

prisonnews

CAPTAINS OF LIVES
REHAB • RENEW • RESTART

FEBRUARY 2026 ISSUE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the February 2026 issue of the Prison News!

This issue takes you through a year of remarkable achievements and meaningful connections that have shaped our rehabilitation journey.

Discover how creativity became a powerful force for change at the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025 and Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival 2025, where inmates and ex-offenders found their voices and rebuilt connections with the community through music and art.

Beyond these creative initiatives, 2025 held special significance as the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders (CARE) Network and honoured a record 651 volunteers and community partners for their invaluable contributions at the Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2025.

Let us take you through the key highlights of SPS Family Day 2025, where we showed appreciation for staff and their families who form the backbone of our mission. We also share how SPS is dedicated to supporting staff in their growth by integrating a Coach-Like Culture that promotes a supportive environment which empowers staff to develop and make the right decisions.

Lastly, SPS remains committed to contributing meaningfully to the global correctional community. We provide a recap of our engagements at the Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific in Japan, and our bilateral exchange with the Korea Correctional Service. These international collaborations reinforce our commitment to share our experiences while learning from international best practices.

Wishing you a pleasant reading experience!

ASP1 Gan Zi Xing
Editor, Prison News Committee



**SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE**



See the Arts,
Feel the Emotions,
Embrace Second Chances.

PARKROYAL
COLLECTION
MARINA BAY

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Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025: Celebrating Second Chances Together

Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025: Celebrating Second Chances Together

On 10 September 2025, the finals of the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025 was held at the Changi Prison Complex. Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim graced the event, which celebrated its 10th anniversary this year. This competition gave inmates a unique opportunity to share their journeys of transformation through music, giving voice to their desire for change and hopes for the future. Let us explore what unfolded at the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition this year.



Reported by RO2 Chua Chong Shan



Group photo symbolising the end of a successful Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition.

Auditions

The competition began in June 2025 with an open call inviting inmates to submit their unique and original songs. 33 inmates (25 men and eight women) from various Prison Institutions and Drug Rehabilitation Centres were shortlisted, and received professional music theory and songwriting lessons from InTune Music, preparing them for the upcoming stages of the competition.



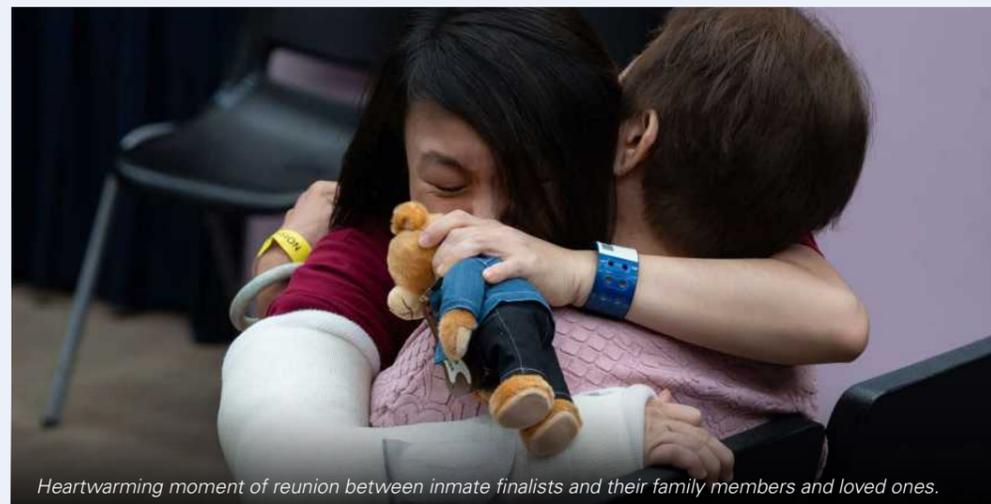
About 40 inmates attended the auditions for the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025 which began in June 2025.



After numerous rounds of auditions, 33 inmates from various prison institutions and Drug Rehabilitation Centres were shortlisted to undergo music theory and songwriting lessons conducted by InTune Music.



Opening address by GOH, Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim.



Heartwarming moment of reunion between inmate finalists and their family members and loved ones.

The Finals

After rigorous rounds of selection, five finalists were selected from the initial group of 33 inmates. Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim served as the Guest-of-Honour for the finals of the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition. In his opening remarks, he emphasised music's transformative power and encouraged participants to embrace the opportunities before them, aligning with this

year's theme "Celebrating Second Chances Together."

The finals of the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition saw the five finalists presenting their own original song to their family members and loved ones who were in attendance. After numerous hours of hard work put into refining their compositions, each piece of work represents a powerful story that highlight their journey of transformation and change during their incarceration.

Stories of Inspiration and Hope: Our Finalists' Compositions

Nisha's song reflects her life experiences and journey battling drug addiction. Her original song, "Darkest before dawn" reflects her life experience and journey battling drug addiction.

Rashid dedicated "Thanks to You" to his two sisters, acknowledging their unwavering support and unconditional love.

Reduan's song "FUYOH!", was cleverly crafted as an acronym – Family, Unity, Yearning, Overcoming, Hope.



Nisha – "Darkest Before Dawn"



Rashid – "Thanks to You"

Jasmine's song "Shine" reminded everyone of the power of community support in helping offenders rehabilitate and reintegrate into society.



Jasmine - "Shine"

Iqbal, struck a chord with his song "Change", inspiring the younger generation to not give up when the going gets tough and to forge their own success.



Iqbal - "Change"

This year's Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition also enhanced participation by members of public by calling upon them to vote for their favourite song from the five finalists. A total of 1,123 votes were received – of which, Iqbal received the highest number of votes and took home the "Viewers' Choice Award", a testament to his dedication and efforts during the entire competition.



Reduan - "FUYOH!"

Group Performance by the Finalists

The finals of the Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition concluded with finalists coming together to perform "You & I", an original song composed by Yellow Ribbon Performing Arts Centre alumni and produced in collaboration with InTune Music.



Inmate finalists singing the song "You & I" together.

The powerful rendition of "You & I" conveyed messages of resilience and hope, encouraging inmates and ex-offenders to overcome past mistakes and move forward together, reinforcing the importance of this year's theme of "Celebrating Second Chances Together".



Panel of judges (from left): Director of Intune Music and Master Vocal Trainer, Mr Aaron Matthew Lim. Renowned Music Producer and Founder of Lee Wei Song Music Academy, Mr Lee Wei Song. Director of Intune Music and Music Producer, Mr Peng Chi Sheng.

Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025 Judges and Celebrity Mentors

This year's judging panel featured acclaimed songwriter and producer Mr Lim Wei Song, alongside InTune Music Directors Mr Aaron Matthew Lim and Mr Peng Chi Seng. The latter two have been actively involved in supporting inmate's rehabilitation through music since 2014, highlighting their commitment to inspiring second chances.



Celebrity mentor Ms Inch Chua, Musician, Singer-songwriter.



Celebrity mentor Mr Nicodemus Lee, Musician, Singer-songwriter.

Local singer-songwriters Inch Chua and Nicodemus Lee, also stepped in to serve as mentors to the inmates throughout the entire competition – journeying with them and providing valuable guidance to help the participants improve on their written songs.

Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition 2025 Committee Members

The success of Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition was made possible by dedicated committee members who worked tirelessly to bring this event to life. Here are their insights:

SUPT1A

Tanny Ng

Chairperson
Yellow Ribbon
Songwriting
Competition 2025
2nd Superintendent,
Institution A4



SUPT1A Tanny reflects on her leadership journey and the committee's achievements.

"My primary goal was to create a platform that truly showcased inmates' musical talents whilst engaging people from all walks of life. I am pleased we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from both participants and community members.

I am particularly proud of how our members shared the same passion to make this event meaningful, constantly rising to challenges and supporting one another. The seamless coordination between different teams, including celebrity mentors and music trainers, plus the publicity elements we introduced, really set this year's Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition apart."

DSP2 Ang Jin Jian

Programme Committee IC
Officer-in-Charge, Institution A5

DSP2 Jin Jian shares his observations on the evolution of Yellow Ribbon Songwriting Competition over the years.

"SPS took a significant step forward by not digitally masking participants' faces on social media platforms. This allowed the public to better connect with inmates through their facial expressions and emotions. Although more challenging than before, the team did an excellent job collaborating to present wonderful videos to the public."

Q: What is your fondest memory during this whole journey?

"Sharing encouraging community responses with participants. Their elation upon receiving such encouragement not only motivated them for the finals but also renewed their hopes of reintegrating into society. I am proud to be part of a community helping inmates in their rehabilitation and reintegration journey."



SGT2 Aqidah Istiqamah

Publicity Committee Member
Correctional Unit Officer (Casework), Institution B5

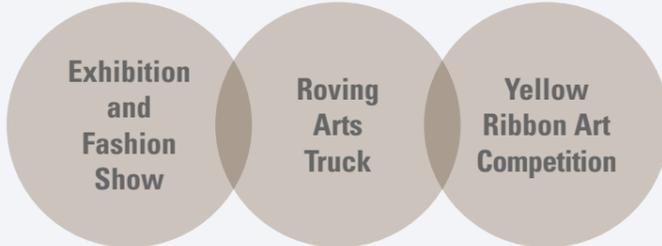
SGT2 Aqidah recounts the most memorable and rewarding moment of being part of this Committee.

"I fondly recall putting my best effort into creating graphics showcasing the behind the scenes to reflect the hard work by staff and participants. The publicity team worked closely with video vendors to bring stories to life, witnessing how each participant's journey unfolded through our content. There is something magical about translating raw emotion into visual storytelling."

Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival 2025: We Are Each Other's Second Chances

On 1 August 2025, the Yellow Ribbon Project launched the Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival 2025 with an exhibition at One Holland Village, with President Tharman Shanmugaratnam gracing the exhibition as the Guest-of-Honour. In conjunction with Singapore's SG60 celebrations, the month-long festival featured 60 art pieces created by 19 male inmates and 13 women inmates participating in arts programmes in prisons.

Highlights of the Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival 2025



Reported by MX12 Adlyna Adly Azamin



President Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam and his spouse, Mrs Jane Ittogi Shanmugaratnam, gracing the exhibition held at One Holland Village as the Guest-of-Honour on 1 August 2025, alongside Commissioner of Prisons, Ms Shie Yong Lee and Chairman of Yellow Ribbon Singapore, Mr Phillip Tan (second photo)

Exhibition and Fashion Show

Themed “We Are Each Other’s Second Chances”, the art pieces displayed during the exhibition offers insights into the inmates’ emotions and hopes for a second chance, while also giving inmates an opportunity to contribute and pay it forward to society. The inmates’ art pieces were available for adoption, with proceeds going to the Yellow Ribbon Fund to support rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for inmates, desistors, and their families.

With the support from Ms Doreen Tan, Chief Executive, Tembusu Institute Pte Ltd, and Ms Sylvia Lim, Founder and Managing Director of Triologie – the inmates’ artistic visions were able to come alive through a contemporary fashion show. Twelve specially curated wearable outfits, inspired by inmates’ artwork, were showcased at the launch event. Volunteers, desistors, and models donned these unique pieces as they walked the runway, bringing the inmates’ creative expressions to life and showing their support for second chances.



Visitors admired art pieces created by a total of 32 inmates participating in various art programmes in prisons.



“Great Harvest” - an Artwork by Adam (not his real name). Adam is currently employed on SPS’s Mandatory Aftercare Scheme.



Volunteers, desistors, and models donned pieces inspired by inmates’ creations at the festival launch.



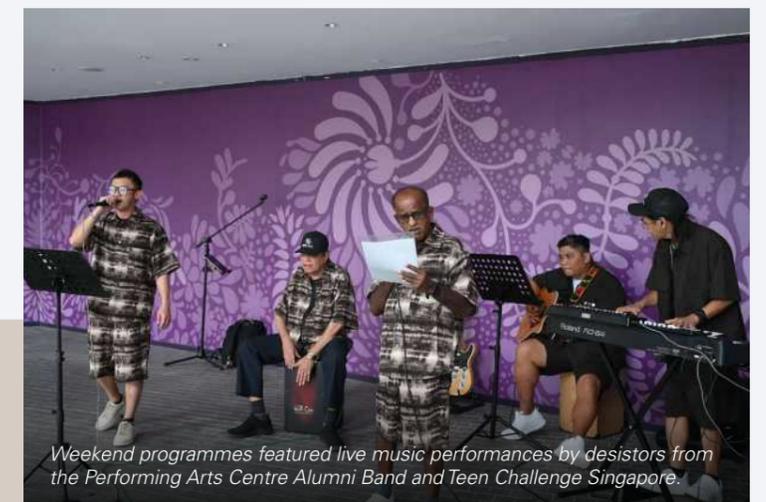
YRCAF Roving Art Truck at Our Tampines Hub.

