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2007 starts on a high with **FUNNIVAL**



SCDF
The Life Saving Force

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RESCUE FEBRUARY 2007
995

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2007 starts on a high with *FUNNIVAL*

■ Ms Crystal Anne Lim, SO Staff Well-Being, Manpower Department
Cpt Juliana Adam

Riding on the success of the Family Day 2006, the SCDF Family Day in 2007 was once again hosted at the HomeTeamNS @ Bukit Batok Clubhouse on Sat, 13 Jan. An annual staff well-being activity that aims to promote family participation and bonding amongst SCDF staff, the Family Day is fast becoming an iconic event for SCDF staff to unwind and mingle with colleagues and their families in a fun and relaxed manner outside the workplace.

Initially, there were worries that the perpetual heavy downpour leading to the day of the event could dampen the mood of the Family Day. It eventually turned out to be a blessing of shower instead when good weather prevailed throughout the whole day to befit the theme of this year's Family Day: *FUNNIVAL*.

Commencing at 9am, there were one-way shuttle services from Tampines,

Buangkok and Ang Mo Kio MRT Station to ferry staff and their families living in the eastern, north-eastern and northern parts of Singapore to HomeTeamNS @ Bukit Batok Clubhouse in the morning. A regular two-way shuttle service that rounded between Bukit Gombak MRT Station and the Clubhouse was also provided from 8.30am to 5.30pm for the convenience of staff and their families to arrive at the Clubhouse.

The one-day event was fun-filled with carnival game stalls, parenting workshops, children's workshops, stage performances and entertainment activities to cater to staff and family members of different generations. Bouncing castles and rides were some of the main attractions for those under 12 years old, not to mention the plethora of colourful and comical

stage performers that kept all glued to the stage. And with prizes up for grabs at every stall, especially when every other player went away with something, who could miss the game stalls.



Game stalls are aplenty at the *FUNNIVAL* to delight all participants.

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Participants trying their hands at archery.

For those who wanted more than just games, mini bazaars were also present where they could take their time to browse through the snacks and magazines on sale - all at bargain prices. In fact, they even had a chance to enjoy some wine-tasting too.

On top of all these, a "Photo Studio" was available for all staff and their families to take a family photo for remembrance. Their photos were printed out on the spot for them to bring home.

The participants of the SCDF Family Day were also treated to the free use of the Clubhouse's sports and game facilities. The popular ones of course were bowling, laser quest, archery, shooting and golf. So overwhelming was the response that queues were seen at each of these stations until the end of the event, and people even had to be turned away after the closing time.

This year, parenting workshops were also conducted to add a new dimension to the holistic Family Day experience. The three workshops were titled, "What can YOU do to help your Child get ready to Read", "Helping Your Child OVERCOME Internet Addiction", and "How to TALK so that

your children will LISTEN". Without a doubt, parents who attended these talks would have brought back some tips on how to handle their children better.

In an event like this, the organisers of course did not forget to include a sumptuous spread of food throughout the day to pamper the palates of the families at the FUNNIVAL. After all, this is Singapore and what kind of an event would this be without Singaporeans' favourite past-time - *makan*. A wide variety of warm food and snacks was abundantly available to all guests throughout the day. Drinks, ice-cream, popcorn, candy floss and chocolate fondue were just a few of the treats on hand for all who attended.

If all these were not good enough, three staggered lucky draws throughout the day must have raised the excitement of the participants. The top three prizes were travel vouchers, with the first being a trip for two to Hong Kong; second, a trip for two to Bali; and third, a trip for



Cpt Esther Heng demonstrates bowling can be just as graceful as ballet.



While the kids are kept entertained by the games, rides, and stage performances, some parents take the opportunity to learn some tips at the parenting workshops.

two to Bangkok. Following which, television sets, home theatre systems, other home and electrical appliances and bonus prizes of NTUC Fairprice vouchers made up the 68 prizes that were up for grabs.

Many would also agree that the emcee of the event, Mr Eddie Singh, did a very good job in hosting the SCDF Family Day. He was multilingual, and was able to reach out to everyone, keeping the crowd entertained throughout the whole day.

At the end of the day, staff and their family members who participated in the SCDF Family Day did not return home empty-handed, but rather, they left with a heavy heart of having to leave the fun-filled memorable FUNNIVAL.



A mask-changing master certainly captivates the attention of many.



Participants at the FUNNIVAL learning how to hold a golf club.

What do our staff have to say about the *FUNNIVAL*?

"My family and I enjoyed the variety of food. There was a free photo-taking session that left us with a wonderful memorabilia. It was well worth the money. Thank you for the hard work."

- Maj Fabian Tan, HQ 1st CD Division

"Congrats to the working committee for organising an enjoyable *FUNNIVAL* 2007. My family enjoyed it and now looks forward to another Family Day next year. Good work, guys!"

- Sgt Burhanuddin Bin Jaffar, Technology Department, HQ SCDF

"I think the SCDF Family Day was well-organised considering the fact that numerous activities were taking place simultaneously at different locations. The food was definitely more palatable than last year's. There were also adequate games and activities planned for the audience of different age groups. Kudos to the organising committee!"

- MX Teo Hua Ling, Service Quality Department, HQ SCDF

"Amongst the activities that we managed to participate in, the highlight for my two sons was bowling. Out of the numerous balls that went into the 'longkang', one went straight and managed to fall some pins. My sons were so excited and were still talking about that experience at bedtime! As for my hubby, he was very satisfied with his shooting score. It was his first try at air rifle shooting and he managed to get most shots in the black. We also made full use of the coupons at the golf driving range to practise our swings."

- Maj Koh Suat Suan, Service Quality Department, HQ SCDF

GPC gets fresh insights into the SCDF

■ Sgt Anthony Chen, Editorial Coordinator, Public Affairs Department

It was undeniably a stroke of good luck and perhaps a good sign for the new year as well. The weather was beaming with sunshine as the SCDF welcomed members of the newly-appointed Government Parliamentary Committee (GPC) for Home Affairs and Law to its Civil Defence Academy (CDA) on 16 Jan 2007, after weeks of rain dampened the spirits of Singaporeans islandwide.

The delegation led by Chairman, Dr Teo Ho Pin included Mr Teo Ser Luck, Mr Arthur Fong and two resource panel members, Mr Tony Chng and Ms Nicole Fung. After being briefed with an overview of the SCDF's operational capabilities, Dr Teo and his members

had a short exchange with Comr James Tan and his officers. They expressed the importance of keeping our nation and people prepared for any emergency through life-surviving skills. The guests were then taken on a tour of the SCDF's innovation projects and the CDA's training facilities.

