

prisonnews

CAPTAINS OF LIVES
REHAB • RENEW • RESTART

JUNE 2025 ISSUE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the June 2025 issue of Prison News!

We start off this issue with a recap of key statistics and rehabilitation and reintegration efforts shared at the SPS and YRSG Annual Statistics Release 2024, highlighting SPS and YRSG's commitment to create a safer throughcare ecosystem for inmates and ex-offenders to promote long-term desistance.

Embracing new technology, continuous innovation and enhancing our officers' capabilities are key to ensuring our Captains of Lives are future-fit and SPS is ever ready to manage changes in the correctional landscape. We share more about how Electronic Monitoring Services 2.0, award-winning innovative projects by our officers and the Fitness Advocate Course have enhanced community supervision, improved existing work processes and enhanced the safety and operational efficiency of our prisons.

Last but definitely not the least, we will also be providing readers with a glimpse into some behind-the-scenes moments of our officers involved in the heartwarming Mediacorp drama *Another Wok of Life* and the Yellow Ribbon Project's student engagement efforts! It is crucial that the community provides inmates and ex-offenders with opportunities that build up their social and economic capital, thereby promoting more seamless reintegration into society.

I hope this issue provides you with a better understanding of SPS's continuous efforts to support inmates and ex-offenders. Wishing everyone a pleasant reading experience!

ASP1 Jolene Ngo
Editor, Prison News



**SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE**

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SPS and YRSG Annual Statistics Release 2024

SPS and YRSG Annual Statistics Release 2024

The Singapore Prison Service (SPS) and Yellow Ribbon Singapore (YRSG) Annual Statistics Release 2024 was held on 11 February 2025. Let’s review some of the key points shared by the panelists and learn more about the efforts SPS, YRSG and our community partners will undertake to continue supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates and ex-offenders!



Reported by ASP1 Jolene Ngo



The panelists consisted of (from left to right) MX10 Lau Kuan Mei (Deputy Director, Correctional Rehabilitation Services, Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division), AC Karen Lee (Director, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Division), DAC Soh Yen Li (Director, Corporate Communications and Service Division), SUPT1A Mohamed Nizaar Bin Md Ibrahim (Senior Assistant Director, Community Corrections, Halfway House/Home Detention) and Mr Leslie Jin (Deputy Director, Skills@YR).