Bringing the Festival to the Heartlands: Roving Arts Truck

To bring this year’s Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival closer to members of the public, a roving arts truck which served as a mobile gallery for the inmates’ art pieces, visited numerous locations in the month of August. These locations included public venues at Tanjong Pagar, One Holland Village, Tampines, Yishun, Bedok, Suntec City, Gardens by the Bay, and 12 secondary schools and tertiary institutions.



New Life Stories converted their storybooks into colouring books to engage children visiting the art truck.

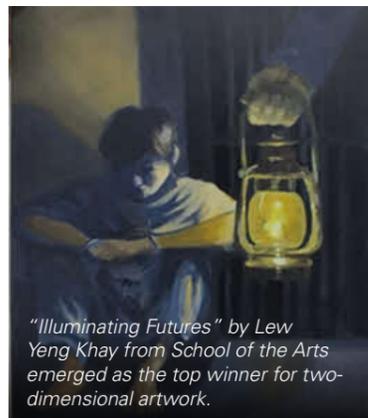


Weekend programmes featured live music performances by desistors from the Performing Arts Centre Alumni Band and Teen Challenge Singapore.

Along with the Roving Art Truck – supervisees and staff members from Green Haven, Rise Above, and Selarang Halfway House also hosted complimentary art workshops, creating meaningful interactions between desistors and the community. These sessions were open to members of the public and taught techniques such as decoupage, crocheting, and henna painting.



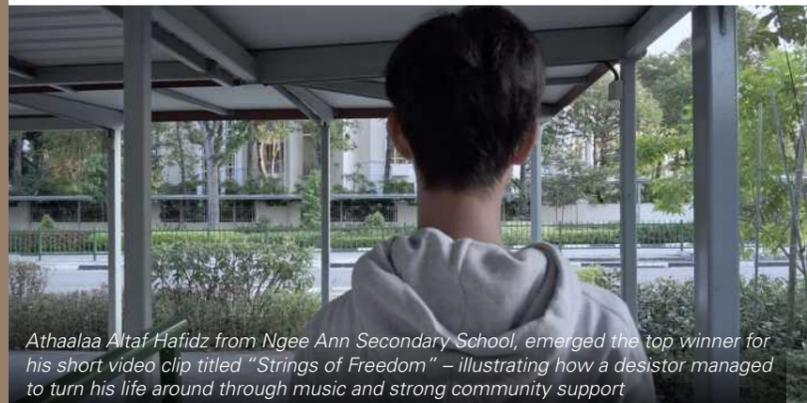
Workshop hosted by supervisees and staff members of Green Haven Halfway House.



"Illuminating Futures" by Lew Yeng Khay from School of the Arts emerged as the top winner for two-dimensional artwork.

Engaging the Next Generation: Yellow Ribbon Art Competition

This year's festival also saw the introduction of the Yellow Ribbon Art Competition, inviting students to create two-dimensional artworks or short video clips based on the theme "We Are Each Other's Second Chances". The competition received a total of 294 entries from 58 secondary schools and tertiary institutions, expanding the festival's reach to younger generations.



Athaalaa Altaf Hafidz from Ngee Ann Secondary School, emerged the top winner for his short video clip titled "Strings of Freedom" – illustrating how a desistor managed to turn his life around through music and strong community support

The competition aimed to spark authentic dialogue about attitudes towards inmates and desistors, spread awareness about the importance of second chances, and inspire the younger generation to become advocates for inmate rehabilitation and reintegration.

Changing Hearts and Minds: The Power of Art

Beyond merely supporting inmates and desistors in their reintegration journey, this year's festival has shown that art serves as a powerful catalyst for community engagement. Showcasing the creative talents and personal growth of inmates during the Yellow Ribbon Community Arts Festival helps to increase awareness and acceptance of our inmates and desistors by the community.

The engagements across the festival were warmly received by the public, and the festival's impact was evident in the over 800 heartfelt messages that were left by members of the public for our inmates and desistors:



Visitors writing words of encouragement for our inmates and desistors.

Appreciation for Artwork

"I love all of your artwork!! All the best we are all rooting for you"

"It was a great experience looking at the artwork and hearing about your stories from the volunteers. The works are fabulous, creative and great creations. All of you must be so proud of yourselves. All the best and continue to pursue your passion."

We Are Each Other's Second Chances

Encouraging our Inmates and Desistors

"No matter where you are now, your story isn't over. Every day is a new chance to grow, to reflect, and to rebuild. Your past doesn't define you—your strength, choices, and hope for the future do. Keep moving forward, one step at a time."

"You are bigger, stronger, and braver than your mistake. Mistakes do not define us. It is how we overcome that matters."

"Everyone deserves a second chance and for ex-offenders, that chance is more than just starting over; it's about rising stronger. The past doesn't define the future, and each step forward is proof of resilience, growth, and courage. Whether it's rebuilding trust, chasing a new career, or simply choosing to do better every day the journey matters. Society benefits when we uplift, not judge. With support, dignity, and purpose, ex-offenders can turn their stories around and inspire others to do the same."

"Your past doesn't define you, what matters is the steps you're taking today!"

"Stay positive, brace yourself for yourself and your loved ones. All Singaporeans will be behind supporting you on your new chapters of life. Fighting!"

Celebrating 25 Years of the Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders (CARE) Network



Reported by HTS12 Li Yixuan Renee

CARE Network Summit 2025 and the Correctional Practice and Research Symposium (CPRS)

The first event – the CARE Network Summit was jointly organised by SPS and the CARE Network on 24 July 2025, and was graced by Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Edwin Tong. More than 450 participants from the public and private sectors were invited to attend the CARE Network Summit, and the Correctional Practice and Research Symposium that was jointly held on the same day.

Themed “GROWing Together, Empowering Change”, the event centred around celebrating the 25th anniversary of the CARE Network and highlighted the efforts in strengthening the aftercare ecosystem for ex-offenders and their families to reduce re-offending. This event also marked the launch of CN’s five-year workplan, built around the new **GROW framework** which focuses on four key areas:

1. **Galvanising** growth of the aftercare support sector through expanded cross-sector mentorship programmes and learning platforms
2. **Reducing** duplication of services and programmes
3. **Optimising** resources for sustainable expansion of services
4. **Widening** the network through new cross-sector partnerships



Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mr Edwin Tong, and Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim joined SPS's Commissioner of Prisons Ms Shie Yong Lee, Yellow Ribbon Singapore's Chairman Mr Phillip Tan, and CARE Network core members in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the network.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the CARE Network – a network of government organisations and social service agencies that co-ordinates aftercare efforts amongst community partners. Two key events, the CARE Network Summit and CARE Network Gala Dinner, brought together our partners to commemorate the network’s continued growth over the years, and set our sights on further strengthening the aftercare ecosystem for ex-offenders and their families for many years to come.