GPCs were first introduced some 20 years ago in Singapore with the aim of improving the quality of parliamentary debates, as well as to serve as checks on government policies. With this in mind, it was all the more necessary for the GPC for Home Affairs and Law members to understand the development, workings and performance of the SCDF.



Comr James Tan briefing Dr Teo Ho Pin (2nd from left) and his GPC members on the Light Fire Attack Vehicle during their tour at the CDA on 16 Jan 2007.

As we bade farewell to our GPC guests in the warm glow of the afternoon sun, we were sure that the committee had gained more insights and in-depth knowledge on the SCDF's initiatives and future plans, all in just a matter of a few hours, but this would probably impact the shaping of government policies that would make Singapore a safer home for all.



SCDF pursues Singapore Innovation Award

■ Cpt Susan Queh, Chief Innovation Officer, Service Quality Department

Having achieved the ISO certification for its key processes, the Singapore Quality Class, People Developer Standard and the Singapore Quality Award, the SCDF is now on its path to the application of the Singapore Innovation Award!

The Singapore Innovation Award is the highest accolade given to innovative organisations in Singapore. It is conferred by Spring Singapore upon the best of the best in recognition of their attainment as models of innovation excellence for others to emulate. The Award recognises and celebrates organisations whose outstanding

innovation capability development approach has contributed significantly to business excellence.

In running up to the application of the Singapore Innovation Award, the SCDF has formed an Innovation Award (I-Award) Committee since last September. A series of I-Award briefings by the Committee will soon be conducted from May to disseminate the information on I-Award framework and highlight the roles of various staff groups.

The SCDF hopes to achieve the Award this year, which will not only serve as a recognition of its innovating culture,



The Singapore Innovation Award Trophy is what the SCDF hopes to lay its hands on this year.

but it will also spur the SCDF to continue striving harder in its pursuit for innovation. Winners of the Award will also be eligible for the PS21 Organisational Excellence Award of \$48 per staff, per annum.

For more information on the Singapore Innovation Award, please log on to <http://www.spring.gov.sg/>

Obese no more!

■ Lta (NSF) Md Danial Abd Rahman, Platoon Commander, Basic Rescue Training Centre

A 13-week pilot training programme was developed and conducted for obese recruits of the 101st Basic Rescue Training intake from 10 Oct 2006 to 5 Jan 2007. Known as the PES B (Provisional) training, the programme aims to transform obese recruits into fit rescuers so that they could be deployed for operational vocations. The physical training regimes have been specially designed to be progressive and low-impact to cater to these recruits as they generally have weaker knees due to their heavier body weight and require more time to acclimatise to our hot weather.

Amongst the many new lessons introduced for fitness development

are Aqua Jogging and Aqua Aerobic exercises, low-impact regimes that bear more benefits than endurance training on land, such as jogging. With the cooling effects and buoyancy of water training, these recruits are able to sustain longer durations of endurance training without exerting undue stress on their joints despite their heavy body mass.

Results from the pilot run of the PES B (Provisional) training have been encouraging. Out of the 41 obese

recruits who have undergone the training, almost half of them have had their physical fitness status upgraded to PES B. Nine or 22% of them have even passed the IPPT. The lessons learnt from the success of the pilot run have since been incorporated into the current run to achieve even better results.



Recruits from the PES B (Provisional) training programme warming up before commencing their water training at the Civil Defence Academy swimming pool.

New system introduced for NS personnel management

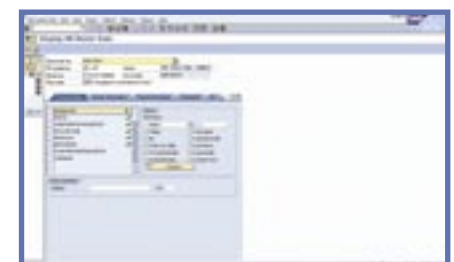
■ Cpt Lee Shin Jiau, SO Relations, NS Personnel Department

Since the start of 2007, the management of NS personnel in both the SCDF and Police has become even more efficient and effective with the introduction of yet another enhancement – the NSPAM.

Short-form for 'National Service Personnel Administration and Management System', the NSPAM is a totally integrated computerised system which replaces the three separate systems that were previously used to manage NS personnel records – HOLMS for managing NSF records, NSAS for NSmen and NSPAY for managing payment of NS allowances. Through the NSPAM, the management of the NS personnel will transcend their NS lifecycle from enlistment to Run-Out Date.

With the introduction of the NSPAM, there will be a system design paradigm shift in the workflow process of NS personnel management. Besides capturing the full data records of NS personnel throughout their NS cycle in the system, the NSPAM will also feature the new Electronic Self Services (ESS) for NSF. The ESS will enable NSF to perform electronic leave and exit permit applications, as well as take ownership of updating their own data, such as bank account.

NSPAM also possesses new capabilities, such as the Manpower Planning tools with built-in intelligence, to cater to human resource planning. Users of the NSPAM can expect to see the entire system take shape in three phases by the end of the year.



Delving into the heart of the newsmaking business @ Caldecott Hill

■ Cpt Eric Chua, SO Media Relations, Public Affairs Department



Media Relations Officer, Cpt Koh Swee Lian (seated) having a hand at a 'Cheryl Fox impersonation'.



MEN POWER: Male DMOs and course trainees with CNA Presenter Melvin Yong (in white).

8 Feb 2007 - 19 SCDF Duty Media Officers (DMOs) and Public Affairs Officers' Course trainees trudged into the deep unknowns of Caldecott Hill on a quest for more knowledge on the news production process. The DMOs were greeted by the ever-so-affable Executive Editor and Presenter of Channel NewsAsia, Melvin Yong and his colleagues. For some of the senior DMOs, it was a nostalgic catch-up session with friends in MediaCorp; for many of the new DMOs, it was their first opportunity getting upclose and personal with our media counterparts.

The visit kicked off with Ms Han Chuan Quee, Vice President Corporate Services (MediaCorp News), giving

a brief introduction to the mega broadcast media conglomerate. Salient pointers made with reference to past instances of close collaborations between the two agencies, such as the Nicoll Highway Cave-In incident, were exchanged. By the end of the interactive session, both the new DMOs and trainers have arrived at a better, in-depth understanding of the newsmakers' interests, concerns and limitations in discharging their duties.

