

prisonnews

MARISSUE 2021

CAPTAINS OF LIVES
REHAB • RENEW • RESTART

CONTENTS

- 02** EDITOR'S NOTE
- 03** MAIN FEATURE
Drug Rehabilitation
Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06** WHAT'S THE BUZZ?
- 08** CONVERSATION
WITH...
Commander,
Cluster C
- 09** A DAY IN THE
SHOES OF...
A Personal Supervisor
and Personal Supervisor
(Casework) in a DRC
- 10** OUR CAPTAINS
OF LIVES
Recipients of the
Commissioners' Award
- 12** #THROWBACK
History of DRCs
in Singapore

DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE REGIME

MAIN FEATURE



SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE

Certain pictures taken before COVID-19

THE TEST



[HTTPS://GO.GOV.SG/THE-TEST](https://go.gov.sg/the-test)

EDITORIAL TEAM

ADVISOR

AC RAFIDAH BTE SUPARMAN

EDITOR

ASP CRYSTAL SEET

SUB-EDITOR

ASP MUHAMMAD SADIQ BIN SA'AD

REPORTERS

MR FAIZAL BIN ROSLAN

MS SIM LIN YI

MS LIEW WAN RONG

RO LIN ROUXIU

RO ZHANG YUN

RO TAN HUI MIN

RO HUZAIFAH BIN MUSTAFFA

RO LIM CHOON LEONG

MEDIA SUPPORT

DIGITAL MEDIA UNIT

PUBLICATION CONSULTANT

OXYGEN STUDIO DESIGNS PTE LTD

FEEDBACK

THEPNEDITOR@PRIS.GOV.SG



© 2020 Singapore Prison Service

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the express written consent of the copyright holder.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers

This issue, we share more about the **Drug Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs)** and its regime in Singapore. We speak to **Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists** and **Prison Officers**, who work hard along with the DRC inmates to facilitate their rehabilitation and reintegration into society to lead a drug-free lifestyle.

Ever been to St John's island and came across a few long, dormitory-like buildings? That's where our **#Throwback** on the history of DRCs led us to as well. We traced the origins of our DRCs all the way to an Opium Treatment Centre on St John's Island, as well as its many iterations since then.

With his 21 years of experience (and his email archives going almost as far back), **Commander Cluster C**, DAC Tan Eng Keong, shares about the key projects implemented by Cluster C in 2020, as well as what's upcoming for Cluster C in 2021.

We celebrate **Our Captains of Lives** who were awarded the individual and team Commissioner of Prisons' Award 2020, for contributing towards the accomplishment of the Singapore Prison Service's Vision and Mission.

With the release of the vaccines, we have started the **vaccination of our frontline Captains of Lives**, further reducing the threat of bringing the virus into our highly dense and closed environment. In line with the phased roll-out of vaccinations for the community, our inmates will also be given the choice to be vaccinated.

And if you haven't already done so, click on the link to watch our short film, "The Test", on the left!

ASP Crystal Seet
Editor, Prison News

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE (DRC) REGIME

Reported by
Prison News Reporters Zhang Yun and Lin Rouxiu

Drug abusers arrested for consumption of controlled drugs are detained in Drug Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs) for rehabilitation, in Changi Prison Complex institutions and Selarang Park Complex Institution S1.

MDA AMENDMENTS

Before 2019, drug users with two prior incarceration records in DRCs would be sentenced to long-term imprisonment when they were caught the third time. In 2019, the Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) was amended such that drug users who were caught abusing drugs for the third and fourth time with no concurrent criminal charges could be channelled to a DRC for rehabilitation instead of long-term imprisonment. The DRC regime was extended to DRC3 and DRC4 to address the rehabilitation needs of repeat drug abusers.



DRC REGIME

The DRC regime consists of two main phases: in-care, and Community-Based Programmes (CBPs).

During the in-care phase, inmates undergo various intervention programmes such as psychology-based correctional programmes (PCPs) that target attitudes and beliefs regarding drug abuse, family programmes that equip inmates with relational skills to enhance relational bonds and supportive relations, and workplace literacy programmes. Inmates also undergo release preparation programmes, vocational training and outreach sessions to prepare them for their emplacement in the community-based programmes.

After the in-care phase, inmates will be emplaced on one of three CBPs: halfway-house, day release or residential scheme. Supervisees will also be subjected to a supervision period of up to five years under Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB).