Opening address by Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Edwin Tong.



Researchers had the opportunity to present their work to Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mr Edwin Tong and Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs Assoc. Prof. Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim.

Research Takes Centre Stage

The integration of the CPRS into the CN Summit highlighted the growing importance of practice research in rehabilitation and reintegration work, and provided opportunities for various stakeholders to collaborate on innovative ideas to advance correctional work across Singapore.

Students from various Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) also presented poster presentations to showcase their research in the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Prizes were awarded to the top projects for their outstanding contributions in advancing the correctional field.



Prize presentation ceremony with the winners of the poster presentation by students from various IHLs showcasing their research studies on the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.



Panel Discussion with Ms Gillian Butler, Ms Jean McCarthy, Ms Sheila Connolly, and Senior Assistant Director (Community Partnerships & Family Policy Branch) SUPT1A Mr Justin Vikneswaran.

Breakout Group Presentations and Workshops: Diverse Learning Opportunities

Participants then split up into smaller breakout groups, where they were then treated to engaging presentations covering four main topics – namely Cultivating Professional Development, Strengthening Connections with Family, Building Community Corrections and Turning Ambition into Opportunities.

After gaining valuable insights from the presentations, participants then had a choice of four interactive workshops, where they could dive deeper into their areas of interest including rehabilitation programme implementation, theory of change, developing psychological resilience, or trauma-informed approaches in rehabilitation.

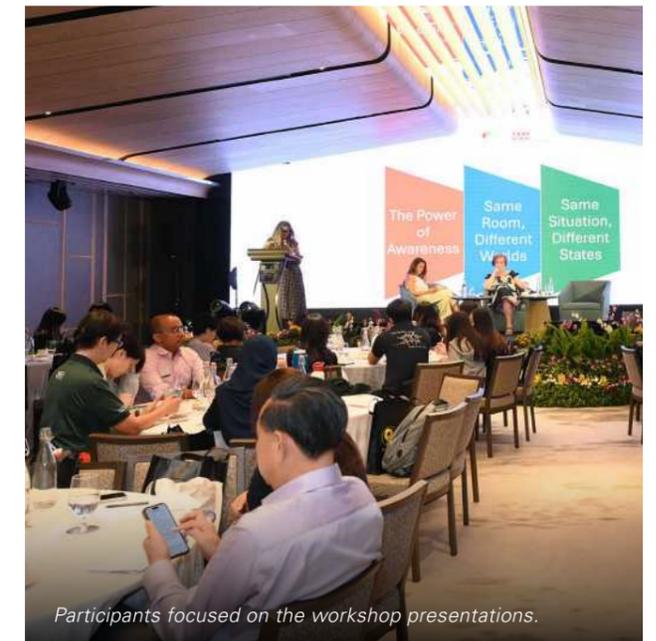


Topics including practical strategies and insights on strengthening family relationships were covered during the breakout rooms.

From Experience to Expertise: Inspiring Journeys of Desistance

Ms Sheila Connolly, CEO of the Cork Alliance Centre, delivered a keynote address on adopting a person-centred approach in multi-agency working environments. Based in the Republic of Ireland, the Cork Alliance Centre works with individuals released from prison, with the support of both the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service.

This was followed up with a panel discussion centred around the theme of desistance.



Participants focused on the workshop presentations.



Participants absorbing insights during the engaging breakout group presentations.

CARE Network Gala Dinner 2025

The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the CARE Network continued on 25 September 2025 at the second key event, the Yellow Ribbon-CARE Network Gala Dinner. Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Edwin Tong, graced the event as the Guest-of-Honour.

Themed “Starlight Odessey: 25 Years of Transforming Lives”, the gala dinner which was hosted by celebrity Mr Gurmit Singh and two of SPS’s very own desistors, brought together more than 800 community partners, donors, sponsors, beneficiaries, and CARE Network representatives to celebrate 25 years of transforming lives of ex-offenders and their families.



Guest of Honour Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mr Edwin Tong posing for a photo alongside other distinguished guests.



As one of the hosts of the gala dinner, Mr Gurmit Singh captivated the audience with his engaging presence and warm humour.



Captivating musical performance by Ms Tasha, alongside our very own SPS Prison Officers.

The guests were treated to captivating musical performances by inmates from the Performing Arts Centre, prison officers, and talented students from LASALLE College of the Arts and University of the Arts Singapore.

The evening also featured an exciting live auction of inmates’ artwork to raise funds for the CARE Network.

As the evening concluded, it marked the end of a significant milestone celebration for the CARE Network’s 25 years of community partnership work. The event demonstrated the network’s continued commitment to supporting rehabilitation efforts and highlighted the strong foundation built over the years.

Mr Edwin Tong announced two new initiatives to strengthen the CARE Network, namely, the formation of the Yellow Ribbon Cares (YR Cares) and

the launch of the Lim Tze Peng-Yellow Ribbon Fund STAR Bursary.

The overwhelming participation from community partners, government agencies, and beneficiaries underscored the collaborative spirit that has defined the network’s approach since its inception, providing a solid platform for future growth and innovation in correctional rehabilitation.



Live auction in full swing, raising funds for the NeuGen Fund, Singapore After-Care Association (SACA), Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA), and the Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF).

Stronger Together: Celebrating the Heartbeat of Rehabilitation Efforts at the SPS Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2025

Singapore Prison Service (SPS) honoured a total of 651 volunteers and community partners at the Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2025 for their steadfast contributions to supporting the reintegration of inmates and ex-offenders.



Reported by RO2 Lum Hong Wei Lloyd



2025 marks the 14th year that SPS has organised the Volunteer Awards Ceremony to appreciate our volunteers and community partners for their efforts and unwavering dedication



Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim gave a heartfelt speech of appreciation to SPS's volunteers and partners.

Held on 8 August 2025, the Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2025 was graced by Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim. In his opening address, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal commended the volunteer community for their unwavering spirit and compassion, highlighting the vital role that community support plays in strengthening Singapore's rehabilitation ecosystem.



Volunteers and Community Partners from various organisations around Singapore engaging with Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim (left), and taking a light-hearted photo during VAC 2025 (right).