Following the briefing-cum-interaction session, SCDF DMOs were given the rare chance of taking sneak peeks into the various news studios and editing suites. Some of our officers even had the nerve-wrecking



WOMEN POWER: Female DMOs and course trainees with CNA Presenter, Farah Abdul Rahim (1st row, centre).

experience of appearing on screen and doing their Cheryl Fox or Melvin Yong impersonations. The visit ended on a high with the leader of the SCDF delegation, Maj Abdul Razak, Assistant Director of Media Relations & Publicity, presenting a token of our appreciation to the MediaCorp Team.

4th CD Division retains title as king of carom

■ Cpt Saifudin Abdul, HQ 4th CD Division



Bukit Timah Fire Post opens



Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon officiates the opening of Bukit Timah Fire Post on 4 Feb 2007.



Mrs Yu-Foo touring the Fire Post and its fleet of emergency vehicles with SCDF officers and other grassroots leaders.

In order to address operational gaps in the Bukit Timah district, the Bukit Batok Fire Post formerly situated at Blk 135, Bukit Batok West Ave 6 had been re-located to the Bukit Timah Community Club at 20, Toh Yi Drive.

Renamed as Bukit Timah Fire Post, the new fire post was completed at the end of December last year and operationalised with effect from 9 Jan this year.

The official opening of the Bukit Timah Fire Post took place on Sunday, 4 Feb 2007. Officiating the opening ceremony was Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon, Minister of State, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and

Sports, and Adviser to Holland-Bukit Timah Grassroots Organisations. Accompanied by some 30 grassroots leaders, Mrs Yu-Foo was briefed by SCDF officers on the operational coverage, as well as the civil defence awareness programme for the residents. She also toured the facilities of the fire post, which included the CPR training room where she witnessed a CPR demonstration by a Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU) paramedic.

In addition, Mrs Yu-Foo was briefed on the SCDF's ambulance and the Light Fire Attack Vehicle on standby at the fire post. But what made this opening ceremony all the more unique was the fact that Mrs Yu-Foo

requested to witness the testing of a fire hydrant upon knowing that it was under the purview of the SCDF. The SCDF, of course, proudly acceded to her request.

Throughout her 45-minute stay at the fire post, Mrs Yu-Foo was a lady of much enthusiasm as many exchanges took place between the guest-of-honour and the SCDF briefing officers. With many queries and clarifications posed to the SCDF officers at each stage of her tour, it was evident that Mrs Yu-Foo had a keen interest in the SCDF's day-to-day operations and was genuinely concerned about the role of the SCDF towards enhancing the safety and security of her residents.

The much awaited, annual inter-unit carom competition was held on 19 Dec 2006 at the HQ 4th CD Division in conjunction with the 2nd Carom Spice Clinic which was conducted earlier in the day at the same location.

Based on international carom rules, the competition was played using a knock-out system in the early elimination round, followed by a

round robin point system. Each team comprised two doubles and one singles player. This competition saw the entry of strong players, all vying for the top spot. Defending champion, 4th CD Division fielded a mix team of experienced veterans and young players eager to make their mark. On the other hand, 1st CD Division fielded a fresh team of untested young guns.

Eventually, it was a playoff between

1st Division and 4th Division for the top spot. Both teams were on even points and the deciding match was left to the singles players with Ssg Hassan Jumari of 4th Division playing against Pte Airull of 1st Division. Pitting experience against raw determination, it was a hard-fought match with both players playing to the last seed. Eventually, experience and composure paved the way for 4th Division's eventual victory.

Love is in the Air: Romance blossoms within SCDF



■ Sgt Anthony Chen, Editorial Coordinator, Public Affairs Department

Love at first sight

Cpt Wesley Lim, 33, OC Bukit Batok Fire Station
Cpt Karen Ng, 30, Head Personnel Branch, HQ 2nd CD Division

How long together:
8 years (married since 12 Jan 2002)

Number of Kids:
1 daughter (2 years old)

How they met:
During their attachment at the old Bendemeer HQ before the Basic Officers' Course (BOC).

Rules of Attraction:
He says: Everything about her - she is pretty, frank, witty...
She says: He's a very patient guy, understanding and very gentlemanly.

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:
He says: Classified, Censored, Cannot Reveal...
She says: There isn't one so far. It usually involves just going out to eat.



Matters of Interest:
She says: They (colleagues) always think I bully him at home because of my outspoken personality.



Working partners turned lovers

Cpt Kelvin Quan, 28, SO Projects, Operations Dept
Lta Karis Koh, 30, SO High Risk Installation, Operations Dept

How long together:
3 years (married since 20 Oct 2006)

Number of Kids: Nil

How they met:
Worked together as Rota Commanders at Jurong Island Fire Station.

Rules of Attraction:
He says: Her strong personality. She doesn't falter easily, not easily stressed and very independent.
She says: He treats people with sincerity. He's smart, a keen learner and very responsible.

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:
He says: A ride on the DHL Hot Air Balloon.
She says: Not Valentine's Day but during our ROM when he bought a bear and roses.

The breakfast couple

Sgt Mahathir Bin Nasir, 25, Section Commander, Woodlands Fire Station
Sgt Siti Hajarah, 25, Section Commander, Ang Mo Kio Fire Station

How long together:
2 years (married since 23 Dec 2006)

Number of Kids: Nil

How they met:
During ERS course at CDA. He was a NSF while she was a newly-recruited regular. Romance only developed after they were posted to Ang Mo Kio Fire Station when he took her out for breakfast at his mother's shop after duty.

Rules of Attraction:
He says: She's funny, easy-going and caring.
She says: He treats me very well, always such a gentleman.

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:
He says: Not during V-Day but on my birthday last year when she cooked an entire meal and we had dinner under the night sky at Esplanade.

Matters of Interest:
She says: We share the same mobile phone and number as we feel it is unnecessary for us to have 2 phones since we work on different Rotas and during our off days, we're always together.





It started from a curry puff...

Sgt Lim Kuan Yew, 34, Paramedic, Ang Mo Kio Fire Station
WO Christina Lim, 31, Paramedic Instructor, CDA

How they met:

During the Level 3 Paramedic Course at the School of Military Medicine. He would buy curry puffs for his peers and would always keep one for her.

Rules of Attraction:

He says: She's helpful and friendly. She liked to tease me during the course and tried to apply CPR on me when I was lying on the floor during break-time.

She says: He's outspoken, friendly and always volunteer his services when others need help.

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:

He says: When I proposed to her during our holiday amid the night scenery at Pulau Tioman.

