

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES SHOW FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN PRO-ENTERPRISE EFFORTS

### *Best results in Pro-Enterprise Index since the start of annual survey in 2004*

1. Government agencies have achieved their best scores yet for pro-enterprise performance in the fourth annual survey of the pro-enterprise orientation of regulatory agencies commissioned by the **Action Community for Entrepreneurship (ACE)**.

2. Based on feedback from businesses, **the average Pro-Enterprise Index for all the 24 agencies surveyed in 2007 was 73.3, up significantly from 68.6 in 2006 (and 67.3 in 2005)**. Moreover, 17 agencies achieved an index score of above 70.0, compared to 10 in 2006.

3. In addition, the average scores for **all five components** making up the Pro-Enterprise Index improved from 2006. These components are:

- 1) Compliance Cost;
- 2) Review of Rules;
- 3) Transparency;
- 4) Customer Responsiveness; and
- 5) Pro-enterprise Orientation.

4. The component with the greatest improvement was "Review of Rules", indicating that the Government's efforts to tackle red tape are making an impact. These efforts include collaborative efforts with the private sector, such as ACE and the **Pro-Enterprise Panel (PEP)**, chaired by the Head of Civil Service Mr Peter Ho, which actively seeks feedback from businesses on ways to cut red tape.

5. Qualitative feedback from face-to-face interviews with business leaders found that **government agencies are increasingly adopting a pro-enterprise mindset when dealing with businesses**. Significantly, this year's survey found that the previous perception among small businesses that agencies treat them unfavourably compared to big businesses – which appeared in all past surveys – was absent this time round.

6. Responding to the agencies' best showing to date, Mr Patrick Daniel, who leads the Rules Action Crucible of ACE, said: "We're truly pleased with the contribution this survey has made. Regulatory agencies have put in a lot of effort to be more pro-enterprise, and the results are quite heartening." Mr Daniel, who is Editor-in-Chief for English and Malay newspapers at Singapore Press Holdings, added: "What this survey has shown is that agencies which take the trouble to respond to their customers' needs, and make customer satisfaction a high priority,

can achieve high ratings from businesses."

7. Looking ahead, the Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Minister in charge of Entrepreneurship, Mr Lee Yi Shyan, who also chairs ACE, said: "ACE's vision is for all government agencies to adopt high benchmarks of being pro-enterprise and customer-centric. I believe a responsive government will be a tremendous multiplier to the competitiveness of our businesses."

8. The Maritime and Port Authority (MPA), which finished 2nd in the last two surveys, captured top spot this year. Commenting on its strong showing, CEO of MPA, BG(NS) Tay Lim Heng, said: "MPA is very honoured by the result of this year's survey. It underscores the strong MPA-industry partnership, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the industry for its endorsement. We will continue to work closely with our partners, so as to enhance the business environment for the maritime industry."

9. Most agencies (19 out of 24) improved on their index this year, with the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) making the biggest leap to finish 4th. Outlining the reasons for URA's performance, CEO Mrs Cheong Koon Hean said: "We have focused on engaging our customers to better understand their needs and expectations, and improving in areas that matter most to them. These include response time, customer service, hotlines, and keeping them informed of changes in our policies. We are very encouraged that our customers appreciate our efforts."

10. The **top ten** agencies in 2007, ranked by their Pro-Enterprise Index, are:

- 1) Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)
- 2) Singapore Customs (SC)
- 3) Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS)
- 4) Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)
- 5) Central Provident Fund Board (CPF Board)
- 6) Public Utilities Board (PUB)
- 7) Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF)
- 8) Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)
- 9) Housing Development Board (HDB)
- 10) Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)

11. The **top five** agencies clinched the ACE Awards for 2007. They will receive their awards during the BlueSky Gala Dinner to be held on 20 July 2007 at Sentosa Cove.

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For enquiries specific to the top ten agencies, please contact:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Tel</b>
MPA	Simon Ang Wen Pin	Manager, Corporate Communications	6375 1626
SC	Ms Woon Lai Leng	Head, Corporate Communications	6355 2129
CAAS	Ms Kaur Satwinder	Corporate Communications Manager	6541 2912
URA	Ms Ang Hwee Suan	Head, Public Relations	6321 8134
CPF	Jonas Kor Gee Cheong	Deputy Director, Corporate Communications	6229 3275
PUB	Ms Sally Toh	Manager, Communications	6731 3108
SCDF	Charles Chow	Asst Director, Public Affairs	6848 1503
ICA	Mrs Kelly Wong-Lim	Head, Public & Internal Communications	6391 6190
HDB	Tay Boon Sun	Senior Public Relations Officer	6490 1143
MAS	Ms Lee Siew Hoon	Assistant Director (Communications)	6229 8982

**Background of ACE Awards 2007**

1. The ACE Awards for pro-enterprise agencies is an initiative by the Rules Action Crucible (Rules AC) of ACE. The Rules AC's objective is to encourage regulatory agencies to establish a pro-enterprise environment in Singapore. Since 2004, the Rules AC has commissioned an annual survey to assess the pro-enterprise orientation of government agencies. The survey was conducted by Frost and Sullivan (Singapore) Pte Ltd.
2. This year's survey, conducted from May to June 07, assessed 24 government agencies (see Annex B for the full list) by surveying the perceptions and expectations of businesses that had interacted with these agencies. For agencies with multiple roles (e.g. regulatory and industry promotion), the survey covered only their regulatory activities.
3. Nearly 2,000 face-to-face interviews were conducted with businesses which had interacted at least once with the agency in the past 12 months. The Pro-Enterprise Index was then computed based on the aggregated scores of an agency's performance in each of the five components (Compliance Cost; Review of Rules; Transparency; Customer Responsiveness; and Pro-enterprise Orientation), which were all given equal weightage.
4. The survey also identified areas for further improvements. Businesses would like to be able to get through agencies' hotlines more easily. And while they appreciated the increased efficiency brought by e-services, obstacles such as difficulties in using them for more complex transactions were highlighted. Businesses also acknowledged that officers are polite and helpful, but they would prefer interaction with officers with greater decision-making powers.

**List of Participating Agencies in Fourth Pro-Enterprise Survey**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Agency</b>
1	Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA)
2	Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA)
3	Building and Construction Authority (BCA)
4	Central Provident Fund Board (CPF Board)
5	Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS)
6	Health Sciences Authority (HSA)
7	Housing and Development Board (HDB)
8	Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)
9	Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA)
10	Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS)
11	Insolvency & Public Trustee's Office (IPTO)
12	JTC Corporation (JTC)
13	Land Transport Authority (LTA)
14	Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)
15	Media Development Authority (MDA)
16	Ministry of Manpower (MOM)
17	Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)
18	National Environment Agency (NEA)
19	Public Utilities Board (PUB)
20	Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF)
21	Singapore Customs (SC)
22	Singapore Land Authority (SLA)
23	Singapore Tourism Board (STB)
24	Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)