The detention period ranges from 12 months to 36 months for the various DRC timers.

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 **Main Feature**
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 **Conversation with...**
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 **A Day in the Shoes of...**
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 **Our Captains of Lives**
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 **#Throwback**
History of DRCs in Singapore

Drug Rehabilitation Centres (DRC)

Community



In-Care

- Psychology-based Correctional Programmes
- Education
- Vocational & Employability Skills Training
- Work Programmes
- Family Programmes
- Religious Programmes and Services

Community-Based Programmes (CBP)

- Halfway House Scheme;
- Day Release Scheme; or
- Residential Scheme

Extended Supervision Up to Five Years under Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB)

INTERVIEW WITH CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALISTS (CRS)

We chatted with Ms Alicia Tan and Ms Thiviya Thiyaga Rajan, who are Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS) from the Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division (PCRD). They conduct counselling programmes for the DRC inmates daily, and here's their sharing on what it's like to be a CRS in the DRC!

How long have you worked as a CRS, and why did you choose to be a CRS?

Alicia: I have been a CRS for 3.5 years. Majoring in psychology, I have always been interested in human behaviour and thought processes. Overcoming addiction is not an easy process; I hope to journey with drug abusers through their rehabilitation and recovery.

Thiviya: I have been a CRS for 7.5 years. I have always taken an interest in working with populations that present challenging behaviours. The offending population in SPS is a unique and specialised population that comes with its own set of challenges. It is not only rewarding, but also exciting to be doing the kind of work we do as CRSes due to the uniqueness of our working environment.



Officers work closely with the CRSes in B5. To allow the CRSes to better understand the job roles of the officers, CRSes would be attached to an officer to experience a day in their shoes as part of their orientation programme. This allows the CRSes to understand how officers manage the inmates outside of counselling sessions. Photos taken before COVID-19.



Ms Alicia and Ms Thiviya conducting a group counselling session



Ms Alicia and Ms Thiviya conducting individual counselling sessions

What is the job scope of a CRS in a DRC?

Alicia: Our core work involves providing group and individual counselling programmes for drug abusers undergoing rehabilitation in the DRC. Besides direct work with the DRC population, we collaborate with officers in the Inter-Disciplinary Team to support inmates with behavioural and psychological issues in the housing units.

Thiviya: We also work closely with the officers in the DRC on various projects to shape the transformative environment and support the DRC population in their rehabilitation.

What are some challenges that both of you face at work?

Thiviya: In the DRC, drug abusers are mandated to attend counselling sessions. Sometimes, they may not be receptive and may also disrupt the sessions by distracting their peers or by being uncooperative during sessions. When this happens, we end up having to manage their behaviours instead of providing effective counselling sessions.

Alicia: The rehabilitation journey with drug abusers is not easy. It is a long and painstaking journey that tests not only the perseverance of drug abusers, but also of the CRSes and officers who are supporting them in their rehabilitation. From trying to engage unmotivated individuals to creating a safe environment for sharing and learning in group sessions, CRSes face a variety of challenges in facilitating PCPs. However, the challenging nature of the job also makes it more fulfilling and rewarding!

What do you enjoy most about your work as a CRS?

Alicia: I enjoy being able to journey with drug abusers through their rehabilitation in the DRC. Everyone has their own unique struggles. Behind every infraction, behaviour or relapse, there is a story that needs to be understood. I am always heartened to see the

efforts made to adopt new and healthier thinking patterns and behaviours. I once met an inmate who was rather down and unmotivated. He was not keen to go for group counselling programmes as he felt his English was not good and others might judge him. However, after speaking to him, he decided to give the group-based PCP a try. Initially, he disliked sharing and refused to participate in practice role-plays. He was also reluctant to help others in the group. However, after much encouragement from both myself and all the other group members, he started to attempt role-plays and share his thoughts during discussions. I noticed that he became more comfortable with speaking to people and grew more confident and cheerful as a person. Sharing his experiences in the DRC Success Stories, he said that he "used to be scared to help others as they might not need [his] help. However, [he] tried to be more proactive in helping others now and felt good about it." It is such changes in thoughts and behaviours that encourages me to persevere in my work to transform lives.