Matters of Interest:

He says: During our Level 3 course, colleagues made fun of us in the classroom during the lunch break by singing an English love song.

How long together:

8 years (married since 20 Mar 2003)

Number of Kids:

1 son (6 months old)

Indescribable romance

Ssg Mohd Fhaizal, 28, DART Rescuer

Sgt Siti Nurhajjah, 25, Paramedic (Temporarily Control Room Operator due to pregnancy)

How long together:

8 years (married since 13 Sep 2003)

Number of Kids: 1 son (3 years old), 1 daughter (2 years old) and a baby due anytime.

How they met:

He asked a friend to introduce her to him at CDA where she was then on attachment.

Rules of Attraction:

He says: She's responsible, firm when making decisions and has a "X factor" which I can't describe even till now.

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:

They say: We never celebrate V-Day. We don't put dates on our relationship.

Matters of Interest:

She says: Several years ago, we turned out from two different fire stations for an attempted suicide case. He shouted my name from across the road and I was so embarrassed that my face turned red.



Fairytale wedding on a rhino

Maj Francis Wee, 30, Head HazMat Readiness & Resource, Operations Dept

Cpt Susan Queh, 29, Chief Innovation Officer, Service Quality Dept

How they met:

At Manpower Dept during their attachment. He helped to measure her height and weight. After which, they were course-mates during BOC.

Rules of Attraction:

He says: She's caring, understanding and dedicated to the relationship.

She says: He caught my attention when he said he joined SCDF because "he wants to help others".

Most Romantic Valentine's Day:

He says: When she said "I do" at my home when I proposed to her. It was the

first time I cooked for a girl. We had a candlelight dinner and we spent the night dancing, or rather learning how to dance.

Matters of Interest:

He says: I'm grateful to the senior management for letting us use the Red Rhino for our wedding. It was one of the most memorable experiences for both of us.

She says: It can be irritating sometimes when others (colleagues) can't get him and get me to relay message for him to call them back.

How long together:

5 years (married since 26 May 2004)

Number of Kids: 1 son (1 year old)

Back to school with Dad

■ Sgt Anthony Chen, Editorial Coordinator, Public Affairs Department

Like many other Singaporeans who are starting 2007 with new aspirations and resolutions, two SCDF officers have too entered another chapter in their lives. With their kids starting primary school for the first time, they are doing everything possible to make the transition a smooth one for their little ones. For me, accompanying these two Daddys back to school has been a heartwarming experience and an opportunity to relive memories of yesteryear.

Wednesday, 3 Jan 2007

On the first working day of the year, 40-year-old Cpt Ang Guan Hock was as busy as usual, this time not in the office but at home, preparing his son for the first day of school. The second of three children, seven-year-old Ee Xien was a fortunate boy. His father was taking him to school, thanks to a new initiative allowing fathers to take a day off from work to accompany their kids to school during the first week of school. Although Cpt Ang felt that Ee Xien was somewhat independent, he

thought that accompanying his son to school was significant so that his children would know that their parents cared about them.

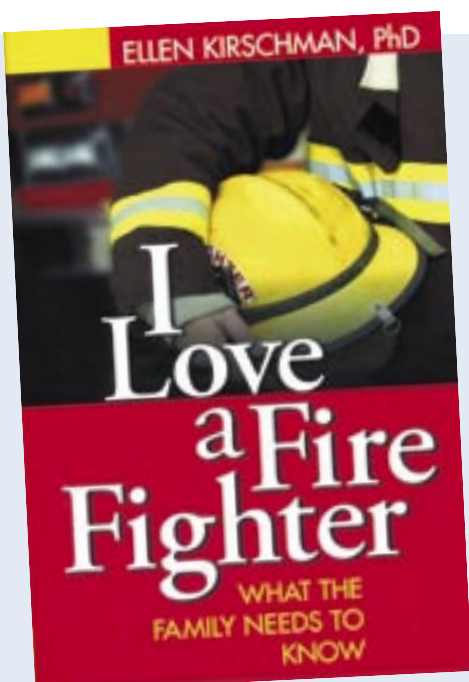
With his elder sister in the morning session returning home from school at around 12 noon, Ee Xien knew it was his turn to embark on a new learning journey. While Daddy was helping him to put on his socks and shoes, Ee Xien did not look the least nervous. After some last minute tantrums, the kid was finally ready to go. He was heading for school in his father's car, but he would be learning to take the school bus the very next day.

After taking Ee Xien to the assembly hall where all the other school kids were gathered, the boy seemed to settle down into the new environment



Cpt Ang Guan Hock helping his son, Ee Xien to put on his shoes (above) before bringing Ee Xien to school with his daughter.

rather easily. Cpt Ang was not the least worried that his son would have problems adapting to the new school. After all, when Ee Xien was in kindergarten for the first time some years ago, he chased mummy out instantly upon arrival.



I LOVE A FIRE FIGHTER: What the family needs to know

■ Cpt Elizabeth Ho, CARE Management Team IC, Manpower Department

Thursday, 4 Jan 2007

Maj Ling Kok Yong was enjoying every moment even though it was his second afternoon taking his seven-year-old daughter, Xin Hui to school. With father and daughter walking to the bus interchange hand-in-hand, it was not hard to notice the close bond between them. Maj Ling truly believed in playing a part in his children's growing up. *"Once you miss it, you'll never get it back,"* said Maj Ling, who had come all prepared to catch her daughter in action. He had captured the events of the day on video which

he felt would be good memories for Xin Hui, especially when she grew older, *"at least she can see how she looks like on the first day of school."* In fact, he was so engrossed with observing his daughter during recess on the first day, he had forgotten to press the record button.

Maj Ling and Cpt Ang are just two of several other fathers in the SCDF who have benefited from the new

"Back to School with Dad" initiative which was introduced by the Centre for Fathering, and supported by the Public Service Division, in recognition of the importance of fathers' complementary role in parenting. Now, who says children have to stick to their mothers? It is time to give fathers their due recognition.



Maj Ling Kok Yong bringing his daughter, Xin Hui to school by bus during the first two days of school.



"I Love a Fire Fighter: What the Family Needs to Know", written by Ellen Kirschman, is one of its kind that targets firefighters and their families. Disregarding stereotypical ideas, the book portrays the honest and real lives of firefighters who hold one of the world's toughest and respected jobs while simultaneously trying to juggle two families - one at the fire station and another at home.