Bridging Hearts Through Volunteerism

As SPS seeks to further enhance our throughcare approach – volunteers and community partners are integral pieces that multiply our efforts in both the in-care and aftercare setting in the rehabilitation journey of our inmates and ex-offenders. Today, SPS continues to partner over 4,200 volunteers from more than 75 organisations, offering religious counselling, academic tutoring, life skills training and pro-social support to inmates and ex-offenders.



Volunteers from various agencies and community partners receiving the Journey Shield Token – given to Community Partners who have worked closely with SPS to support inmates and ex-offenders in their rehabilitation and reintegration journey.

A Record Year of Service and Commitment

The Volunteer Awards Ceremony 2025 saw nearly twice the number of award recipients compared to 2024, reflecting the growing community ownership of SPS’s rehabilitative mission. Volunteers and partners were recognised for various milestones, including long-serving volunteers with over 20 years of service.

This year, nine volunteers were also conferred the Throughcare Hero Award 2025. The award recognises individuals who provide exceptional support across the full rehabilitation continuum from in-care engagement to sustained post-release support, ensuring that inmates and ex-offenders receive consistent encouragement and practical assistance as they reintegrate into society.



Ms Angela Chin in attendance at SPS Volunteer Award Ceremony 2025.

“My interactions with them taught me that trust is the foundation of meaningful relationships, and this mindset has reshaped my understanding of rehabilitation and how important it is to meet all individuals, regardless of their pasts with honesty and respect.”

Insights into the Work of Our Volunteers

Ms Angela Chin first began volunteering with SPS in 2022, where she was inspired by some of the desistors that she met during a Mid-Autumn event organised by the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA).

In 2023, Ms Chin introduced Nagomi Pastel Art for the supervisees at Institution S2. This gentle form of art requires no prior artistic skills, and promotes mindfulness, emotional expression, and positive social interaction.

Since then, Nagomi Pastel Art has grown into a mainstay at Institution S2, with strong connections between SPS staff, volunteers, supervisees, and community partners. For Ms Chin, volunteering with SPS is about contributing to a collective effort in an individual’s rehabilitation journey — building pathways where supervisees can continue learning, regain confidence, and one day, give back to others as facilitators themselves and uplifting others with their growth and transformation.

“Volunteering has reinforced that we are each other’s second chances, and I believe that when our supervisees and ex-offenders are supported by a caring community, they can take the second chances given to them and flourish!”



Ms Angela Chin and her colleagues conducting a Nagomi Art session for inmates at Institution S2.

Volunteer Award Ceremony 2025 Organising Committee

Chairperson of the SPS Volunteer Awards 2025 Organising Committee, SUPT1 Sabrina Rosman, expressed her heartfelt appreciation to the volunteer community.

“The number of award recipients has nearly doubled from 2024, and over the years, it is deeply encouraging to see more and more individuals and organisations stepping forward to support the reintegration journey.”

“Each award represents a story of commitment, compassion and partnership, and recognising our volunteers is a meaningful way to affirm the vital role they play in giving offenders hope and a second chance.”



SPS Volunteer Award Ceremony 2025 Committee posing for a picture with Guest of Honour, Acting Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim and Commissioner of Prisons, Ms Shie Yong Lee.

SPS Family Day 2025

SPS Family Day 2025 brought together our Captains of Lives and their family members for a day of shared experiences and appreciation, reinforcing the importance of family support within the SPS community. Held at Rainforest Wild Asia, the event featured a mix of physical and virtual activities, as well as messages of appreciation for officers and officers' families.



Reported by RO2 Syazmeer Khan S/O Naseer Khan

The event commenced in a light-hearted and engaging manner, with opening remarks delivered virtually via WhatsApp by Commissioner of Prisons, Ms Shie Yong Lee along with Deputy Commissioner of Prisons (Operations & Rehabilitation), Mr Matthew Wee Yik Keong, and Deputy Commissioner of Prisons (Policy & Transformation), Mr Rocky Francisco Junior.



One of the key activities was a scavenger hunt known as "Wild Bonds: The SPS Family Quest", a team-based activity designed to promote interaction and collaboration among staff and their families. Conducted virtually, participants were tasked with locating designated points within Rainforest Wild Asia and submitting photographs taken with family members, colleagues, and Captains of Lives collaterals. Those who successfully completed the activity were rewarded with special prizes.

Throughout the day, families and colleagues could be seen spending time together through shared activities, simple conversations, and moments of joy, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere.



A total of 1,473 Captains of Lives and their family members took part in the event. Participants enjoyed a range of activities, and brought home welcome gifts and attractive prizes won from lucky draws.



Captain of Lives and their family members posing for photos at SPS Family Day 2025.

Commissioner of Prisons Ms Shie Yong Lee (in white) taking photos with our Captains of Lives and their family members.

Here's some snippets of what some of the participants of SPS Family Day 2025 shared when asked about their friends and loved ones:

"To my wife, I am proud of you! I know that you have many tough days at work, but thank you for doing what you do."

"I'm fortunate that my husband is also an uniformed officer and he understands the struggles that I face at work, and he is always there to support me when I had a tough day."

"Our work as Prison Officers is not easy, but my family is my pillar of support and everyday when I go home after a long day of work, they are there to welcome me and recharge me for the next day."

"I'm happy to have a day to relax and enjoy today with my good friends from work, and to meet old friends and familiar faces from work that I haven't seen in a while"

SPS Family Day 2025 Organising Committee

Members of the organising committee also reflected on their experience in planning this year's event.

This year's SPS Family Day was truly a meaningful and enjoyable occasion for both staff and their families. The success of this year's event not only reflected the strong bonds within colleagues in SPS, but also highlights the invaluable role that our loved ones play in supporting our Captains of Lives – so that we may continue doing the work that we do. Looking forward to SPS Family Day 2026!



Programme Committee

“ One of the most memorable moments was conducting the site recce to brainstorm ideas on creating an enjoyable experience to thank our colleagues and their families for the hard work and dedication shown throughout the year. ”

SGT2 Tandra Chua
Correctional Unit Officer, Institution A4



Logistics Committee

“ The smooth coordination on the day itself was the result of careful planning, but more importantly, it was our way of showing appreciation to staff for their commitment and efforts over the year. ”

ASP2 Muhammad Amir Asyraf
Staff Officer (Reintegration), Community Reintegration Branch, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Division

(rightmost, front row in photo)

Publicity Committee

“ Our work can be tough, and through our interviews and stories, we hope to bridge communication gaps and remind officers and their families how much they appreciate one another. No matter the challenges at work, it's the smile of our loved ones that truly matter. ”

RO2 Lim Wee Siong
Senior Correctional Unit Officer, Institution B1

(third from left in photo)





A Coach-Like Culture in SPS

This article explores how a “Coach-Like Culture” has been integrated into SPS, from training the new prison officers at the Singapore Prison Training Institute to existing prison officers in the service, such as those from Institution A4, Singapore’s only all-female Prison.



