



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE BY NEA, SINGAPORE STANDARDS COUNCIL & SINGAPORE MANUFACTURING FEDERATION

NEW 'SINGAPORE STANDARD' PROVIDES GUIDELINES TO HELP CATERERS PREVENT AND REDUCE FOOD-BORNE HAZARDS

*Singapore Standard to provide comprehensive guidance to caterers on how to
implement a Food Safety Management System in a cost-effective manner*

Singapore, 16 August 2013 – The National Environment Agency (NEA) today announced a new Singapore Standard on food safety management for food service establishments. This follows NEA's earlier announcement at the 2013 Committee of Supply (COS) debates of new measures to ensure the hygienic preparation of food by caterers¹.

2 Developed by NEA and the Food Standards Committee², the Singapore Standard will provide comprehensive guidance to caterers on how to put in place a Food Safety Management System (FSMS) in a cost-effective manner. A properly implemented FSMS can help caterers to systematically identify, prevent and reduce food-borne hazards at every stage of the food storage, preparation, cooking, and delivery process. Hygiene lapses and non-compliance with proper food safety practices can be easily identified and corrected as the system requires documentation of processes during operations and regular auditing by supervisory staff.

3 NEA has also worked with the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) to provide caterers with training to design and implement an FSMS plan suitable for their operations. Caterers will be required to have at least one staff, preferably in-charge of day-to-day operations, undergo training in FSMS planning and execution. The two-day training programme which consists of theory and on-site assessment at the caterer's premises will help each caterer develop an FSMS plan tailored to its operations. Course fees are subsidised up to 90% for SMEs. WDA-accredited training companies will run the course starting from January 2014.

4 NEA's hygiene officers will check on the proper practice of the FSMS regime during our inspections of caterers. Officers will focus on the pre-requisite programmes, for example, a daily regime to monitor food handlers' practices during food preparation, screening of staff to ensure those who are unwell are not handling food and cross-contamination prevention procedures and critical food hazard control points identified in the FSMS such as proper temperature of stored and cooked food.

¹ NEA announced at the 2013 COS debates that from 1 June 2014, new caterers will need to have in place a Food Safety Management System (FSMS) within three months of getting an NEA licence to operate a catering business. Existing catering licensees are required to submit an FSMS plan three months before their next licence renewal date, starting with licences expiring from 1 September 2014.

² Managed by the Singapore Manufacturing Federation Standards Development Organisation (SMF-SDO), the Food Standards Committee comes under the purview of the Singapore Standards Council.

5 NEA will continue to work with the Association of Catering Professionals to support the catering industry's efforts to improve their food safety management procedures and practices to meet the new requirements. The industry has been consulted on the new FSMS requirement and will be updated on the training component including course fees and course dates by October 2013.

6 Mr Derek Ho, Director-General of Public Health at NEA said, "The FSMS will help caterers to prevent and reduce common critical hazards likely to occur in the preparation and service of food and beverages. However, proper implementation of FSMS can be challenging and this is where the Singapore Standard is designed to help. With these guidelines, caterers can easily identify all the critical food hazard risks in their day to day operations and put in place the necessary control measures."

7 Mr Ho added, "Importantly, the FSMS allows caterers to have closer supervision of daily food safety practices and to correct deviations promptly, addressing weak links in their system which will help to prevent incidents of food poisoning."

8 "Increasing public expectation and awareness of the issue of food safety has heightened the need for companies to adopt food safety management systems to ensure that food prepared and served is safe for consumption. The interaction among food practitioners, industry experts at SMF-SDO and regulatory authorities has helped to shape the Singapore Standard and ensure its relevance to the F&B industry," added Mr Tan Khieng Sin, Chairman of Food Standards Committee.

9 "The launch of *Singapore Standard 583: 2013 Guidelines on Food Safety Management for Food Service Establishments* is a significant development on food safety management. We must always remain vigilant to ensure that food safety standards are met. The Food Standards Committee has put in much effort to develop the guidelines. The new requirements by NEA will lead to the widespread practice of food safety standards at every step of the catering process, benefiting many consumers", said Mr Tay Jih-Hsin, Chairman of the Singapore Manufacturing Federation Standards Development Organisation (SMF-SDO).

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About National Environment Agency:

Formed on 1 July 2002, the National Environment Agency (NEA) is the leading public organisation responsible for improving and sustaining a clean and green environment in Singapore. The NEA develops and spearheads environmental initiatives and programmes through its partnership with the People, Public and Private sectors. It is committed to motivating every individual to take up environmental ownership and to care for the environment as a way of life.

By protecting Singapore's resources from pollution, maintaining a high level of public health and providing timely meteorological information, the NEA endeavours to ensure sustainable development and a quality living environment for present and future generations.

For more information on NEA, please visit www.nea.gov.sg

About Singapore Standards Council:

The industry-led Singapore Standards Council advises SPRING Singapore, the national standards body, on the directions, policies, strategies and priorities for the Singapore Standardisation Programme. The Council, which comprises representatives from the private and public sectors, establishes Singapore Standards and Technical References that meet industry needs and regulatory requirements, so as to achieve quality, productivity, safety and competitiveness.

For more information on the Singapore Standards Council, please visit www.spring.gov.sg/standards

About Singapore Manufacturing Federation:

Established since 1932, SMF represents the interest of the Singapore manufacturing community, driving its competitiveness and sustainable growth through serving industry-specific needs. Supported by 10 industry groups and 6 Centres of Excellence, SMF enhances the competitiveness of the industry by encouraging capability development and capacity building, innovation and productivity.

It provides opportunities for companies to collaborate, network; and to grow and expand both locally and internationally. Current membership stands at more than 3,000 corporate members ranging from SMEs to MNCs. For more information, please visit www.smfederation.org.sg