The book addresses occupational and mental health issues, along with safety and domestic concerns,

including unpredictable schedules, lack of communication and anxiety. It sheds light on how families can pull themselves together and what the spouses and partners can do to help themselves when stress threatens their livelihood. Overall, the book provides valuable insight into the challenges of firefighters who have to struggle between their family and work commitments.

The author, Ellen Kirschman, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and consultant who has worked with public safety

personnel, their agencies, and their families for over 20 years. She is much sought after as a speaker and workshop leader. Dr Kirschman was in Singapore in Aug 2005 as a keynote speaker during the *Resilience Building Seminar 2005: Resilience on the Homefront*, held at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

From Feb 2007, copies of this resource book are made available to all fire stations and the Resource Library in the Basic Rescue Training Centre. Do check it out!

"May The Force Be With You": Star Wars fan turns interest into lifelong goal

■ Sgt Anthony Chen, Editorial Coordinator, Public Affairs Department

Space battles, light sabres and Jedi knights - these might mean little to the average Joe but to Cpl Muhd Faiz Bin Abdul Wahid, it probably means the world to him. If watching the original Star Wars trilogy 50 times over is anything to go by, anyone would agree that Cpl Faiz is a true Star Wars fanatic. In fact, he started watching the George Lucas movies some 18 years ago after discovering some tapes at his aunt's home when he was barely five.

Now, the full-time National Serviceman (NSF) from HQ SCDF's Public Affairs Department is pursuing his Star Wars passion in very different ways. For several years now, Cpl Faiz has been an avid Cosplayer. (Cosplay is a Japanese subculture centred on dressing as characters from manga, anime, video games and movies.) One will find him dressed as Obi-wan Kenobi, Darth Maul or Luke Skywalker at Cosplay events, like the annual Cosfest held at Downtown East. The die-hard Star Wars fan had even paid

\$100 to attend the charity premiere of Star Wars: Episode 2 in 2002. Not surprising, he and his friends had dressed up as Star Wars characters for the screening.

Knowing that much of the fight choreography in Star Wars was influenced by Kendo and fencing, the 23-year-old NSF took up Kendo at the Singapore Kendo Club in 2003. Through the local Star Wars Internet forum, Cpl Faiz also found other like-minded Star Wars fans who were interested in fight choreography. They began meeting to practise their stunts and soon founded their group, SEJA, in short for Subterranean Esplanade Jedi Academy. As phony as the name sounds, it really came about because the team holds their weekly practice at the Esplanade underground walkway, a hotspot too for Hip Hop aficionados and dance groups.

SEJA earned their inaugural performance opportunity when a SHATEC student who spotted them practising, approached them to perform at a theme dinner. This was followed by an offer to perform at Cosfest in July last year where SEJA staged an unprecedented feat featuring Star Wars characters with



ALL GEARED UP FOR SOME ACTION: Cpl Faiz playing the role of a SWAT team member for a short film.

Supergirl. The team once again strutted their skills during Coscon, held to coincide with the World Cyber Games at Suntec City last August.

Nevertheless, Cpl Faiz dreams of bigger things. Despite SEJA having members trained in Taekwondo, Kendo, fencing, Silat and drama, the group is still looking at learning more forms of martial arts to further develop their acts. Cpl Faiz hopes to eventually venture into stunt coordination and fight choreography for the silver screen. To many, his dream might be a little far-fetched for now, but one can bet "the force" in him will keep him going. Do not be taken aback should you see his name in the rolling credits of some Hollywood action blockbuster in the years to come. Until then, you can still catch some of the action should you pass by the Esplanade underground walkway.



Cpl Faiz (right) strutting his stuff during his weekly practice session with his group at the Esplanade underground walkway.



JEDI KNIGHTS AND LIGHT SABRE FIGHTS: A self-produced mock-up that looks as if it came straight out of a Star Wars movie.

Firefighters rescue mother and child from clinic fire

■ Ssg Nur Azman, Section Commander, Ang Mo Kio Fire Station

A fire broke out on the upper level of a two-storey clinic at Blk 465, Ang Mo Kio Ave 10 on 4 Dec 2006. Firefighters from Ang Mo Kio Fire Station were activated to the scene in three appliances at about 1am.

Upon arrival, the crew was greeted by thick, black smoke bellowing from the second storey unit. Despite the early hour on a Monday morning, throngs of passers-by had congregated at the scene to check out the situation. After an initial assessment of the situation, firefighters found a female casualty standing by the second storey window, with something clutched in her hand. It was only when wails were heard did the firefighters realise that the casualty was actually holding on to a baby!

Sgt Ong Chee Seng and Ssg Adnan Bin Ibrahim immediately requested for a ladder from the first arriving crew to be erected and positioned against the parapet adjacent to the window. Using a bolt cutter to remove the padlock that had held the metal grilles in place, Sgt Ong successfully entered the unit. When he immediately tried to help the casualty to escape via the ladder, he was turned down. The casualty insisted that her baby be brought to safety first.

Upon hearing the commotion, Sgt Shafeer Maricar made his way onto the parapet and received the baby from Sgt Ong. The former later handed the baby to Ssg Adnan who was by



The contents of the dispensary room in the clinic at Ang Mo Kio Ave 10 were severely damaged by the fire on 4 Dec 2006.

then perched on the ladder midway from the top. After descending from the ladder, Ssg Adnan realised that the baby was as red as a newborn.

Under usual circumstances, it is more laborious for a firefighter to bring a baby or a child down a ladder as compared to an adult. With one of his hands engaged in holding on to the baby, the firefighter will only have his remaining three limbs to help him make his way down. However, in this instance, guiding the female casualty down to safety was a challenge to the firefighters, as she had a phobia for heights. With Sgt Shafeer constantly talking to the lady, and Ssg Adnan guiding her down and keeping her focused on taking a step at a time, the lady was finally brought to safety.



Ssg Adnan Bin Ibrahim (left), Sgt Shafeer Maricar (centre) and Sgt Ong Chee Seng (right) were instrumental in rescuing a lady and a child trapped by the fire.

Having rescued the casualties, full efforts were placed on putting out the fire, which came under control within the next 10 minutes.

The price of being unprepared

■ Lcp Gadaffi Noorzilan, Civil Defence Heritage Gallery



It was on 5 Apr 1958 when tragedy struck. A devastating fire engulfed approximately five acres of densely-populated Kampong Koo Chye at Lorong 3, Geylang Road. The large village consisted of combustible houses constructed using mainly timber framing, plank walls, attap and corrugated iron roofing. It took firemen 1.5 hours to keep the raging fire under control. At the end of the day, six lives were lost, and several others, including firemen, suffered minor injuries and burns.