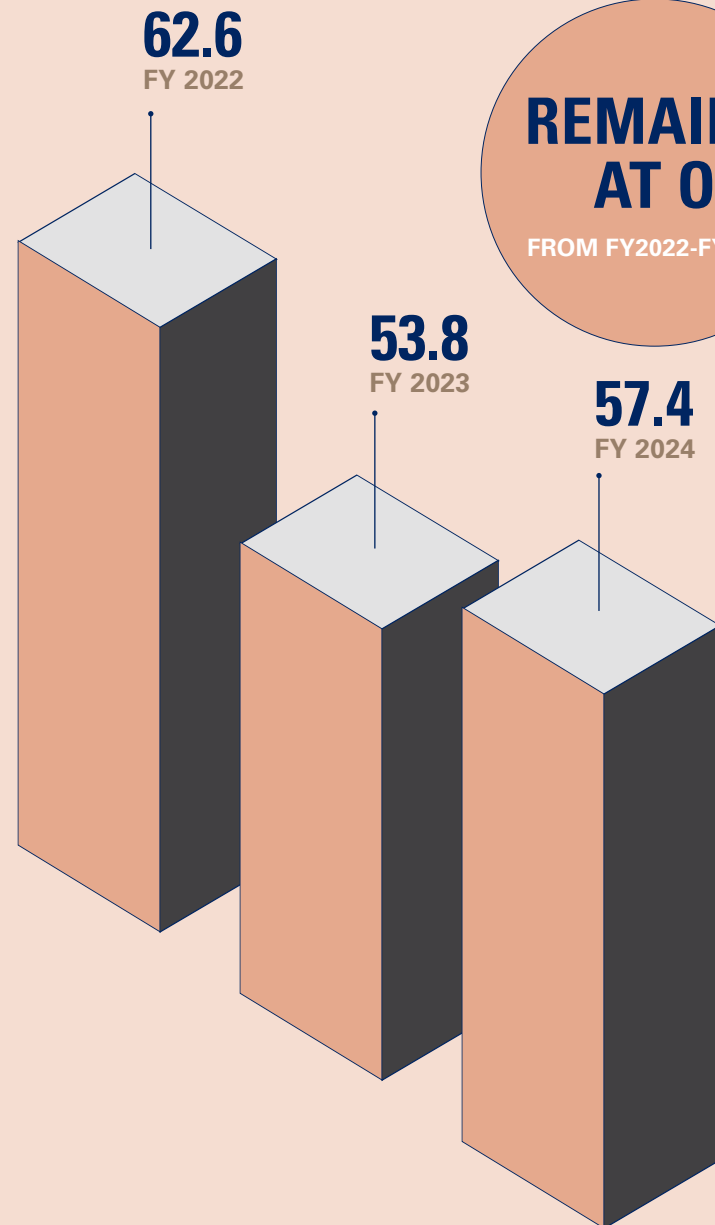
Prisons Remained Safe and Secure

Good order and discipline are key to creating a safe environment for the rehabilitation of inmates. SPS will continue to implement strategies like the use of restorative practices, targeted anti-violence interventions for inmates with higher violence risks and use of video analytics to detect abnormal or aggressive behaviour in inmates to better prevent and respond to assaults in our prisons.

PRISONS REMAINED SAFE AND SECURE

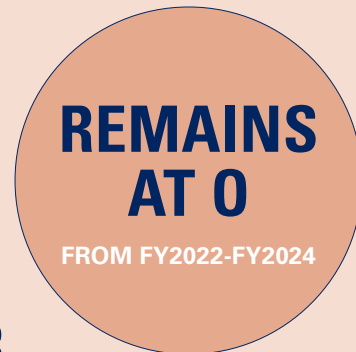
ASSAULT RATE

Per 10,000 Inmate Population



ESCAPE RATE

Per 10,000 Inmate Population



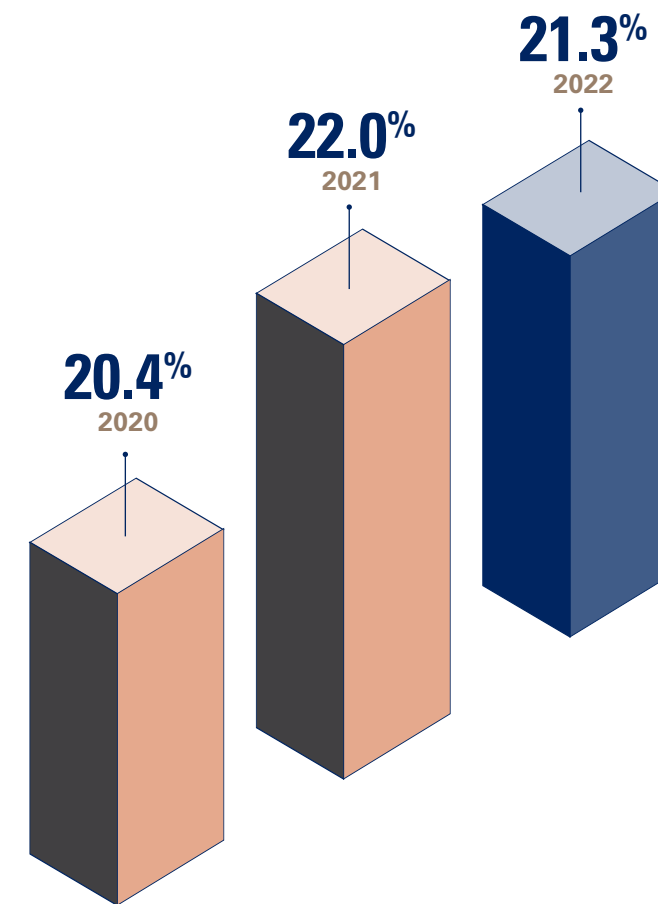
Low and Stable Two-Year Recidivism Rate, Improving Five-Year Recidivism Rate

The two-year recidivism rate remained low and stable at 21.3% for the 2022 release cohort and there was an improvement in the five-year recidivism rate. The improvement in the five-year recidivism rate shows that more ex-offenders are attaining prolonged desistance from crime and is a testament to the abundant reintegration efforts by SPS, YRSG and our community partners.

LOW AND STABLE TWO-YEAR OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATE

OVERALL

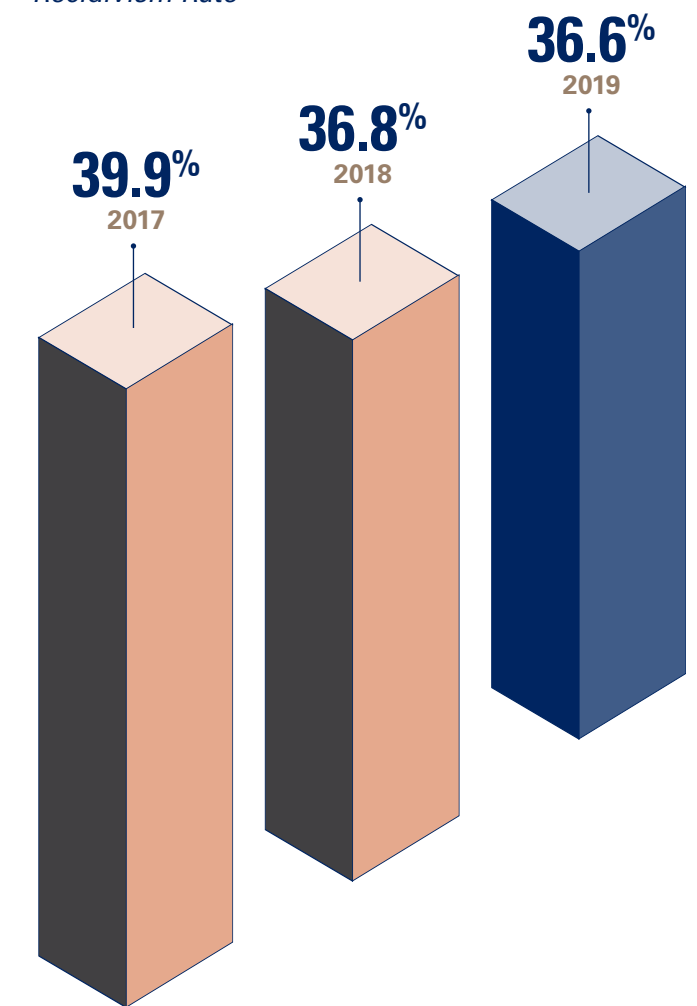
Recidivism Rate



DECREASE IN FIVE-YEAR OVERALL RECIDIVISM RATE

OVERALL

Recidivism Rate



Enhancing the Drug Rehabilitation Regime

Although the five-year recidivism rate of inmates in the Drug Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs) had decreased, the two-year recidivism rate had increased.

To enhance the effectiveness of the psychology-based programmes delivered to repeat drug abusers and their self-efficacy for drug abstinence, SPS will invite ex-drug abusers to share their strategies for successful recovery. SPS will also engage community partners and addiction recovery organisations like the Industrial and Co-operative Society Limited (ISCOS) and Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) to make their services better known and accessible to repeat drug abusers before their release and during the Community-Based Programme (CBP) phase.

Set up in September 2024, the S2 Reintegration Hub provides a full suite of re-entry programmes, career-related initiatives and supplementary programmes to prepare inmates, including drug inmates for CBP. SPS will continue to leverage the Reintegration Hub to strengthen SPS's partnerships with external stakeholders to address inmates' re-entry needs and enhance the throughcare support provided to inmates.

Upskilling Volunteers and Community Partners to Enhance Community Mobilisation

SPS has been actively engaging and increasing the number of volunteers and community partners. In 2024, SPS rolled out the new Igniting and Maximising Partners' Agility for Correctional Transformation (IMPACT) tiered competency framework to offer volunteers and community partners mandatory, developmental and advanced courses to progressively deepen their competencies in working with inmates, ex-offenders and their families. IMPACT will provide approximately 4500 training spaces to our volunteers and community partners, providing them with greater accessibility to development opportunities.



SPS conducted a sharing on the new IMPACT framework to our volunteers!



At the S2 Reintegration Hub, inmates are empowered to take charge of their reintegration with support from SPS officers and community partners.

Maximising Employability and Career Progression Opportunities for Inmates

YRSG supports inmates and ex-offenders in building up their economic capital and foster more resilient career pathways through skills training, career placement and career retention. The Train and Place (TAP) & Grow initiative resulted in the implementation of longer and more comprehensive training programmes for inmates and introduced new courses in food services and retail sectors to inmates.

Promoting Long-Term Desistance

SPS and YRSG will continue to implement Corrections 2030 strategies to create a safer throughcare ecosystem for inmates and ex-offenders and promote greater desistance in the long-term.

Let us hear from an SPS officer and community partners on how they support the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates and ex-offenders!



DSP2 Ahmad Sophan Basir Ahmad

Officer-in-Charge of Correctional Unit (Incare), Institution S2

DSP2 Sophan and his team oversees the pre-release regime and re-entry programmes delivered to inmates at Institution S2.

DSP2 Ahmad Sophan Basir Ahmad leads a team of Correctional Unit Officers (CUOs) to ensure the secure custody of and facilitate pre-release programmes for inmates at Institution S2. His invaluable experience as a Manager in the Community Corrections Command (COMC) has helped prepare him for his current role where he supports the inmates in their re-entry preparation, before their emplacement on Community-Based Programmes (CBP).