Thiviya: I enjoy my interaction and counselling sessions with the drug abusers in the DRC. It is a privilege when they trust us enough to share personal experiences and information. About two years ago, I had a group member who had returned to the DRC within a few months of his release from his last DRC detention. Although I did not conduct the counselling session for him during his earlier DRC detention, I remembered him as he refused to undergo the counselling sessions and chose to serve the full duration of his detention in the DRC, forsaking his eligibility for CBP. When I first started engaging him, he again expressed uncertainty in being able to complete his counselling session. He shared that he felt very defeated as he had tried countless ways to quit drugs but found himself returning to drugs time and again. However, with encouragement and support, he not only gained the confidence to complete his counselling sessions, but also developed the confidence to lead a drug-free life. He became someone whom his peers turned to for guidance and advice. Most importantly, he was able to make peace with his past and focus on building his future.

That is very encouraging to hear. Indeed, your work has transformed lives! Lastly, could you share with us about desistance theory, and why do some relapse?

Thiviya: Desistance in general refers to the stopping of offending behaviours. Primary desistance refers to periods during which an individual does not engage in offending behaviours while secondary desistance refers to the complete abstinence from offending as the individual takes on a new self-identity.

Alicia: Drug rehabilitation is a marathon and never a sprint. It takes months and years of immense efforts for drug abusers to overcome addiction. Desisting from drugs also requires the engagement of families, communities, and the society. With so many factors in play throughout the recovery process, it is not uncommon for drug abusers to fall back into drugs. When that happens, it can be disappointing and discouraging to both the inmates and their loved ones. However, we must never lose hope or give up, for rehabilitation and recovery is a journey best travelled with others.

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

Singapore Prison Service
January 13, 2021

Straight As!

Anna (not her real name), is one of many students who sat for her GCE O-Level this year. With grit and determination, and the help of her Math and Form Teacher Ms Jayme, she managed to achieve straight As. Here's wishing her and all our students all the best as they continue working hard this year, achieving greater heights!



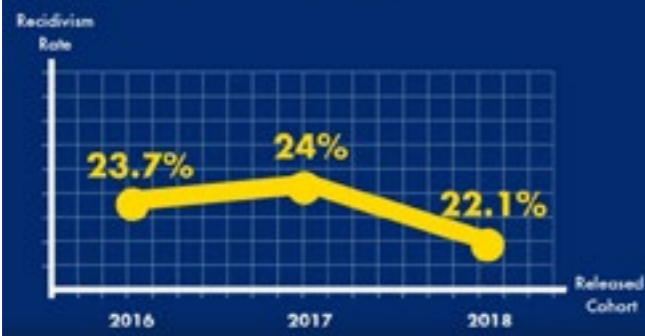
[Click here to see FB post](#)

Singapore Prison Service
February 4, 2021

Singapore Prison Service Annual Statistics Release for 2020

The overall recidivism rate has remained low and stable, and more inmates are undergoing community corrections with supervision and support from Captains of Lives and community partners.

About 8 out of 10 inmates who were released in 2018 did not return to prison within 2 years of release.

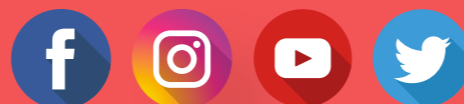


[Click here to see IG post](#)



Each issue, we select trending posts from our @SingaporePrisonService social media accounts to provide a peek at what our Captains of Lives are up to. #ICYMI

Follow us! @SingaporePrisonService



Singapore Prison Service
February 28, 2021

Yellow Ribbon Culinary Competition

The Yellow Ribbon Culinary Competition is an annual competition that aims to equip inmates with skills relevant to the Food & Beverage (F&B) Industry that are aligned to the national Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) framework.

Inmates cook from the heart during Yellow Ribbon Culinary Competition



Minister of State for Trade and Industry Low Yen Ling presenting Adam (not his real name) with his award at the annual Yellow Ribbon competition on Feb 25, 2021. PHOTO: SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

Singapore Prison Service
February 13, 2021

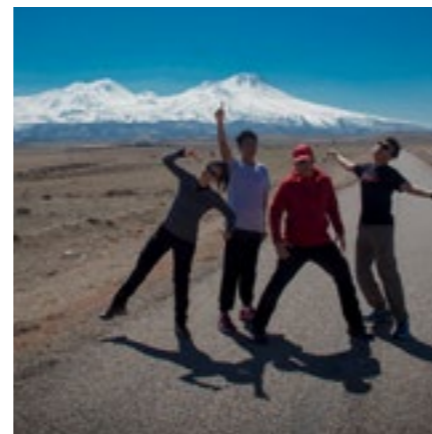


Celebrating 24 years of Valentine's Day Together

When asked what it's like to work in the same organisation as their spouse, SUPT Hamisah revealed, "We understand the demands of our jobs and have equally accepted that both of us would always want to be there for our respective teams. We must be grateful for the opportunities that we have, no matter how tough it can be." SUPT Shahlan shared, "I once remember cancelling our family dinner at the last minute because I was activated to report to work. As she worked in the same organisation, she understood the demands of my job, including such unexpected activations."