Reported by RO2 Sng Sok Hing

Staff well-being is especially important in SPS’s work environment, where our Captains of Lives (COLs) operate in a field that demands constant vigilance, emotional resilience, and effective teamwork. Since 2001, SPS has worked to implement a coaching community to promote staff culture where COLs have a supportive environment which empowers them to develop solutions and make the right decisions in challenging times.

What Makes a Coach-Like Culture Different?

Think of the difference between a teacher who gives you all the answers versus one who asks the right questions to help you figure things out yourself. A coach-like culture means:

- **Listening** deeply to understand what people really need
- **Asking thoughtful questions to empower** instead of immediately giving directions and solutions to the problem
- **Staying curious** about how to improve systems and support people
- **Creating safe spaces** where everyone can learn and grow together, regardless of their position

New Officers Learn Coaching from Day One

At the Singapore Prison Training Institute (SPTI), all new prison officers receive comprehensive coaching training as part of the Prison Officer Course (POC). The programme includes a full-day workshop on coaching fundamentals followed by practical sessions with peers.



Prison Officer Course trainees posing alongside SPS Coaching Champions Senior Assistant Director (Staff Development), SUPT1A Cammy Teh and Head (SPEAR Training and Doctrine), DSP1 Venu Arsh after completing a coaching workshop.

“We believe in supporting our trainee’s growth early in their careers,” said Commandant SPTI, SUPT1A Jimmy Lee. Each trainee is assigned to a coach who conducts regular development sessions throughout their training period – who also serves as an important figure of support during the period of transition that the trainees go through as they begin their journey as COLs.

The trainees are taught that Coaching should focus on three core principles: deep listening, asking thoughtful questions instead of giving direct orders, maintaining curiosity about improving systems, and supporting the people around them.

The practical approach allows the trainees to learn active listening during real conversations, practice asking the right questions in genuine interactions, and develop their skills through trial and feedback rather than merely memorising coaching theories and not knowing how the theory relates to their day-to-day jobs.

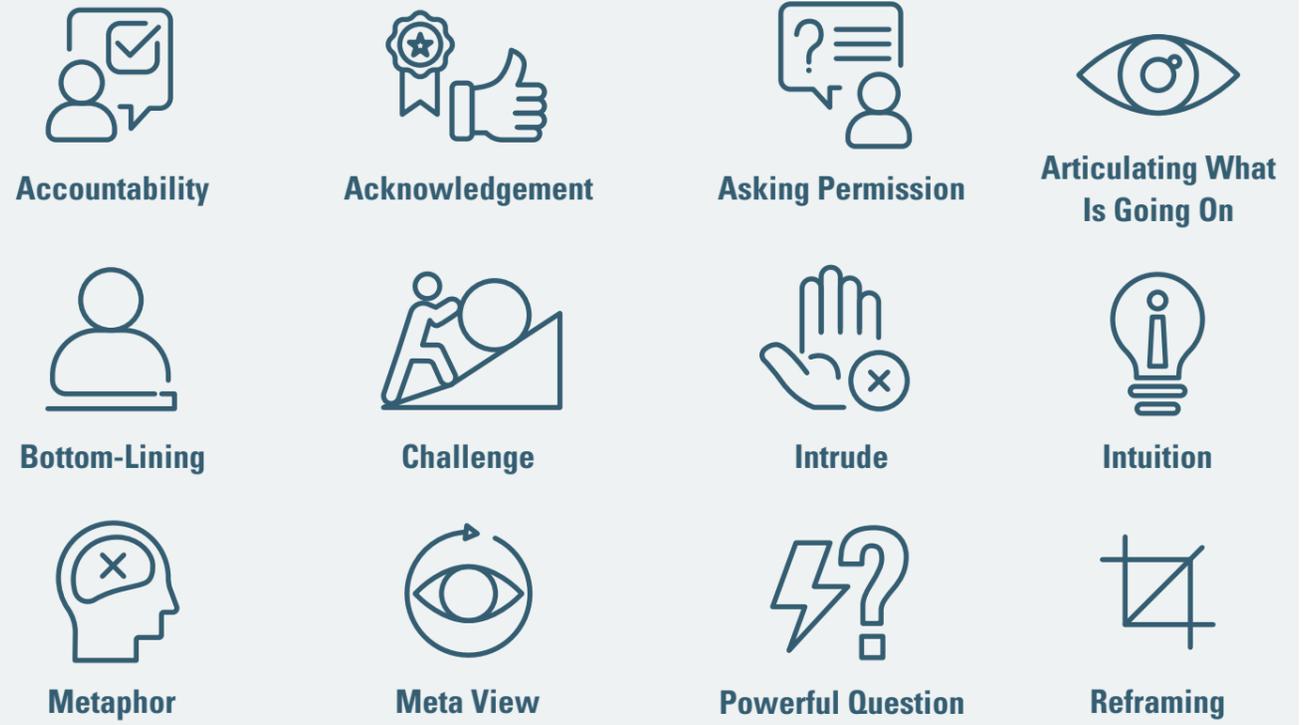


Commandant SPTI, SUPT1A Jimmy Lee (on the left) conducting a coaching session for COLs at the SPS Headquarters.



New prison officers experience coaching through direct application after learning the theory. After a foundational workshop on coaching basics, trainees immediately begin practicing with their peers in realistic scenarios that they might face on the job.

12 COACHING SKILLS



A summary of the various coaching skills that allows one to practice coaching effectively.

RECAP: MINDSETS



A summary of how our COLs can adopt a coach-like mindset when engaging other staff.

COACH-LIKE CULTURE A SUMMARY



SPS's goal is for a Coach-Like Culture to be seamlessly integrated into our daily work and interactions.

The Women Prison's Drive Towards a Coach-Like Culture

Coaching does not start and end in SPTI as we envisage that it can benefit all divisions and commands within SPS. Institution A4, Singapore's only all women prison institution, has championed a coach-like culture to empower staff and enhance their professional growth and emotional well-being.

