manifested largely when management partners contributed generously to the Labour Movement's U Care Fund to help workers affected by the downturn.

With an additional boost of \$38,160 from the U Care Fund, UPAGE gave out the largest number of bursary awards ever in 2009. 267 beneficiaries received bursaries, compared to 188 beneficiaries in 2008 and 175 beneficiaries in 2007. Another 106 unsuccessful applicants received a one-time Encouragement Award. Bursaries were also extended to members' children studying in the Institute of Technical Education for the first time last year.

## Renewing Bipartite Ties

There were many opportunities for the Union of Power and Gas Employees to strengthen relations with its management partners, and it took full advantage of them.

- On the union's recommendation, Singapore Power Group received the Model Partnership Award at the Labour Movement's May Day Awards 2009. PowerSeraya Limited was also honoured with a Plaque of Commendation.
- UPAGE strongly supported the May Day Medal of Commendation (Gold) to Ms Ho Ching, Chief Executive Officer of Temasek Holdings, who involved the union closely in the divestment of power generation companies to new owners.
- There were also three key changes in senior management profiles. The departure of Mr Neil Garry McGregor, Managing Director of PowerSeraya Limited; Mr Roy Adair, Chief Executive Officer of Senoko Power Limited; and Mr Greg Conlon, General Manager of WorleyParsons Singapore were losses to the union.
- UPAGE welcomed back Mr Neil Garry McGregor as Executive Director of the Singapore LNG Corporation Private Limited in November 2009 when he promptly invited UPAGE to represent the workers at SLNG because of good relations established with the union.
- UPAGE held its first National Day Observance Ceremony jointly conducted with Tuas Power Limited in August 2009. Tuas Power Limited was also the first foreign-owned power station. UPAGE intends to continue to hold this event annually with its branches.
- In September 2009, the union and management leaders worked together to come up with an industry-wide training framework for the energy and utilities sector. A technical committee with representatives from all the companies and union leaders are now mapping out competencies and pathways for skills progression under Singapore Workforce Development Agency's Workforce Skills Qualification system.

# Target 2010: Making The Unemployable Employable



According to statistics presented at the Labour Movement's year-end media conference on 28 December 2009 by NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) Chairman Ong Ye Kung and Chief Executive Officer Ang Hin Kee, overall, the skills upgrading and job placement centre successfully placed three out of every five jobseekers into jobs last year.

Mr Ong, who is also NTUC Assistant Secretary-General, explained that this performance was better than expected thanks to heightened efforts put in by e2i.

“I started the year looking at a database of 7,000 people registered as jobseekers and expected to end the year with 20,000. But we ended the year with more or less the same number because we did a lot more to help people find jobs. There was only a slight increase from 7,000 to 8,000, which commensurated with the slight increase in the unemployment rate.”

NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say revealed that the situation was less than ideal initially because of the overwhelming focus on retraining jobseekers and job matching. Jobseeker numbers peaked at between 13,000 and 14,000, and on the average, half of them found jobs.

SG Lim credited ASG Ong and Mr Ang for the excellent a-job fair-a-day idea for turning things around dramatically. Today, the situation is reversed, and twice the number of jobseekers get employed.

Moving on to 2010, NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say disclosed that the new goal for e2i was reducing structural unemployment, particularly in the long-term unemployable, defined by the Ministry of Manpower as individuals who are out of work for 25 weeks.

“e2i is not going to give up hope on any long-term unemployable. We have Employability Camp Plus, Employability Camp Plus Plus, Attitude, Skills and Knowledge Workshops, and we will keep working on them. Of course, if one day they give up then there is nothing we can do. But as long as they are prepared to keep going, we will never give up hope on them,” said SG Lim.