The S2 officers conduct intake briefings at the incare institutions monthly, to connect with and brief incoming

inmates on what to expect in S2. After inmates are transferred to S2, SPS Reintegration Officers, Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists and community partners conduct engagement sessions with inmates, ahead of their CBP emplacement, which greatly enable and empower them to start taking concrete steps for successful re-entry.

"S2 Reintegration Hub seeks to synergise reintegration efforts across SPS entities and external key stakeholders like halfway houses and case management partners to better triage and support inmates in addressing

their re-entry needs and improve the throughcare support provided to them," DSP2 Sophan said. "A full suite of Re-entry Preparation Programmes are provided to inmates at S2. Some examples of the programmes are the 12-steps programme by Christian Counselling Services and the Hijrah Programme by FITRAH, which aim to introduce and set in place prosocial networks that are available to inmates upon their release."

Supplementary programmes are also provided to inmates in addition to the Re-entry Preparation programmes. "One of the supplementary programmes run by volunteers is the Pastel Nagomi Art classes, an initiative by Groundup Art and Grow Collective SG, in partnership with Temasek Foundation's OSCAR Fund. Beyond art therapy incare, inmates may opt to pursue this interest after their release, to build prosocial networks and strengthen social capital," DSP2 Sophan shared.



Inmates can choose to keep their Pastel Nagomi artworks as motivation or gift it to their loved ones upon release.

Words of Encouragement for Inmates and Ex-offenders

For inmates and ex-offenders embarking on their rehabilitation and reintegration journey, DSP2 Sophan offers the following words of encouragement: "There's always good news. You are the master of what you want to do next."



Mr Shawn Lim

Head, HCSA Highpoint Halfway House

Shawn is dedicated to supporting ex-offenders in their reintegration journey!

Shawn was involved with drug use and gangs in his early teenage years, during the time when he was trying to find his own identity in life. He was emplaced on a halfway house programme during the tail end of his third sentence in 1999 and successfully completed the programme. Shawn has since continued to stay on in the halfway house to give back.

Today, Shawn holds a Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Arts in Counselling and leads the dedicated team at the HCSA Highpoint Halfway House to support ex-offenders in their recovery journey, before they are reunited with their families. "Ex-offenders tend to face challenges in finding stable employment, navigating social stigma, addressing life issues and rebuilding their relationships with family and the community," Shawn shared. "Halfway houses support ex-offenders by providing them with a safe and structured living environment, job training programmes, life skills development programmes, counselling services and information and referral services. Connecting ex-offenders to community resources helps them overcome hurdles and successfully reintegrate into society."

Words of Encouragement for Inmates and Ex-offenders

Shawn encourages inmates and ex-offenders to try a new approach in life after being released from prison. "Albert Einstein said: *Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results*," Shawn said. "New ways of doing things will have different results!"

Shawn believes that change is possible, but it takes time and effort. "Someone whom I looked up to in my life journey quoted this: *The heart of change is the change of heart*. Your heart must have the desire to change, then life will start to make sense to you," Shawn shared.



Nasirah's work enables her to support persons recovering from drug addiction and their families!

Ms Nasirah Nasir

Deputy Head of Operations,
SANA Step-Up Centres

SANA Step-Up Centres are community walk-in facilities that provide reintegration support for individuals recovering from drug addiction.

Before joining the Step-Up Centres, Nasirah was an Aftercare Case Manager and worked closely with supervisees released from the DRC. "I was able to journey alongside them through their struggles and successes during their recovery," Nasirah shared. "I have always been inspired by the resilience of persons-in-recovery as they face the challenges of overcoming drug use and work towards becoming better versions of themselves." Nasirah's work enables her to support individuals in regaining their independence, rebuilding relationships, and finding purpose and stability in their lives.

At SANA, Nasirah and her team conduct casework and counselling for persons in recovery and their families, facilitate recovery support groups and run prosocial interest groups like sports, art and music programmes. "SANA upholds the importance of providing a safe space for persons-

in-recovery and their families or loved ones to interact and rebuild their relationships," Nasirah explained. "Our support and prosocial interest groups provide opportunities for persons-in-recovery to learn to express their thoughts and emotions in a healthier manner, build up their social support networks and learn from one another in coping with reintegration challenges."

"Drug inmates often face significant social stigma from society, their own families or loved ones. This stigma can result in discrimination and a lack of support, making it harder for them to reintegrate," Nasirah said. "The stigma attached to a history of drug use can cause someone to feel isolated, which can lead to feelings of shame, low self-worth, and even relapse. Rebuilding relationships with their families and the community takes time, patience, and consistent effort, which can be emotionally exhausting for inmates and ex-offenders."