Superintendent, Institution A4, DAC Doris Ng, and 2nd Superintendent, Institution A4, SUPT1A Tanny Ng, were inspired to create this culture after recognising that these skills are essential for developing leaders who can empower their teams, foster growth mindsets, and create meaningful workplace relationships.

Through the establishment of a "Coach-Like Culture Committee," Institution A4 implemented several initiatives:

Mindful Mondays: Staff take time during shift changes to acknowledge and appreciate each other's hard work—something that often gets overlooked in busy daily operations.

Coaching Broadcasts: The committee released a series of broadcasts to increase awareness and provide tips on coach-like behaviours and how they can be implemented practically on the ground. These broadcasts may also feature excerpts from staff sharing real life examples on how they utilised these skills to enhance the work relationships with both staff and the inmates under their care.

Making It Approachable: Recognising that coaching concepts might seem intimidating to some staff, the committee even created "COACHingu," a friendly mascot that combines "coach" with the

Korean word for friend. The character appears in communications and training materials to make the programme more approachable.

The shift has created unexpected benefits beyond staff development. Officers who feel supported and empowered naturally extend these approaches to their work with inmates, helping them develop better self-awareness, personal responsibility, and problem-solving skills.



Institution A4 leadership team and staff attending a 2-day workshop on coaching.



Superintendent of Institution A4, DAC Doris Ng taking the lead by conducting Coach-Like Culture workshops for staff.

Building Organisational Resilience

The coach-like culture represents a significant step forward in how SPS supports its officers and fulfils its mission. It is a comprehensive approach that strengthens teamwork, enhances professional development, and creates more effective interactions between both staff and inmates. SPS will continue to expand its coaching approach to develop a more supportive, capable workforce to succeed in its mission as a correctional agency.



Regardless of seniority and age, everyone plays an important role in developing a Coach-Like Culture.



2nd Superintendent of Institution A4, SUPT1A Tanny Ng (front row, first from left) worked with the team to share A4's coaching initiatives with SPS senior leaders during Commissioner of Prisons, Ms Shie Yong Lee's visit.



4th Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific (Crim-AP) by Ministry of Justice Japan and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The Singapore Prison Service (SPS) reaffirmed its commitment to advancing offender rehabilitation and reducing reoffending by representing Singapore at the 4th Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific (Crim-AP), held from 24 to 26 June 2025 in Tokyo, Japan.



Reported by RO2 Muhammad Nur Remy Bin Kamsani

A Platform for Shared Purpose

Co-organised by the Ministry of Justice of Japan and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the forum brought together criminal justice practitioners from 22 Asia-Pacific jurisdictions to exchange experiences, strengthen partnerships, and promote effective approaches in offender treatment and rehabilitation.



The 4th Crim-AP was held at the International Justice Centre at the Ministry of Justice's International Cooperation Department.

Contributing Singapore's Experience on a Global Platform

Assistant Director (Operations Policy), Operations Division, DSP2 Alan Lee Xuan Chang represented SPS and participated in the Working Group on Offender Treatment and Rehabilitation (WG-OTR). The group focused on the theme of "Ensuring multi-stakeholder collaboration and an all-of-society approach for reducing reoffending."



DSP2 Alan Lee representing SPS at the 4th Crim-AP

During the sessions, SPS contributed actively to discussions on effective collaboration with community stakeholders and international cooperation to support offenders' reintegration into society.

In his presentation, DSP2 Alan Lee shared Singapore's unique throughcare

approach, which emphasizes coordinated and continuous rehabilitation efforts which begins during incarceration and extends into the community after release. Offenders' risks and needs are also addressed across multiple levels from the individual, family, and the wider community.

DSP2 Alan Lee also shared about efforts towards international collaborations through various platforms organised by SPS, such as the International Correction Leadership Programme and the Asian Prisons Lockdown Challenge, which bring together correctional professionals to share good practices, strengthen networks, and learn from one another.



The WG-OTR focused on best practices in multi-stakeholder and whole of community approaches towards reducing reoffending.

Learning from Regional and International Partners

The forum provided valuable opportunities for regional learning and exchange. Delegates shared how risk assessment tools, evidence-based programmes, and community engagement initiatives are adapted to their local contexts. Discussions highlighted diverse models of community involvement, including partnerships with non-governmental organizations, volunteers, private enterprises, and innovative funding approaches such as social impact bonds. Such exchanges allowed participants to better understand how different social systems and cultural contexts can contribute in meaningful ways to the shared goal of reducing reoffending.

Through its participation, SPS not only strengthened professional ties across the region, but also contributed to advancing correctional practices by sharing Singapore’s experiences and approaches.

Insights from Japan’s Rehabilitation Ecosystem

Beyond the conference sessions, participants visited Japanese facilities showcasing community-based rehabilitation efforts. At “Shisui-en”, a halfway house for female ex-offenders, participants observed how counselling, employment support, and family reintegration services are delivered through a community-based model led by social workers and volunteers.

Participants also visited Fuchu Prison, one of Japan’s largest correctional institutions, which houses over 2,600

inmates. The prison features structured rehabilitation programmes, vocational training, and specialised medical facilities for elderly and foreign inmates. The visit ended with an exhibition at the Correctional Association Prison Industry Cooperation shop, showcasing products made by inmates from around the world to garner support for second chances.

Reflecting on the visits, DSP2 Alan Lee shared, “The Japanese model showed me how closely their correctional and community systems intertwine. It reinforced the importance of engaging the whole community at every stage of an offender’s rehabilitation.”



“Shisui-en”, a halfway house for female ex-offenders.



Living amenities at Shisui-en, a Japanese halfway house for female ex-offenders.



Exhibition of products made by inmates around the world including cookies handcrafted by inmates at the Yellow Ribbon bakery.



Fuchu Prison (From “Guide for Fuchu Prison”).

Looking Ahead

Singapore’s participation in Crim-AP underscores SPS’ role as an active and trusted regional partner, committed to reducing reoffending through collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning. By contributing its experiences and learning from international counterparts, SPS continues to advance its mission of building a safe and inclusive Singapore, supported by strong partnerships at home and abroad.

Visit by the Korea Correctional Service

As part of SPS's efforts to contribute to the global correctional community, we regularly host and receive counterparts from other jurisdictions for working-level professional exchanges to learn from one another. In April 2025, SPS was pleased to have the opportunity to host the Korea Correctional Service (KCS) for a bilateral exchange on correctional technology, security and rehabilitation approaches.