CELEBRATING 24 YEARS OF TOGETHERNESS

Supt Hamisah Tomari & Supt Shahlan Bin Rashid



[Click here to see IG post](#)

Singapore Prison Service
March 7, 2021



Happy International Women's Day!

On what it is like working as a female Superintendent in the Singapore Prison Service where about 80% of the staff strength are males, SUPT Koh shared, "We are not limited by our gender. When we put on our uniform, it is always duty before ourselves."



[Click here to see IG post](#)

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

CONVERSATION WITH...

DAC TAN ENG KEONG

COMMANDER, CLUSTER C

Reported by
Prison News Sub-Editor Muhammad Sadiq Bin Sa'ad and Prison News Reporter Faizal Bin Roslan



FUN FACT

DAC Tan archives his work and emails dating to as far back as 2002! That is close to 20 years of information stored on his laptop!

Q1 THIS YEAR MARKS YOUR 21ST YEAR IN SERVICE. DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORABLE ENCOUNTERS OR STORIES TO SHARE?

I joined the service on 31 March 2000. I remember my time as Superintendent of Kaki Bukit Centre Prison School (KBC), and later in Tanah Merah Prison (TMP), when KBC moved there. I witnessed and experienced many inspiring moments during that time. I remember seeing inmates in their dormitories, standing close to the maintenance zone at night after lights off, so that they can get some light to continue reading and studying. It was quite an inspiring sight to see the inmates persevering through their circumstances, to do well in their studies.

There was an inmate who had to serve a very long sentence due to drug trafficking offences. He had no formal education and could not converse in English very well. In his later years of incarceration, he made good use of his time, persevered and managed to study right up to his 'A' Levels. It was amazing because he struggled with his studies, but he never gave up. I remember him as not only was he a very positive chap, he also had very large feet! Every now and then, he would request for a special shoe size of 46, and we would need to do a separate purchase for him because our contracted vendor did not supply such a size. When I was posted out of TMP, I lost touch with him.



DAC Tan bumping into the ex-offender at a Yellow Ribbon event in 2018

Recently in 2018, I was at one of the Yellow Ribbon events. I was pleasantly surprised when the man, who has since been released, came up to me and greeted me warmly. He told me that he had been looking for me all these years ever since his release, and he wanted to convey his gratitude and thanks for what I had done for him. We had short catch-up session, and I am very happy that he was doing well.

Q2 2020 HAS BEEN AN EVENTFUL YEAR. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2020?

Cluster C implemented some key projects in 2020, and we are very proud of this despite the many obstacles and challenges especially arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. There are three projects that come to mind —

- The operationalisation of SPC in September 2020.
- The introduction of the first part-time degree course for our inmates in July 2020 — Bachelor of Science in Business specialising in Logistics & Supply Chain Management.
- The extension of support from our Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRSes) to the Reformative Trainees (RTs) in their Release on Supervision (ROS) phase in May 2020. Previously, CRSes only provided counselling sessions and interventions were provided mainly during the RT's in-care phase.

Q3 WHAT'S UPCOMING FOR CLUSTER C IN 2021?

We need to expand our reach to more volunteers and partners to provide throughcare support to the inmates, from their in-care phase right through to the post-release after-care phase. Our community partners are our 'force multiplier'. In our mission to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders, we cannot do this alone.

Additionally, we need to continue to innovate, review our systems and processes, and leverage on technology so that we can do more with less. Deputy Commander, Cluster C, is leading a committee to revive the culture of innovation in Cluster C. I am looking forward to receiving more suggestions and cut work initiatives from our staff.

Q4 DO YOU HAVE ANY ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR OUR COLS?

Despite the huge disruption to our daily life and routine, I am glad to see many Captains of Lives carry out our mission with high spirits, and always striving for excellence at work. All of you have done a great job in keeping the virus out through the various precautionary measures. Our inmates continue to feel safe in prisons and their loved ones are well-assured. Our partners and volunteers are eager to enter prison to resume their services.

