

SINGAPORE BUSINESS FEDERATION 18TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

30 June 2020

Questions Received and Responses

Question 1:

Could SBF offer 50% discount on membership fees for 2020 and 2021 to allow companies to recover from the COVID-19 situation.

Response:

SBF acknowledges that the impact of COVID-19 is significantly affecting many Singapore businesses, including our members. We are monitoring and assessing the situation closely and will try our best to assist our members.

One of the ways SBF is supporting our members is the launch of a \$2.5 million Rising in Support of Enterprises (RISE) Fund in partnership with Enterprise Singapore. This is aimed at helping our members, particularly SMEs to meet the challenges arising from COVID-19 by supporting them in business growth and capability upgrading.

Under the RISE Programme, an SBF member with a paid-up capital not exceeding \$5 million, can claim up to \$500 to offset the costs of a wide range of qualifying activities conducted by SBF, its programme partners, and participating trade associations and chambers. These activities are aimed to equip businesses for the eventual recovery to emerge stronger from this crisis. SBF hopes that eligible members can tap on RISE to alleviate some of the issues they are faced with.

Further information on RISE is available below:

<https://www.sbf.org.sg/activities/sbf-rise-programme>

<https://www.sbf.org.sg/singapore-business-federation-launches-two-initiatives-to-strengthen-businesses-and-support-workers-in-need>

Question 2:

How will SBF help businesses post COVID-19 moving forward?

Response:

With the unprecedented global challenges brought about by COVID-19, SBF's role in galvanising our members and the wider business community for business survival and success has been amplified. SBF will focus on several issues in the months to come:

Meet Manpower Challenges

One area of focus is to tackle manpower challenges in beating the unemployment curve. Singapore's unemployment rate is the highest in 10 years. We will work closely with the Government as well as the industry and the labour unions to create jobs and traineeship opportunities for our local workforce, through the SGUnited Jobs Initiative and SGUnited Traineeships Programme.

Digital Transformation

COVID-19 has also accelerated many businesses' adoption of digital technologies, particularly during the circuit breaker period. However, there are also many companies who have been left behind. We intend to bridge the gap for these companies by connecting them with the right resources and organising digital transformation programmes. This will enable them to keep up with the fast-evolving future of work and remain competitive.

Internationalisation

SBF will be prioritising growth beyond our Singapore borders, as it is important for businesses to diversify their supply chains and customer base. Target markets include ASEAN countries including Vietnam, Indonesia, as well as China and the North Asia region, where we have market specialists to provide assistance. This will be done through the GlobalConnect@SBF initiative which aims to help Singapore companies to internationalise.

We believe that it is important during this time to continue to build and grow our international networks particularly within this region, so that when travel restrictions are eased, Singapore businesses are well positioned to take advantage of market opportunities.

Question 3:

In SBF's Audited Accounts, it is stated that the sum of Other Receivables is at \$3.39m. Will SBF be able to recover these amounts after the financial year ended 31 December 2019?

Response:

SBF has subsequently collected \$1.54m (or 48%) as of June 2020. The bulk of the remaining sum is mainly due to the reimbursement for participation in the China International Import Expo (CIIE) 2019, which we will expect to receive from Government in July 2020.

Question 4:

Where is the RISE fund drawn from? Will it affect SBF's financial status? How can RISE help members?

Response:

The SBF Rising in Support of Enterprises (RISE) Programme is established by SBF to help members tide over the challenges arising from COVID-19 and push on with transformation efforts in preparation for economic recovery. The goal of the Programme is to help eligible

SBF members build up their capabilities and digitalise by making it more affordable for them to participate in capacity-building, business growth and internationalisation programmes.

Under the RISE Programme, SBF has set up a \$2.5 million RISE fund by working with Enterprise Singapore (ESG) to tap on the SG Together Enhancing Enterprise Resilience (STEER) programme. Under the STEER programme, ESG will match \$1 for every \$2 contributed by SBF.

SBF has set up the RISE fund from our savings. SBF's financial status remains sound with the set-up of the RISE fund.

Eligible SBF members may apply for a one-time support of up to \$500 to offset the cost of a wide range of qualifying activities, conducted by SBF, its programme partners and participating trade associations and chambers (TACs). At least 5,000 of SBF's SME members will benefit from the programme.

Question 5:

May members contribute ad hoc directly to the RISE fund?

Response:

While the RISE Fund is funded by SBF and the Government, interested members who are also members of the following Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) may approach them to contribute to the SBF Foundation's industry-led Compassion Fund to help employees in need.

For every dollar raised by a participating TAC, the SBF Foundation will match dollar for dollar up to \$200,000 per TAC. The Foundation aims to reach out to at least 10 TACs to benefit at least 8,000 employees in need of financial assistance.

List of TACs that will be partnering SBF Foundation to set up industry-led Compassion Funds

1. Association of Small & Medium Enterprises (ASME)
ASME-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund
2. The Singapore Contractors Association Ltd (SCAL)
SCAL-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund
3. Security Association Singapore (SAS)
SAS-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund
4. Association of Certified Security Agencies (ACSA)
ACSA-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund
5. Singapore Furniture Association (SFA)
SFA-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund
6. The Law Society of Singapore
LawSoc-SBF Foundation Compassion Fund

List of TACs that will be pooling funds to enable the set-up of industry-led Compassion Funds:

1. European Chamber of Commerce (Singapore)
2. The American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore
3. China Enterprises Association (Singapore)
4. SGTech
5. Singapore Chartered Tax Professionals Limited
6. Association of Information Security Professionals

More information on the Industry-Led Compassion Fund can be found at the following:

<http://www.sbffoundation.org.sg/compassion-fund>

<https://www.sbf.org.sg/singapore-business-federation-launches-two-initiatives-to-strengthen-businesses-and-support-workers-in-need>

END