

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR R DHINAKARAN, PRESIDENT, SINGAPORE RETAILERS ASSOCIATION, AT THE EXCELLENT SERVICE (EXSA) AWARD 2018 PRESENTATION CEREMONY, 21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2018, AT KALLANG THEATRE, 1 STADIUM WALK, S397688**

Mr Zaqy Mohamed, Minister of State, Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Manpower,

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 Presentation Ceremony 2018 to recognise exemplary service staff from the retail industry.

This year's award recipients have surpassed that of EXSA 2017 by 16%. We have a total of 2059 Silver, 1209 Gold and 695 Star award winners emerging from 126 companies this year. 17 companies are new to the EXSA programme.

Excellent customer service helps build enduring customer loyalty. A strong culture of customer service is one of the fundamental strengths that retailers and retail staff must continue to nurture and develop as we move forward. Excellent service will help to achieve customer satisfaction. This is what generates customer loyalty, repeat business and higher profits.

Everyone has a role to play in achieving service excellence. A service excellence culture must be part of an organisation's culture, and this is ultimately shaped by the leaders in the organisation. Today, we recognise the passion and efforts of this year's winners of the EXSA Award and SRA Platinum ACE Awards, and especially to the EXSA Service SuperStar Award Finalists for providing exemplary service in retail. As well as the companies behind these winners who have given their support for the EXSA programme. My heartiest congratulations, and sincere thanks!

It is also important to continually provide training to employees to acquire essential skills that are necessary for them to improve in their jobs and also motivate them. Recognising this importance, I am pleased to announce that SRA is partnering Upskill People Asia to deliver learning and training in more effective and innovative ways.

Going forward, e-learning will be a key aspect of the SRA's training framework.

Our e-learning platform partner Mr Rupert Macey, Managing Director of Upskill People Asia will share with us more on e-learning and how it has benefited retailers globally and driven results, especially when manpower is a constraint. He will also share the results of the pilot run of the Upskill People e-Learning programme with Wing Tai Retail and Benjamin Barker which a few months ago.

Developing an excellent service culture takes time and can only succeed when customer orientation and service excellence are entrenched in the company's processes and practices, alongside training and upskilling of its retail workforce. The award recipients today show that it can be done. So, let us work together and continue to strive for service excellence in the retail industry in Singapore.

On this note, let me congratulate all the recipients on their awards and wish them every success and a fulfilling service career ahead of them.

Thank you!