A few months later, the City Council approved the formation of kampong firefighting parties as part of fire prevention efforts targeted at the kampongs. These volunteer firefighting parties comprised younger able-bodied men from the kampongs who were then trained by the Fire Brigade. Each squad consisted of 20 men under the direction of a squad leader and his assistant. Fire Brigade

Officers would visit the kampongs in a fire engine and through the public address system that was fitted in the vehicle, gave lectures and advice to the volunteers and other kampong dwellers on dealing with fires in their incipient stages.

The City Council also supplied the firefighting parties with the necessary equipment to deal with fire outbreaks and hold the fires in check before the arrival of the Brigade.

Prior to the formation of kampong firefighting parties, it had never occurred to most of the kampong dwellers to attempt to extinguish the fire when it occurred, although in many instances the fires could have easily been curbed while in the incipient stage. Neither would they think of calling the Brigade until the fire had gotten out of control. Instead, the kampong dwellers tended to grab their most valued possessions and

make a run for safety.

However, since the advent of the firefighting parties, the situation had made a turnaround. Numerous small fires with the potential to develop into serious outbreaks were swiftly dealt with. Many a times when the Brigade arrived, there was no need for their services because the situation was well managed by the firefighting parties and the kampong dwellers.

The recruitment and training of volunteers, as well as the education of the public have continued right up to this day. The SCDF continuously educates the public in emergency preparedness and trains volunteers in basic rescue and firefighting so that they are able to react faster to emergencies within their immediate communities. Regardless of the era and the types of accommodation, everyone should be aptly prepared for any emergency.

Yishun unites for 'Arabia'

■ Sgt Faizul Shahrain, Section Commander, Yishun Fire Station



Personnel from Yishun Fire Station performing a skit during the Year-end Function on 1 Dec 2006.

Another year has passed and what better ways to end the year on a high note than in the company of the entire Yishun Fire Station family? The station Year-end Function is the time when we celebrate and acknowledge the contributions made by station personnel throughout the year.

Tasked by Officer Commanding, Cpt Raihan Rafiek to organise the 2006 Year-end Function, Paramedic Sgt Rhoziah Ramlan soon formed an organising committee comprising both firefighting and ambulance crew from the different Rotas in Oct 2006.

With 'Arabian Night' decided as the theme for the function, the 18-member committee organised a few gatherings and brainstorming sessions to address the theme. They even patronised a few Arabian cafeterias along Arab Street to seek inspiration.

With all necessary research done, the committee began working at full steam

to accomplish the task at hand. The hardest part of the preparation phase lied in decorating the venue. The HQ 3rd CD Division Mess was aplenty with open spaces and the process of transforming the entire Mess into 'Little Arabia' was tedious and a constant brain-cracker for the decoration team that was led by Ssg Suhaimi Ramli and Sgt Faizul Salamon.

Thankfully, donations of decorative items from our station personnel helped to ease the problems. Even personnel from other stations lent their hands in decorating the venue. Long hours and late nights spent were exhausting but through the process, we derived fun and a sense of achievement. This was also when all the hidden creative talents of the personnel started to emerge. The creation and the preparation for the Arabian Night Year-end Function was an exemplary example of the camaraderie that existed amongst the station personnel over the years of working together.



On 1 Dec 2006, the turnout was overwhelming. The majority of the personnel came clad in Arabic costumes and attire and many were in the company of their loved ones. All were enthralled with the exquisite decoration, the sweet aroma of the traditional wood incense and the smell of BBQ satay that permeated the air.

The night's programme progressed smoothly, with awards presented to the best-performing Firefighter, Section Commander, Medic, Paramedic and Senior Ambulance Medical Orderly.

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Staff welfare

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A Special Recognition Award was also presented to an individual for his contributions during his tour of duty at Yishun Fire Station and the former Sembawang Fire Station. The highlight of the programme was undeniably the performances by the various Rotas and the organising committee, which won roaring applause from the audience.

Indeed, the night left wonderful memories for all who attended. The organising committee's tireless effort paid off as personnel left the Mess with smiles and congratulatory handshakes for a job well done. The Arabian Night Year-end Function reinforced our common mindset that at Yishun Fire Station, we not only work hard, we play just as hard.

The award recipients are:

Best Firefighter 2006

Rota 1 – Cpl Ridhwan Ramdani
Rota 2 – Cpl Yusmali Saad
Rota 3 – Cpl Md Zaki Osman

Best Section Commander 2006

Rota 1 – Sgt Daeng Iskanzahar
Rota 2 – Sgt See Chi Yang, Johnny
Rota 3 – Sgt Siti Nur Shahidah Hashim

Best Medic 2006

Cpl Lim Yong Chuan

Best Paramedic 2006

WO Mohamed Nur Azli B Md Ramli

Best Senior Ambulance Medical Orderly 2006

Sgt Samsudin Tolhar

Special Recognition Award 2006

Sgt Md Sharom Bin Md Salleh



Transforming the HQ 3rd CD Division Mess into 'Little Arabia' is no easy feat.

Amazing Race at East Coast

■ Sgt Akrab Hidayat, Section Commander, Bishan Fire Station



One of the teams gathering some clues in the midst of the Amazing Race.



AMAZING WINNERS: Participants from Bishan Fire Station with their colleagues from the division.

Bishan Fire Station organised the 1st CD Division Active Day at East Coast Park on 24 Nov 2006. The main attraction for the day was "The Amazing Race: East Coast Edition", which saw representatives from each of the five stations in the 1st CD Division boundary forming teams to battle it out in a gruelling race along the stretch of East Coast Beach, in a bid to be the first to complete all tasks and reach as many checkpoints as possible in the stipulated time of two hours.

The heavy downpour did nothing to dampen the spirits of the contestants as they cycled up and down the length of East Coast Beach in search of the checkpoints, some of which were indeed very well hidden, as evident by a team being unable to locate a

checkpoint for almost half an hour. The teams gamely competed in the tasks given, having fun in the process. With luck on our side, nobody got injured despite speeding around on slippery tracks, with some contestants being stuck with bicycles with faulty brakes. But nobody minded at all, since it was all part of the game.

All in all, it was an eventful day, with everyone having loads of fun. For some, it was a trip down memory lane to the past, where everyone could just be carefree and happy, cycling with friends in the rain and laughing to their hearts' content. Although Bishan Fire Station was declared the overall winner, everyone left East Coast Park with something, be it a prize, or a priceless memory to cherish and remember.

