

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR R DHINAKARAN,
PRESIDENT, SINGAPORE RETAILERS ASSOCIATION,
AT THE EXCELLENT SERVICE (EXSA) AWARD 2017
PRESENTATION CEREMONY, 15 NOVEMBER 2017, AT
KALLANG THEATRE, 1 STADIUM WALK, S397688**

Ms Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State,
Distinguished Guests,
Fellow Retailers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon.

I am delighted to join you today at the Singapore Retailers Association (SRA) Excellent Service (EXSA) Award 2017 Presentation Ceremony.

Let me begin by extending my congratulations to this year's winners of the EXSA Award and SRA Platinum & Gold ACE Awards, and especially to the EXSA Service SuperStar Award Finalists for providing exemplary service in retail.

SRA launched Singapore's First Omni-Channel Mystery Shopping Programme for the Retail Industry in December 2015, to continually improve the customer service offerings in Retail.

Two years and 4 cycles on, SRA has conducted more than 3,500 mystery audits for the SRA Achievement in Customer Experience (ACE) Programme.

The ACE retailers represented here today have achieved top service performance in their categories, across different touch points namely; store outlets, customer service emails, store telephone lines, company websites as well as social media engagement.

In particular, I would like to commend four retailers awarded the SRA Gold ACE Award this year, who have shown the best improvement in service delivery in the mystery audit programme over 4 cycles. They are -

- Cash Converters, (Stevetay) Pte Ltd,
- Metro Pte Ltd,
- RSH (Singapore) Pte Ltd and
- SUTL Sports Retailing Pte Ltd (Nike).

They have demonstrated significant improvement over the duration of the ACE programme from 2015 to 2017, and their mention here today is a great credit to their efforts in this new digital age.

Conceived in 1994, the Excellent Service Award (EXSA) is an annual national award that values and recognises individuals who have delivered outstanding service.

I am delighted to announce that we have surpassed figures from EXSA 2016. We have seen an increase of 17% for this year's Awards, of whom 1824 are Silver, 1073 Gold and 517 Star award winners emerging from 122 companies this year. 13 companies are new to the EXSA programme.

I am very heartened that we have seen such a notable increase in EXSA winners from 2016, despite the difficult retail and economic landscape.

I would also like to take this opportunity to salute all our Service SuperStar Finalists.

Each finalist is unique, and the key differentiators in the makings of a Service SuperStar can be summed up as being a passionate, empathetic professional with an ability to think of solutions. Most importantly one should always serve from the heart.

Customer service is more important than ever in this new digital age that we find ourselves operating in. The service you provide is of the utmost importance in providing added value to the customer experience, as we seek to drive online customers to our brick and mortar stores.

Once again, I congratulate all winners of this year's Excellent Service Award, the Service SuperStar Award Finalists as well as the SRA Platinum & Gold ACE Award recipient companies for a job well done!

Thank you.