

Jobs Guidelines Get More Flex



By
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In view of the continuing world economic downturn and in anticipation of a protracted recession, the tripartite partners comprising of the Ministry of Manpower, the Singapore National Employers Federation and the National Trades Union Congress have come up with an updated Tripartite Guidelines for Managing Excess Manpower. The paper was released on 17 May 2009.

Almost exactly six months after the original guidelines were released on 19 November 2008, it takes into consideration rapid changes in the economy and feedback from industries and unions since then.

Designed to help companies stay competitive and viable and thereby cutting costs to save jobs, key refinements and additional recommendations to the tweaked guidelines include:

- 1) Updates to recently announced schemes such as Jobs Credit, the Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR), and SPUR-related schemes such as the Professional Skills Programme;
- 2) Refinements to recommendations on a shorter work week, and flexible work arrangements;

- 3) Recommendation for companies which have not implemented the Monthly Variable Component to convert part of the existing basic salary into MVC when they effect wage cuts; and
- 4) Guidelines on other cost cutting measures such as no pay leave.

Stressing that “the underlying principle really is that everyone must do their part”, Manpower Minister Gan Kim Yong said the changes are a continuing process and give more all-round flexibility to deal with the downturn, especially in the light of the significant slowing down of the economy in the first quarter of this year.

“How long the recession will last, we do not know. But one thing that is important is to make sure that we do the right things during the recession. That is why the tripartite partners have always been consulting one another, monitoring the developments and the economy.

“We have decided that it is important for us to refine and revise the guidelines so that it is responsive and takes into the account the various programmes that we have introduced in the last few months. It also takes into account changes in the economic landscape so that we can be more effective in helping the employers

manage the downturn and helping the workers cope with this recession,” said Mr Gan.

He also urged companies and employers unfamiliar with the guidelines to approach SNEF, MOM or NTUC and make use of the Tripartite Upturn Strategy Teams specially set up to help them.

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Heng Chee How said that the Labour Movement is guided by the key considerations of minimising retrenchments, minimising unemployment and helping workers to train and up-skill for better employability.

“From the unions’ standpoint, we want companies to survive because we want them to keep the jobs for workers. We also want them to survive in a way that is responsible, in a way that is fair, and in a way that is practical for the workers. These guidelines try to strike a balance in consultation with the employers and the Government,” added DSG Heng.

SNEF Vice-President Bob Tan said the guidelines are helpful as “most companies just want to keep their employees because they take a long time to train them and the last thing they want to do is to let them go.”

He also said that the majority of companies are adopting the guidelines “unless they don’t want to continue operating or their business is not going to survive.”

New Career Ladders For Security Workforce



By
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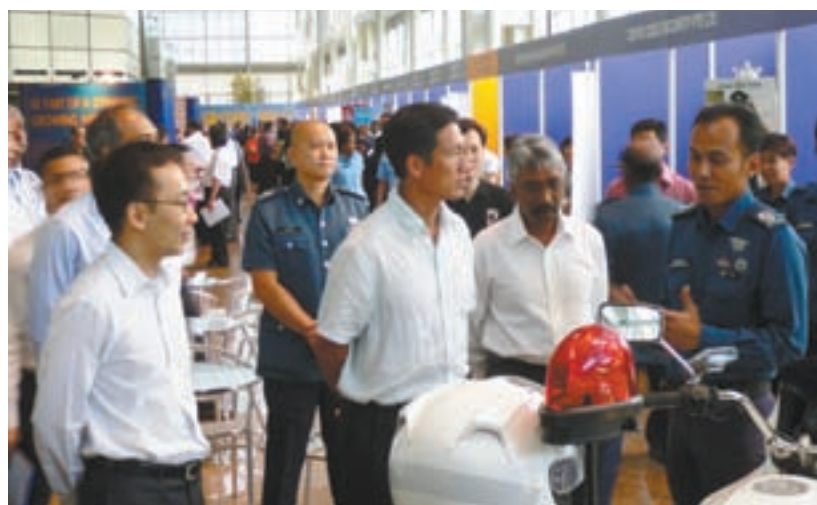
The private security workforce can reach newer career heights with Singapore Workforce Development Agency’s

newly launched upgrading programmes. The Security Supervisor Conversion Programme, Professional Conversion Programme for Security Executives and Place and Train Programme for Auxiliary Police Officers are new programmes now in force for the career

enhancement of workers in the industry.

These training avenues as well as employment opportunities were brought closer to interested jobseekers through the collaboration of tripartite partners in the private security industry. Union of Security Employees and private security employers supported WDA to organise this career fair at Suntec City Convention Hall on 25 and 26 April 2009.

The job fair provided interested jobseekers with information on WDA’s schemes, career opportunities as well as training opportunities



USE President Nakalingam Silva (second from right) and NTUC ASG Ong Ye Kung (third from right) at the fair.

and pathways through Workforce Skills Qualifications courses in security and also through programmes offered at Security Industry Institute. The job fair also facilitated the placement of jobseekers with recruiting security companies.

Employers and training partners set up booths with informative panels to showcase their company profiles, career progression paths, IT equipment and also showcased their screening and profiling techniques. There was a buffet of openings available, ranging from security supervisory posts, executive

positions for PMETs (Professionals, Managers, Engineers and Technical People) and Auxiliary Police Officers for jobseekers seeking a career in this exponentially growing industry.

On the first day of the fair, NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Ong Ye Kung was invited as a special guest. USE President Nakalingam Silva delivered a motivating presentation that gave jobseekers an insight into the security industry through his sharing of personal anecdotes and the numerous initiatives designed to improve the image and professionalism of the industry.

Mr Silva also shared on yesteryears’ “jaga” image of the industry and how it has evolved and transformed to one that promises a better pay and better future. He highlighted that security officers in Singapore are now all well trained under the Security WSQ pathway and undergo stringent criminal record screening. This gave jobseekers a vivid picture of the industry’s progress over the years and the abundant career opportunities that lie in the security sector. Over the two days, the job fair attracted 1,566 participants.