A resilient community in the making

■ Maj Teo Chun Hian, Head Public Affairs Branch, HQ 4th CD Division
Maj Lee Chuan Low, Head Public Affairs Branch, HQ 1st CD Division

The South West Community Development Council (CDC), SCDF, Police and SMRT jointly organised the Community Resiliency Exercise 2007. Held at Blk 322, Clementi Ave 5 on Sunday, 4 Feb, the event commenced with 'commuters' being put through an emergency exercise onboard a MRT train departing from Clementi MRT Station, where they were imparted with emergency skills on identifying suspicious objects, operating the communications system and activating the emergency derailment exit, etc.

Upon the train's arrival to the Ulu Pandan MRT Depot, a 'bomb explosion' exercise spearheaded by the 1st CD Division was carried out to test the response of trained SCDF volunteers. Some 30 SCDF-trained and Community Emergency Response

Team (CERT) volunteers participated in the evacuation and rendering of first-aid to those 'injured'. In all, about 1,800 members from the 16 constituencies of South West CDC took part in the train exercises.

At the carnival site, besides the regular public education exhibitions and static appliances display, skits were staged to convey emergency preparedness messages to the public, who comprised some 5,000 residents.

The event also saw the launch of the MRT Citizens on Patrol, which was jointly mooted by three Civil Defence Executive Committees (CDECs) from Jurong Central, Yuhua and Clementi constituencies. More CDECs are expected to follow suit with such an initiative.



'Commuters' evacuating from the train after a 'bomb explosion' at the Ulu Pandan MRT Depot on 4 Feb 2007.



Guest-of-Honour, Mr Arthur Fong, Vice-Chairman of South West CDC and Adviser to Clementi Grassroots Organisations being briefed on the concept of the SCDF's Fire Bike.

Inmates just as important in community preparedness

■ Lta Johan Nazrin Bin Jaffar, Public Education Officer, HQ 2nd CD Division



As part of its relentless efforts to raise awareness on emergency preparedness, the SCDF has extended the Community Emergency

Preparedness Programme (CEPP) to the inmates of Selarang Park Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC). As a collaboration effort between the SCDF and the Prison Service in support of the Yellow Ribbon Project, the initiative has seen some 300 inmates trained in CEPP within the premises of the DRC since Jul 2006. Monthly classes are still on-going.

Inmates attending the CEPP are those who have been selected for the pre-release programme, which focuses on their needs upon their release and on steering them towards being

responsible citizens. With this in mind, the authorities hope that in providing them with the opportunity to learn basic life-saving skills that are useful in times of emergencies, the inmates will be imbued with a strong sense of responsibility and civic-mindedness upon their release to the community.

Equipped with the necessary knowledge on emergency preparedness, these trained inmates will be able to better assimilate into the community and contribute positively to our society.

Paramedics down under, Melbourne Australia

■ Ssg Roger Lee Chun Yuan, Paramedic, Central Fire Station



With their Australian counterparts are SCDF paramedics: (from left) Ssg Norazni Diron, Ssg Noraini Kasbani, Ssg Roger Lee and WO Tay Guek Khim.

I was ecstatic upon learning that I was one of four paramedics to be attached to the Metropolitan Ambulance Service (MAS) in Melbourne, Australia. With paramedics ranked as the most trusted profession in Australia, my teammates - Ssg Noraini Kasbani, WO Tay Guek Khim, Ssg Norazni Diron – and I knew it would be an eye-opener for us to experience the life of a paramedic there.

With the haze still clouding Singapore skies back then, breathing Melbourne's clean air after stepping out of the Melbourne International Airport in late October last year was a stark but refreshing change. This marked the start of our two-week attachment to the MAS.

Learning to navigate around a large city was a challenge. Thankfully, we were greeted by our coordinator, Ian Hunt at the airport, who then chauffeured us downtown to what would be our cosy apartment for the next two weeks.



WO Tay Guek Khim and Ssg Norazni Diron inspecting the equipment carried by the Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance paramedics.

As a Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) paramedic, Ian responds to critical emergencies. On our way to Doncaster HQ, he received a call on the radio: a policeman had been thrown off his horse during training. We happened to be in the vicinity.

Despite our years of experience as a paramedic, we had never encountered such a scenario back home. Within minutes, we arrived at the scene to find the policeman already being attended to by paramedics. Despite our innate desire to help, Ian kept us in the car. We reluctantly watched from a distance as Ian and his

colleagues assessed the policeman and subsequently administered a painkiller to alleviate his pain. We learnt later that he had suffered a collarbone fracture, but fortunately, did not sustain any spinal injury from the fall.

The rest of our attachment stint was just as eventful. We were each attached to different branches to turn out for ambulance cases. The paramedics we met were friendly and accommodating to our needs, and we soon became fast friends.

Coinciding with our trip was a major horse-racing event, the Melbourne Cup, which lasted a week. We visited the Flemington Race Course on Oaks' Day, traditionally a day when ladies dress up in their sartorial best. It was indeed an eye-opener to see hordes of men and ladies all dressed formally for an outdoor event. We also had a rare opportunity to witness the ambulance coverage for this large-scale event. Besides having on standby a heat-insulated tent to shelter casualties, and paramedics on bicycle patrol, there was a vehicle that sent live video feed of the surroundings to the MAS headquarters for monitoring, in case of a major incident.

Much as we wished we could extend our stay with the MAS to gain more experiences, we were beginning to feel homesick at the end of the two weeks. We were truly impressed by the Australian paramedics' professionalism and affability. It was certainly a privilege to have been exposed to the inner workings and best practices of one of the world's leading ambulance services and we could not wait to share our experiences and photograph snapshots with our colleagues and families back home.

SCDF ambassadors to FESA Western Australia

■ SWO Mohd Arriffin Yusope, Company Sergeant Major, Alexandra Fire Station

Although sheep shearing and farmstay accommodation were out of the question, our two-week attachment with the Fire Emergency & Rescue Services Australia (FESA) bore valuable lessons and had been nothing but a great and enriching experience for WO Sabree Dusuki, WO Syed Aelim Wanyek Alhabshie, WO Hezrul Iskandar and myself. It has definitely broadened our perspective on the various methods of fire management implemented by FESA.

Arriving on the Sunday afternoon of 12 Nov 2006, we were warmly greeted by Supt Phil Thellwell, who brought us to FESA HQ in Perth the next day, where we had the rare opportunity of meeting their senior management.