If we look on the bright side, COVID-19 opened up many windows of opportunities for us to review, rethink and redo things. We managed to move ahead with several projects that would have taken many more years or may not even take place. Examples are the setting up of the Video Conferencing capabilities with the Courts, and teachers conducting classes virtually. So, seize the moment and exploit the opportunities.

The 3 "Es"

As resources are limited, all of us must constantly review what we are doing to ensure that they are still relevant, important and how we can do it better. I always have 3 Es in mind in most of the things I do.

- We must not lose sight of the **Essential** things that are instrumental to our success and conversely, we should stop doing non-essential things.
- Singapore is transforming itself into a SMART Nation. All of us need to be smarter and always strive to carry out our daily task in the most **Efficient** way. It need not be through technology. Very often, a little tweak to the work processes is sufficient.
- You must bear in mind that no matter how you innovate and change the processes, it must not lose its **Effectiveness**.

A PERSONAL SUPERVISOR (PS) AND PERSONAL SUPERVISOR (CASEWORK) (PSC) IN INSTITUTION B5, DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE (DRC)



Reported by
Prison News Reporters Tan Hui Min and Huzaifah Bin Mustaffa

Unique to DRC is the Enhanced Drug Rehabilitation Regime, officially implemented in April 2014 for all DRC inmates. The regime philosophy focuses on providing a safe and supportive environment promoting a pro-social lifestyle through the learning and practising of skills, and development of healthy relationships and responsibility for self, family and the community. The philosophy provides broad guidance for the DRC team to engage the inmates and support their change process in a consistent manner.

1 What do you do on as a Personal Supervisor (PS)?

Arif: Fundamentally, our key duty is to ensure the smooth operations of the Housing Unit while maintaining the safe and secure custody of the inmates. However, apart from the normal routine like unlocking of inmates for programmes, recreational activities or medication rounds, I also will take the time to engage the inmates, especially when the inmates are having their recreational dayroom or yard activities. This will allow me to better understand them to provide a supportive environment for change.

2 What is the job scope of a Personal Supervisor (Casework) (PSC)?

Praveen: As a PSC, I work closely with the Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS) to manage the high-risk DRC3/4 inmates in their rehabilitation journey. I conduct regular meetings with stakeholders and individual casework in which I will put up referrals for their re-integration needs. I also ensure order and discipline when rehabilitation programmes are being conducted. In addition, I work closely with various stakeholders to conduct purposeful activities such as orientation for newly admitted DRC inmates, family engagement sessions, and sharing and learning session during TRUST* Time.

*TRUST — Abbreviation of core values under the regime philosophy: Truthful, Responsible, Uplifting, Steadfast and Teamwork.

3 What is your most memorable encounter with an inmate?

Praveen: Once, when I was out with my family, I saw an ex-DRC inmate who used to be under my charge. He was so pleased to see me. He shared about how his life had changed for the better after he embarked on a healthy lifestyle. He also said that he had been drug-free for almost 2 years. The most memorable part about that encounter was when he introduced me to his wife and kids. He said, "If it was not for this officer, I wouldn't be here right now with you guys." The warm look that the kids gave me touched my heart. Till this day, knowing that my actions had impacted not only the lives of the ex-inmates, but also their families, is what keeps me going.

Arif: It would be my previous stint as the Workshop Programme Officer of the Theatre Art Programme (TAP). With the support from then-Superintendent of B5, Mdm Soh Yen Li, TAP had their inaugural family open visit in 2018. The TAP inmates were very appreciative for the opportunity given. They used the open visit platform to showcase their talents through a performance which they learnt while undergoing the TAP. It was heart-warming to see the families reuniting, as for some of them, it was their first time seeing their families since their incarceration.

4 What keeps you going?

Praveen: I believe that as humans, we are not perfect. All of us have our own flaws. We all make mistakes and we should never demean or judge others for it. Helping them regardless of race or religion, is the main driving factor in my career.

Arif: What keeps me going is that I make it a point to begin my duty positively and to always motivate my colleagues and the inmates. Working in prisons, no two days are the same. That is why there are lots of opportunities for me to learn daily. My colleagues are also the reason I look forward to going to work every day. I am truly grateful for the constant guidance and advice given to me. The smooth Housing Unit operations that we achieve daily is a result of the great camaraderie that we have as a team. As the saying by Joey Badass goes, "You are as strong as your weakness link."



