

Pioneers in promoting sustainable and clean energy in Singapore



Mr Khew says that the LEAD programme has been quite successful in improving the capabilities of local enterprises

PROMOTING energy efficiency and developing sustainable and clean energy is a national priority for Singapore. Spearheading this effort is the Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore (SEAS). Although it is a relatively young (trade associations and chambers) TAC, SEAS has undertaken bold initiatives to drive the sustainable energy industry forward with funding support from the LEAD programme.

“We were pioneers in this sector, and engagement with government from the start through LEAD was very important,” says Edwin Khew, chairman of SEAS.

“We have released a major White Paper on how we can accelerate the adoption of renewable energy in Singapore,

working together with key industry experts and seeking their insights on the renewable energy landscape in Singapore. They shared the barriers to renewable energy adoption and gave suggestions on how to accelerate renewable energy adoption,” he adds. The White Paper explains how renewable energy can make up to 7 per cent of Singapore’s total energy mix by 2025.

Launched in July 2006, SEAS represents the interest of organisations and individuals from all segments of the alternative energy sector. The association provides a common platform for companies in the clean energy, energy efficiency, carbon trading, clean development mechanism projects sectors and financial institutions to

meet, collaborate and undertake viable projects together.

Among the initiatives by SEAS is the SME Energy Efficiency Initiative. The association was appointed to lead this initiative to help SMEs improve their energy efficiency by helping them to assess, monitor and improve energy performance. The goal is to help 300 SMEs achieve at least 10 per cent savings in energy costs over the next three years.

So far, the initiative has been challenging as many SMEs are unsure how to start. But SEAS is looking at fine-tuning the programme to be more SME-friendly. It is partnering UK-based Carbon Trust, which has been running a similar programme for British SMEs for many years. The association hopes to make the initiative easier to embark on and ensure that SMEs understand how they can benefit and sustain their energy savings and efficiency.

“Another area which is unique to SEAS is the strong enterprise development and market development for our members, as well as being a training centre for sustainable energy topics,” says Mr Khew.

Using the LEAD grant, SEAS has been organising training courses for member companies to help them enhance their capabilities in technology innovation and product development. It also provides consultancy and support services to help nurture and incubate clean energy startups. This helps in the growth of local sustainable energy technology innovation and adoption.

To help local players stay on top of the latest developments and know-how in the fast-moving clean energy industry, SEAS works with companies to identify training needs. Feedback from the training needs analysis is then used to design relevant courses for the clean energy companies to upgrade and maintain their technical proficiencies to more effectively cater to the growing market and evolving technology capabilities.

SEAS specialises in running training courses and conferences only in the area of sustainable energy, ie energy efficiency and management, renewable energy, carbon trading as well as funding and financing of clean energy projects. SEAS aims to be the one-stop, information and training provider in the area of sustainable energy.

“We have, as our trainers and lecturers, not only highly qualified academic professionals but also industry specialists and professionals who are successful and sought after practitioners in the area of sustainable energy. They have successfully executed many energy projects with varying complexities and demands both locally and regionally,” says Mr Khew.

SEAS has developed more than 60 training courses to date and has trained about 7,000 professionals.

Overseas expansion is another focus of SEAS. To stimulate further growth for sustainable energy companies in Singapore, it has undertaken a series of internationalisation activities. These include formalising partnerships with regional TACs and TACs in target markets, participating in key overseas tradeshows with local companies and facilitating the signing of deals by local companies.

To help members grow their business, SEAS takes them on overseas business and trade missions, with support from LEAD. Last year, its members reported S\$2.7 million in projected sales from trade missions that it organised. Twelve member companies participated in two trade shows in 2014 – the inaugural Myanmar Green Energy Summit and the Indonesia Building+Solar Expo.

“The LEAD programme has been quite successful in improving the capabilities of local enterprises and the industry as a whole. Developing skilled professionals is important for the growth of an industry and the LEAD programme has enabled us to progress on that front as the sustainable energy industry has grown rapidly since SEAS was established in 2006,” says Mr Khew.