Reported by RO2 Muhammad Haziq Bin Abdul Razak

A delegation of seven officers from the Korea Correctional Service, led by Vice Commissioner General Mr Kim Moon Tae, visited SPS on 1 April 2025. During the visit, SPS shared more about our S.M.A.R.T prison initiatives and how technology is used across our prison institutions to support daily operations, security, and rehabilitation.

The KCS delegation and SPS also took this opportunity to exchange valuable insights on hosting major international correctional events. The KCS delegation

shared their experience preparing for the 43rd Asian Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators (APCCA) in November 2025. SPS also shared our insights on organising the upcoming Asian Prisons Lockdown Challenge (APLC) – an international tactical competition where correctional officers from different jurisdictions come together to compete in a tactical skills-based competition,

and exchange ideas on incident management and crisis response.

The first stop of the visit was the Singapore Prison Emergency Action Response (SPEAR) base, where the KCS delegation observed SPS' operational environment, including training facilities, specialised equipment, and tactical capabilities.



SPS hosted the KCS delegation, led by Vice Commissioner General, Mr Kim Moon Tae, for a working visit focused on correctional tech and rehabilitation.



New friendships being forged between SPS and KCS officers during the visit

The KCS delegation taking a group photo alongside SPS staff outside the Selarang Park Community Supervision Centre.

SPS also took the chance to showcase some of the facilities used during APLC, along with highlights from past editions of the competition.

The delegation's engagement continued at the Selarang Park Complex, where they visited Institution S1 and the Selarang Park Complex Supervision Centre.

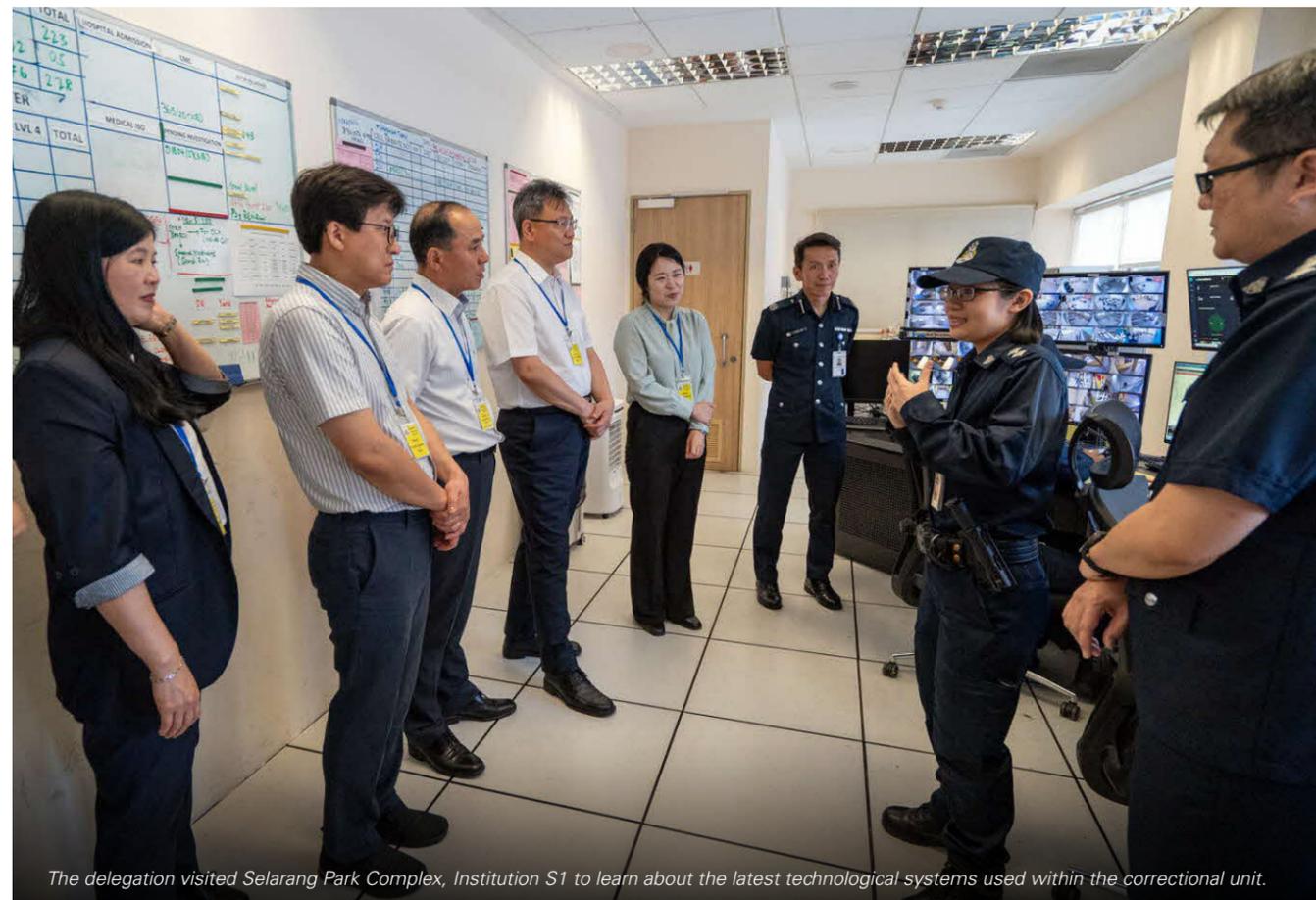
At Institution S1, the delegation learned about the use of the Digitalisation of Inmate Rehabilitation and Corrections Tool (DIRECT) in supporting inmates' rehabilitation journey, as well as technologies such as the Integrated Security System and Facial Recognition System used within the correctional unit to improve the efficiency of operational processes.



The KCS delegation learning about the various operational equipment used by SPS.



At the SPEAR Base, the KCS delegation learnt about SPS's operational equipment and tactical capabilities.



The delegation visited Selarang Park Complex, Institution S1 to learn about the latest technological systems used within the correctional unit.

At the Selarang Park Community Supervision Centre, the delegation also explored the use of technology in Community Corrections. SPS showcased the Prison Automated Screening System (PASS), which uses automation, robotics, and sensors to automatically collect urine samples from our supervisees and screen them for illicit drugs in an efficient and seamless manner.

Through this bilateral exchange, both SPS and KCS reaffirmed their shared commitments towards embracing innovation and supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in their respective jurisdictions. The visit also underscored the value of international collaboration in advancing correctional excellence and strengthened the partnership between both services as SPS continues to learn from and support our international counterparts in the years ahead.