Officer interacting with inmate in B5 (Photo taken before COVID-19)



SSG MUHD ARIF SA'AT
PERSONAL SUPERVISOR, B5



SGT3 PRAVEEN S/O SUBRAMANIAM
PERSONAL SUPERVISOR (CASEWORK), B5

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PRISON'S AWARD!

Reported by
Prison News Editor Crystal Seet

The Commissioner of Prison's Award (C/SPS Award) is awarded to SPS staff who had contributed as an individual or team, towards the accomplishment of the Singapore Prison Service (SPS)'s Vision and Mission.

The C/SPS Award was awarded to 43 individuals and 75 teams. We interviewed a few of our award winners.

RECIPIENTS OF THE C/SPS AWARDS 2020 (INDIVIDUAL)



★ **CW2 Andy Tan Soon Peng**
Curriculum Design & Development Officer
Singapore Prison Training Institute (SPTI)
Staff Development Division

Please introduce yourself.

Hi there, I'm Andy. I'm currently with SPTI as a Curriculum Design & Development officer. It is a huge honour to receive the SPS Commissioner Awards and I'm deeply grateful to my superiors and colleagues for this recognition of my work. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to all my SPTI-mates who lifted me up with their relentless support.

What keeps you going at work?

I am very certain that my efforts will bear fruits and enhance the learning experience of many people, and this motivates me to ensure that the delivery or quality to be the highest possible.



★ **DSP2 Mohamed Azhar Bin Zailan**
Officer-in-Charge (Housing Unit)
Institution S1
Cluster C

What do you do as an Officer-in-Charge (Housing Unit)?

My team and I ensure the security and discipline of inmates, engage in purposeful interactions with them, and guide them to be more socially responsible individuals.

How do you feel about achieving the C/SPS award?

It came as a pleasant surprise to clinch this award as it has never crossed my mind. I always give my sincere best in carrying out my duties and strive to build collaborative bridges with stakeholders. Getting my work recognized by management is a bonus. I would like to take this opportunity to dedicate this award to my officers who are together with me holding the fort as a team.

What keeps you going at work?

The following group of people keep me going: My team of officers who always believe in me; My management, both past and present, whom I have the deepest respect, and who are supportive of my work delivery; and most importantly; My wife and family for understanding my nature of work and for being there for me.



★ **RO2 Ng Kia Yi**
Staff Officer
Operations Planning & Readiness Branch
Operations Division

What was the project that you were involved?

The project involved working with SPF K-9 Unit to streamline, optimise and enhance the K-9 deployment for SPS operations.

How do you feel about achieving the C/SPS award?

I am grateful to my supervisors and peers for guiding me along in this journey and am honoured to be nominated for the C/SPS award.

What keeps you going at work?

Knowing that the efforts on our part, no matter how small, will contribute to the bigger picture, and mission of SPS motivates me to do my best and to keep going.

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

RECIPIENT OF THE C/SPS AWARDS 2020 (TEAM)

Facilitation of community projects involving inmates from institution A4

By: Cluster A Management and Institution A4 Officers



What was the project about (elaborate on obstacles as well as successes)?

