

Editorial

In this first issue of *POINTER* for 2013, the main theme of the articles lined up for you is on people, our most important asset, and their development in the SAF. Four of these articles discuss the importance of nurturing and engaging the people to ensure a competent and committed workforce in the SAF, and stress the role of the leaders in this endeavor. In the words of our new Chief of Defence Force, MG Ng Chee Meng at the Chief of Defence Force Change of Command Parade held on 27 March 2013, "Our Commanders and senior enlisted leaders will continue to own People Development for the people they lead. In so doing, we will strengthen our foundation for mission success for many years to come."

In the article *Understanding the Millennial Generation: Developing a More Effective Workforce for the Future SAF*, MAJ Fu Wei'en Eugene and CPT Nah Jinping point out that current enlistees, i.e. Generation Y are better educated, more adaptive and learn faster. They are also more acquainted with social media and technology. Compared to their predecessors, these soldiers' characteristics, requirements and expectations are manifestly different. The authors propose that the leadership can develop them into an effective and committed workforce for the future SAF through proper training and engagement.

The next article, *Inspiring Commitment in the RSN: Insights from Organizational Psychology* by CPT Hou Minzheng, examines the importance of organizational commitment in the people development of the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN). CPT Hou articulates that the adoption and implementation of the RSN Nurturing Philosophy symbolizes the first decisive step that the Navy is taking to systematically nurture and train its people to ensure that they are competent, committed and confident. He highlights that the organizational support given to the serviceman through his supervisor represents recognition of the value and importance of the serviceman to the success of the organization. The serviceman might feel a stronger sense of obligation and responsibility

to reciprocate by improving his performance. CPT Hou concludes that an organization needs to be sincere and genuine to ensure the development and well-being of its personnel.

Revisiting "Putting People First": An Organizational Culture Perspective by CPT Chong Shi Hao discusses how a People-First Culture would give us the ability to handle the challenges ahead, in the midst of economic, cultural and political transformation. According to CPT Chong, each of us has a role to play as subordinate and leader, wherever we may be in the SAF. We need to respect one another as individuals, not merely as human resources or digits in the establishment. A People-First Culture means developing our people through work and using intrinsic motivation to generate results and a sense of purpose.

The fourth article entitled *A Culture-Centric Strategy for Sustaining Change* is by CPT Daxson Yap. In this article, CPT Yap highlights the need for the SAF to focus on understanding its own organizational culture as a first step towards implementing change. He states that if SAF leaders are better able to understand their own units, identify those areas resistant to change and design effective transition plans, it is likely that change will be sustained to the benefit of the organization.

The next two articles, while not about people development or organizational culture, still cover the theme of people—one article delves into the case of conscription in Singapore while the other is an examination of the causes of the Arab Spring and its impact on the rest of the world.

In *The Citizen-Soldier in Modern Democracies: The Case for Conscription in Singapore*, LTC Chan Ching Hao discusses the main forms of military service, the history of the rise of conscription from 18th century revolutionary France to its widespread proliferation during the Second World War (WWII) and the factors for its decline in the years after WWII. He then provides reasons why Singapore's defense needs are still best served by conscription and

concludes with the key factors for the continued success of Singapore's National Service system.

Our final article is by CPT John Samuel and is entitled *Contested Revolutions: The Arab Spring and Its Impact*. Here, CPT Samuel discusses the causes of the Arab Spring—the revolutionary wave of demonstrations, protests and civil wars that occurred in the Arab World in 2011. He further explores how the Arab Spring has shaped the domestic political arena in the Arab states and how the regional power balance and key geostrategic concerns such as the Arab-Israeli conflict have been affected and what are the general implications for international politics.

We would like at this point to bid farewell to two key members of the *POINTER* Editorial Board. As Deputy Chairman of the Board, LTC (NS) David Lee Wei Boon has been a committed member, giving invaluable advice and support these past three years. Thank you, David. We will miss your guidance and many contributions. We would also like to thank Ms Judith d'Silva for her invaluable contributions and wish her all the best. We warmly welcome COL Irvin Lim who will take over as Deputy Chairman of the *POINTER* Editorial Board. A warm welcome also to Ms Deanne Tan Ling Hui, who joins the *POINTER* Editorial Board.

The *POINTER* Editorial Team