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MAY DAY

AWARDS

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PARTNER OF LABOUR MOVEMENT

Lee Yem Choo

Group Chief Human Resource Officer
SMRT Corporation Ltd

Nominated by the National Transport Workers' Union.

An outstanding leader, Lee Yem Choo is dedicated to fostering strong labour-management relations at SMRT. In 2022, when inflation and rising living costs posed significant challenges for many workers, the union engaged in extensive negotiations with SMRT for a one-off wage adjustment and an increase in the salary range for all bargainable staff. Sister Yem Choo played a crucial role in these discussions, providing clear and thoughtful explanations of the company's position while demonstrating deep empathy for workers' concerns. As a result of her efforts, the wage increase implemented was fair and balanced, supported by both the company and the union.

When SMRT was awarded the Jurong West bus package in 2023, she took proactive steps to ensure parity in the terms and conditions for both existing and new staff. She championed policies that enhanced worker welfare, including improvements to retirement policies, annual leave entitlements, and allowances.

Sister Yem Choo has consistently advocated for open communication with the National Transport Workers' Union (NTWU), demonstrating a genuine willingness to listen to feedback and concerns from union representatives. She engages in dialogue with a spirit of cooperation, ensuring that the union is informed and included in discussions when necessary.

Since joining SMRT in 2018, Sister Yem Choo's leadership has been characterised by her commitment to doing more for workers. She consistently strives to balance the needs of the company with those of its employees, promoting long-term sustainability and mutual benefit. When needed, she takes the initiative to engage senior management to adjust in response to union feedback, showcasing her dedication to improving workers' lives and her proactive approach to issue resolution.

Sister Yem Choo also championed the "LEAP Programme," which provides sponsorship for deserving SMRT employees to further their education, take on greater responsibilities, and enhance their wages and career prospects. Additionally, she partnered with the NTUC to utilise the NETF Collaborative Fund (NCF) to upskill and reskill workers, ensuring their skills remain relevant in a changing workforce. Approximately 2,000 workers from the bus and train sectors will benefit from this training.

Furthermore, Sister Yem Choo actively supported the formation of the Company Training Committee (CTC) between NTWU and SMRT Corporation. Since its establishment, SMRT has launched several working groups to identify suitable training for both maintenance and operational employees as part of the rail workforce development manpower plan. She is currently working to identify suitable CTC projects with SMRT, facilitating, coordinating, and applying for grants.