



### **Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal undergoing \$3 million renovation**

*Commercially Important Passenger services and sophisticated RFID boarding passes to be introduced*

Singapore, 2 Aug 2006 - The 11-year-old Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal (TMFT) is undergoing a renovation which will give it a full facelift and launch new Commercially Important Passenger (CIP) services.

The completion of works before Christmas will also mark the simultaneous launch of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) check-in services at both the TMFT and at Singapore Cruise Centre at HarbourFront Centre. It will be the first time that RFID boarding passes will be used in Asia.

The \$3 million refurbishment will create a bigger and grander concourse and create an aesthetic façade with more prominent and specially-designed passenger service counters. With the baggage handling area and administration offices being pushed further back, the concourse will be deepened by 15m.

Departing and arriving passengers will both share the concourse. Previously, arriving passengers were segregated from the concourse and came via a separate arrival gate. With the upgrading, these passengers will be routed through the concourse. Since there is a heavier flow of departing passengers in the morning and of arriving passengers in the evening, this will mean more efficient utilisation of the concourse. The old arrival gate will be closed down.

Upgrading will also realign passenger service counters to the front of the concourse, with offices providing back-room services, such as administrative offices, being moved to the back.

Said Mr Cheong Teow Cheng, President of SCC: "Check-in and other customer service counters will be re-aligned to have better visibility and to bring about an attractive open façade. At the same time, we will create a Commercially Important Passenger lounge for premium passengers."

The facelift will also bring new flooring and wall features, refurbished men's and women's toilets and a nappy-changing facility. The cafeteria facing the sea will be renovated and limousine and meeting services will be provided.

Prominent multi-lingual signs in English, Malay, Chinese, Korean and Japanese will be put up at selected locations.

The TMFT was built in 1995 at a cost of \$28.6 million. The first ferry came by on 26 August 1995. The terminal was officially opened on 10 November 1995.

Mr Cheong said: "The terminal has not been renovated since 1995 and has reached its optimum level of an average of 2 million passengers a year.

"In addition, the 911 incident in 2001 has resulted in space being taken up for more security measures and equipment such as additional lanes, X-ray machines and metal detectors. It has also meant extra deployment of manpower. As a result, passenger and baggage flows have been affected to a certain extent.

"Furthermore, we are introducing the RFID technology simultaneously at the Regional Ferry Terminal at HarbourFront and TMFT."

In accordance with the Singapore Cruise Centre's plans, the HarbourFront Passenger Terminal was upgraded first last year at a cost of \$5m, with TMFT following suit now.

The renovation started on 3 July 2006 and is being done in phases. Operations will not be

affected. Passengers will encounter some inconvenience but it will be kept to a minimum, Mr Cheong said.

#### Services for Commercially Important Passengers

A special package of services will be introduced for passengers who require special attention.

- The CIP will be met at the kerbside drop-off point.
- A bell-boy will take care of his/her luggage
- The passenger is ushered into a special lounge while terminal staff undertake his/her check-in
- The passenger will get seat allocation
- A buggy will transport the passenger along the 120-metre jetty to the ferry

CIPs' arrangements will be administered by travel agents. The respective resorts will package the services for their special customers.

Walk-in customers can request for such services. They will be provided a range of services that they can take at a price of \$25-\$50, depending on the services they select. The ultimate will be the full range offered to CIPs.

#### RFID services

RFID technology will be used for boarding passes to be used both at the TMFT and the SCC. This will mark the debut of such passes in ferry and cruise terminals in Asia.

The new sophisticated RFID-enabled gates will feature messages on turnstile screens welcoming passengers. The use of RFID boarding passes will also enable accurate tracking of passengers who enter the boarding area. Tapping these passes onto the turnstile will automatically convey the information to the central computer that the passenger has entered the boarding area. At another reader next to the ferry, tapping the passes will notify the operations staff when every passenger is aboard so the ferry can leave on time. These boarding passes can be re-used 500 times.

We will also introduce strict check-in timings similar to that practiced at our Changi Airport. Passengers will need to check-in early like 60 minutes to departure, check-in will close 40 minutes to departure and gate will close 10 minutes to departure.

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