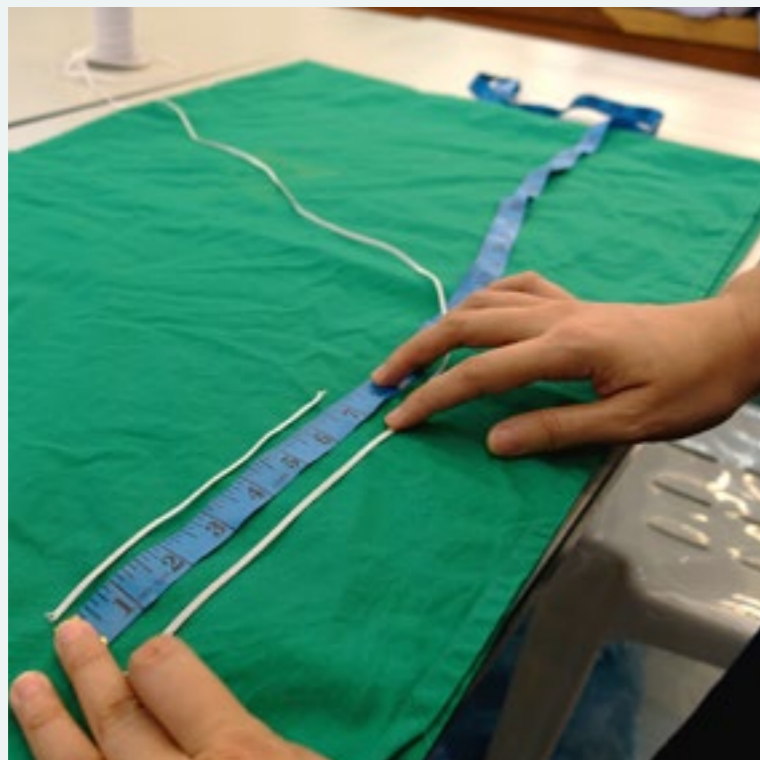
The project was a joint effort between staff and inmates to show solidarity with others in Singapore in the fight against COVID-19. Some of our women inmates stepped forward to ask how they could show appreciation to the healthcare frontline workers and other inmates stepped up to volunteer to help groups of people in Singapore to keep safe from COVID-19 through the making of masks for migrant workers and/or care kits for needy families and children for incarcerated inmates. It was a meaningful experience not only for the officers who facilitated it, but also to the inmates who felt that they were doing their part in the fight against COVID-19 in Singapore, even though they are in the prison.

How does your team feel about achieving the C/SPS award?

Our greatest satisfaction from this project was from seeing how we were bolstering the nation's efforts to overcome COVID-19, and in helping the inmates see that they could also do their part in helping others despite being incarcerated. The award is a bonus to recognise our efforts and we are grateful for it.

What keeps your team going at work?

Like other fellow Captains of Lives in the service, what drives us at work is to see that we continue to make a difference in the lives of those around us. Particularly for us managing women inmates, we hope to also empower them to be independent individuals who can fulfil their responsibilities in their families and at their workplaces.



A4 inmates were involved with a team of volunteers sewing masks for the migrant workers community

- 02 Editor's Note
- 03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime
- 06 What's the Buzz?
- 08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C
- 09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC
- 10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award
- 12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

HISTORY OF DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRES IN SINGAPORE

Reported by

Prison News Sub-Editor Muhammad Sadiq Bin Sa'ad
and Prison News Reporter Huzaifah Bin Mustafa

▶ OPIUM TREATMENT CENTRE

The origins of the Drug Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs) in Singapore can be traced to the Opium Treatment Centre (OTC) at St. John's Island that was established in 1955 to deal with opium addicts.

During those early days, the Prisons Department worked with the Medical Department to supervise the treatment of the addicts at the OTC. Treatment was divided into three phases.

1st Phase: Withdrawal phase in the prison hospital.

2nd Phase: Rehabilitation and re-education at St. John's OTC.

3rd Phase: Regular check-ups and visits by the prison staff outside of the OTC. Follow-up could last for the rest of the addict's life.

Two other OTCs were also set up on mainland Singapore in Outram Prison; one was at the hospital ward, and the other in the women prisoners' wing.

▶ FUN FACT

St John's PTC comprised twelve huts. Six huts were used for carpenters' workshop, tailors' workshop and laundry, rattan workshop, hospital, office and store, and attendants' barracks. The other six huts were used for accommodation, with a maximum capacity for 40 beds in each hut.



The tailors' workshops at St John's OTC



Accommodation at St John's OTC

Photo credits:
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore

DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRES

By the early 1970s, the number of opium addicts was dwindling but a new group of drug users became addicted to heroin. Heroin addiction was to emerge as one of the biggest drug scourges in Singapore in the 1970s.

The government addressed the issue by stepping up efforts in detaining large numbers of drug addicts through operations such as Operation Ferret in 1977. With the large numbers of drug abusers being detained by the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB), there was an urgent need to quickly establish drug rehabilitation centres (DRCs) to meet the rising needs.

The St John's OTC was renamed St John's DRC in 1973 and took in heroin addicts and abusers. The Centre closed in 1976, when the addicts were transferred to the other DRCs on the mainland.

In 1977, Prisons Department developed five DRCs: Jalan Awan Centre, Selarang Park Centre, Khalsa Crescent Centre, Telok Paku Centre and one wing of the Orchid Lodge Female Prison. Telok Paku, Selarang Park, Jalan Awan and Sembawang were converted from former naval or army barracks and residential quarters, and were set up in succession. Subsequently, the Rose Lodge facility was also set up to serve female drug addicts.



