

BCA MDD 76.1.1

9 Oct 2013

Dr Russell Heng Hiang Khng  
President  
TWC2, Transient Workers Count Too  
5001 Beach Road, #09-86  
Golden Mile Complex  
Singapore 199588

Email: [TAN\\_LAY\\_TWAN@BCA.GOV.SG](mailto:TAN_LAY_TWAN@BCA.GOV.SG)  
DID: 6 2489 813

**RE: ARTICLE "CENTRES IN BANGLADESH HAVE BECOME MONEY MINTING MACHINES"**

Dear Sirs,

- 1 We refer to the article "Centres in Bangladesh Have Become Money Minting Machines" posted on the TWC2 website at <http://twc2.org.sg/2013/09/22/>
- 2 We share your concerns on the well being of construction workers. For the built-environment sector to have a sustained pool of workers, the well being of the workers need to be taken care of.
- 3 As explained in our recent briefing to TWC2 on 4 Apr 2013, it is essential that every construction worker acquire the relevant trade skills and safety knowledge to work in the construction industry. This is essential to safeguard the health and safety of the workers, safety of buildings and infrastructure, and also public safety.
- 4 Over the last few years, BCA has expanded the range of construction trades offered by the appointed Overseas Testing Centres (OTCs) from 7 to 29 trades. This facilitates the training and skill certification of workers in relevant trades so that they would be deployed to work on construction sites in Singapore. In the latest 2013 survey conducted by BCA, more than 70% of the relatively new construction workers were being deployed by employers in the directly relevant and related trades they were trained in. As shared with you on 4 Apr 2013, construction workers who are deployed in the trade they were trained in draw higher wages.
- 5 We note that the malpractices quoted in the article in the TWC2 website occur in the source countries. BCA has been having conversations with the Bangladesh Ministry of Expatriates and Welfare Employment (MOEWE) and the Bangladeshi Embassy in Singapore on related matters. We understand that the local authorities are looking into this.
- 6 Referring to the online article, do allow us to correct the following factual inaccuracies:-.

S/n	Nature of Text Discrepancy (Errors)	Facts
1	<b>Pg 2 of article</b> "BCA also handles the testing for marine trades "	BCA does not test workers for the marine sector
2	<b>Pg 3 of article</b> "Some unofficial training centres send their trainees to an authorised test centre to take the tests, but other workers report that BCA testers came to their unofficial training centres to test them. This means that BCA is fully aware that although it has only authorised eight centres, the reality is that many more are operating"	BCA only conducts tests at BCA appointed OTCs
3	<b>Pg 3 of article</b> "What is not clear is where the \$800 charge originates from. It could be a fee levied by BCA to cover the costs of maintaining their officials in Bangladesh and expenses related to testing. Or it could be an unofficial price set by the authorised testing centres in order to profit from"	BCA only charges test fees and the test fees are capped at \$730.

7 Going forward, we would like to share that we are also encouraging the employers to retain and upgrade their better skilled and experienced workers, so that they can contribute to the industry and draw better pay.

8 Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



TAN LAY TWAN  
DIRECTOR  
MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

cc:

Tan Yong Kiang  
Senior Assistant Director  
Corporate Communications Department. Ministry of Manpower

Jason Teoh  
Manager  
Foreign Workforce Policy Department, Ministry of Manpower