This trip allowed us to study the command structure of FESA under their Australasia Incident Management System (AIMS) and Bush Firefighting Techniques over at ForestField Training Centre. We were privileged to experience their aerial firefighting techniques to extinguish mass bush fire in wildlife and mountainous regions in Western Australia. This included drawing water from available water sources nearby and extinguishing bush fires from an aerial helicopter. We were also taught the concept of 'Dry Firefighting', widely used by the Aussie firefighters to extinguish wildlife bush and dry vegetation fires.

If ground lessons were not enough, we flew onboard FESA's Air Intel Choppers to witness the capabilities

of their sophisticated long-range surveillance camera, used for capturing bush fire images to facilitate ground operations.

During our second week, we were attached to Murdoch and Perth Fire Station which were located in Perth, where we had undergone the daily routine and physical training with firefighters from both stations.

There, we were able to gain first-hand experience in responding to several fire incidences and undergo several rescue exercise training with the fire station personnel. We also had the opportunity to observe various types of bush fire appliances located in Canningvale Fire Station, and were exposed to their HazMat capabilities in Malaga Fire Station in the southern part of Western Australia.

Our two-day stay at Perth and Murdoch Fire Station each gave us a deeper understanding of the work and culture of our Aussie counterparts, who were disarmingly friendly. With their warm hospitality, we could not feel any more at ease.

Having gone through the attachment programme, we are now able to better understand the danger of wildlife bush fire and a proper firefighting system must always be readily in place to safeguard the community.

Although the SCDF hardly uses the concept of 'Dry Firefighting' in its operations, we must always keep an open mind when dealing with fire, especially when no nearby water



SCDF personnel being briefed on the functions of the Eurocopter Helitac.



A demonstration of aerial firefighting.



SCDF personnel with their Aussie counterparts from the fire station.

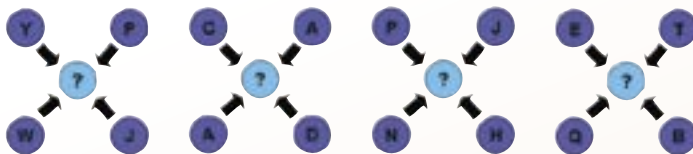
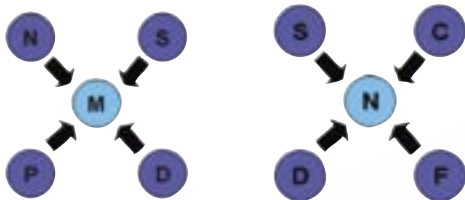
source is available. Dry firefighting methods such as backburning, fire break, defensive strategies and offensive strategies are other alternative methods of firefighting which can be applied when the situation permits.

What's the acronym?

Crack the mystery code to discover the 4 missing letters. Rearrange the letters found below to form an acronym. State what the acronym stands for.

Hints: A=1, Z=26

Eg.



Acronym: _____

Stands for: _____

Rank / Name: _____

Dept / Organisation: _____

NRIC No: _____

Contact No: _____

Answers to the December 2006 Quiz

"TFUQUT GXK EGDDXFOZN OF
TDTKUTFEN HKTHQKTRFTLL"

" **ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY IN**
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS "

Please send in your entries to:

Editorial Coordinator, Rescue 995
Public Affairs Department, HQ SCDF
91 Ubi Ave 4
Singapore 408827

by **29 Mar 2007** and stand a chance to win the following prize:



Clock Radio

Terms & Conditions

1. This contest is open to all staff of the Home Team and CDEC members.
2. Multiple entries or incomplete entries will be disqualified.
3. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entertained.
4. The organiser reserves the right to substitute the prizes with other items of similar value.
5. Prizes must be claimed within three months from the date of notice.

Winners of the December 2006 Quiz

- 1) Sgt Lok Wei Ming Joseph, NS Personnel Dept
- 2) Cpl Wayne Ching Wei Jia, NS Personnel Dept
- 3) Lcp Muhd Khairul, HQ 4th Div
- 4) Lcp Christofer Thow Yi Ming, BRTC
- 5) Pte Andrew Liu, Manpower Dept

Winners will be notified separately to collect their prizes (a limited edition Wireless Optical Mouse).

HELP is here

■ Maj Jalil Montel, Special Rescue Company Commander



Constant friction between uneven road surfaces and fire hoses often leads to pin-hole leaks in fire hoses as shown above.

In the course of firefighting operations, fully-charged hoses are laid and dragged across uneven road surfaces and other rough terrains. The constant friction against such surfaces may cause the fire hoses to spring pin-hole leaks, with several 'fountains of water' spurting from these leaks. If left unchecked, the high water pressure within the hoses often culminates in these pin-hole leaks getting bigger, leading to an eventual tear. Such hoses need to be replaced immediately, needlessly disrupting the on-going firefighting operations.

Currently, firefighters use 'hose bandage' or hose ratchet, which are quite bulky to lug around, to contain such leaks. Firefighters thus have to race back all the way from the fire ground back to their fire appliances to get the items whenever they need to plug any leak in the hose. However, even with the hose bandage and ratchet, water will still continue to leak from sideways.

To circumvent this problem, the SCDF has designed a simple contraption, aptly named the Hose Emergency Leaks Plug or *HELP* for short, to effectively plug such pin-hole leaks in fire hoses during operations.

The *HELP* is a specially fabricated screw-plug about the size of a 10-cent coin. The plug is screwed directly into the leak, thus completely sealing the water from spurting out. A cable tie is strapped around the hose and tightened, holding the *HELP* firmly against the leaking hose. A slight curvature on the underside of the *HELP* head helps to further 'clamp' the piece nicely onto the leaking hose.

Besides sealing the leaks, tightening the cable tie on the *HELP* against the fire hose helps to relieve the pressure exerting on the leak spots. After operations, the cable tie can be cut away simply and the *HELP* retrieved



The *HELP* is screwed into the hose to seal the leak.



Tightening the cable tie helps to hold the *HELP* firmly against the leaking hose and relieve the water pressure exerting on the leak spots.

for re-use. Permanent patching of the leaks in the fire hoses can then be carried out back in the fire station.

As the *HELPS* are relatively small, firefighters can easily carry them in their pockets and promptly fix any pin-hole leak that may spring out suddenly in the midst of firefighting operations. More importantly, all it takes is 20 seconds for a firefighter to seal any pin-hole leak whilst the firefighting operation continues uninterrupted!



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The participation of the SCDF in the Total Defence Exhibition on 'Combating Terrorism' at the Singapore Discovery Centre from 2 to 22 Feb 2007.



2006 Winner