The façade of Rose Lodge or Female Prison

FUN FACT

Rose Lodge was not a purpose-built prison but converted from a prison officers' clubhouse. It housed female addicts as well as all other categories of female prisoners. In 1994, the female prisoners from Rose Lodge were moved to the purpose-built Changi Women's Prison/DRC, which was designed to house 600 inmates.

From 1995, all drug addicts were first sent to Sembawang DRC (SD) for medical observation during their drug withdrawal and recuperation after their arrest.

After recuperation, they were transferred to other institutions according to their records. First and second time DRC inmates were sent to the Selarang Park DRC, third time DRC inmates to Khalsa Crescent DRC, fourth time DRC inmates remained at Sembawang, and those with more than five DRC admission records were sent to Jalan Awan DRC.



The multi-purpose court of Sembawang DRC

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore



First and second time DRC inmates were sent to the Selarang Park DRC



Third time DRC inmates were transferred to Khalsa Crescent DRC



Those with more than five DRC admission records were sent to Jalan Awan DRC

In 1998, the long-term (LT) imprisonment regime was introduced for recalcitrant drug abusers. Abusers arrested for the third time or more would face the LT regime. This led to many abusers being sentenced to prison instead of DRC, resulting in a drop in the DRC population.

Subsequently, several of the DRCs such as Khalsa Crescent and Lloyd Leas Centre were converted into Day Release Camps. These camps catered to inmates in the day release scheme that helped drug abusers readjust to society and secure jobs.



Lloyd Leas Centre was one of the DRCs that was converted into a Work Release Camp

By 2009, the last remaining DRC, which was Selarang Park DRC, was shut down and Institution B5 took over its functions.

The DRC and LT imprisonment regimes had kept the drug situation in Singapore under control over the last 20 years. With enhancements to the DRC regime and rehabilitation programmes, the rehabilitation of pure drug repeat abusers can take place in a DRC regime, with enhanced supervision and support when they are out in the community. As such, the Misuse of Drugs Act was amended in 2019 to allow repeat drug abusers without other concurrent offences to undergo treatment and rehabilitation in a DRC. Drug abusers who commit other criminal offences and harm society will continue to be dealt with strictly, and will be liable for imprisonment and caning, including the LT imprisonment regime. To better segregate and rehabilitate the DRC inmates of different risks, DRC first and second timers will be housed in the DRC in the newly opened Selarang Park Complex, and repeat drug offenders will continue to be housed in the Changi Prison Complex.

Read our main feature to learn more about what the current DRC regime is like!

02 Editor's Note

03 Main Feature
Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) Regime

06 What's the Buzz?

08 Conversation with...
Commander, Cluster C

09 A Day in the Shoes of...
A Personal Supervisor and Personal Supervisor (Casework) in a DRC

10 Our Captains of Lives
Recipients of the Commissioners' Award

12 #Throwback
History of DRCs in Singapore



WE GOT VACCINATED!

With the roll-out of the vaccinations in Singapore, we have vaccinated our frontline Captains of Lives, further reducing the threat of bringing the virus into our highly dense and closed environment.



Mr See Hoe Kiat,
Deputy Director
(Operations
Management)
Operations Division

“Over the last 12 months, our officers and partners had worked very hard to keep COVID-19 out of SPS. I am really glad that the COVID-19 vaccine is now available to us, as it will provide us with another layer of protection.”



Mr Benjamin Chia
Commander
Cluster B

“Last year around this period, we were gearing up for the implementation of cohort segregation and other measures. We did not know the virus and what it could wreck. It certainly caught us by surprise. The magnitude of its impact was unparalleled.

One year on, we have vaccines on hand and made accessible to us. I am a lot more hopeful now and know that vaccination is critical in our defence against the virus outbreak. I need to do what is needed like before to keep SG and SPS safe.”



Mdm Foo Ee Lin
Director
Strategic Planning
Division and Staff
Development Division

“I know it is the best defence for our country — not just to protect myself, but to protect also the people I care about, those I work with every day, and the many unknown others I encounter daily.

Are there no fears? Yes, there are. But just like the many choices I make in my life, I weigh my options, make a decision and take responsibility for it.”



Mr Tan Eng Keong
Commander
Cluster C

“I know my immunity and resistance to the virus will contribute to the total defence against the spread of the virus to inmates, my colleagues, and loved ones.”