Words of Encouragement for Inmates and Ex-offenders

Clients come to SANA Step-Up Centres seeking help because they feel overwhelmed with the stressors of being emplaced in the community or struggling with triggers, and some of them feel ashamed about reaching out for help.

"Be humble, own your struggles and celebrate small wins," Nasirah says. "It's okay to ask for help and lean on others when you need it. Surround yourself with people who believe in you, whether that's a mentor, a support group, or a loved one. Recovery is about taking small steps – healing and rebuilding your life takes time, and even the smallest acts of self-discipline and self-reflection contribute to meaningful changes. Keep moving forward, no matter how small the step."

Electronic Monitoring Services 2.0

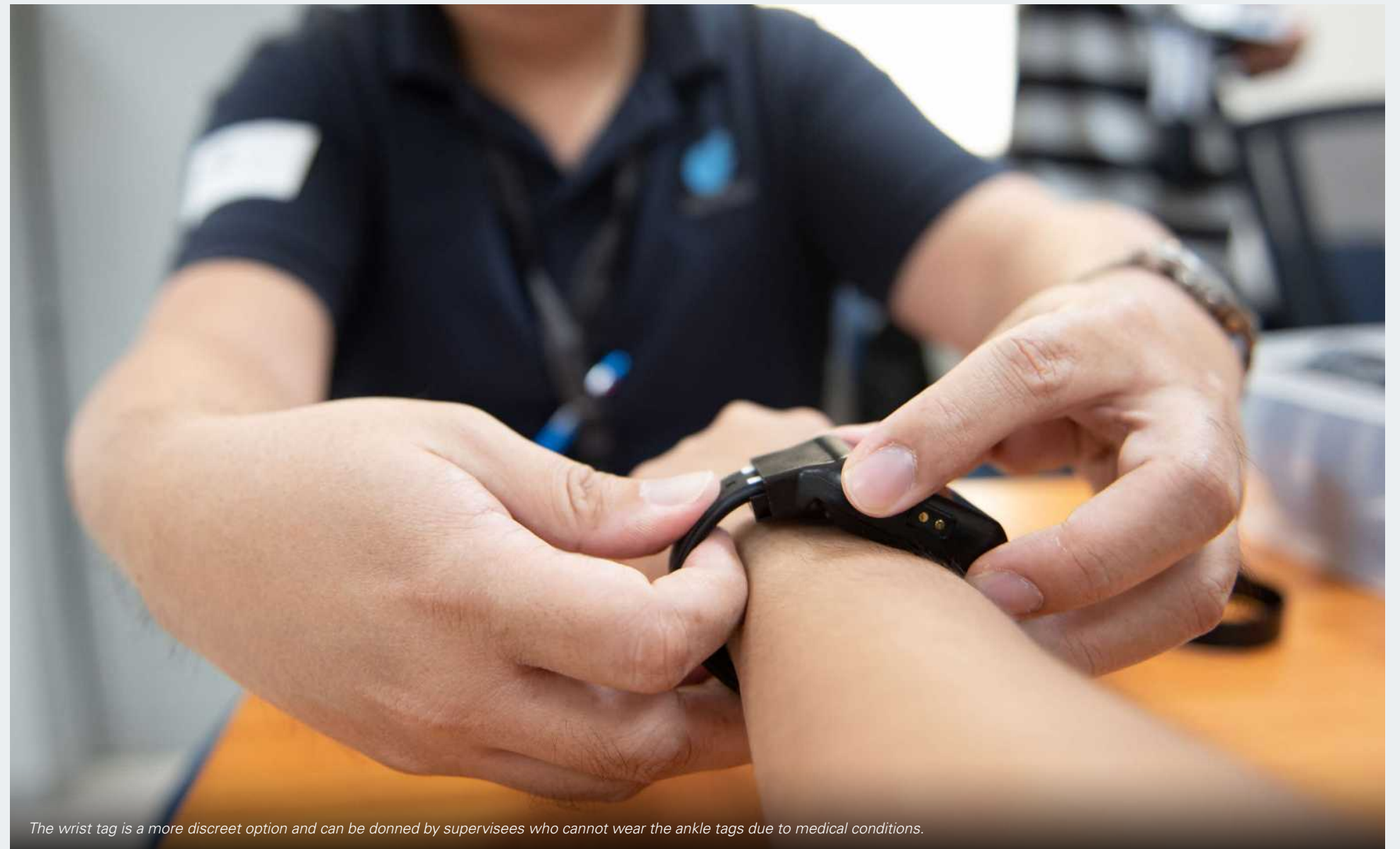
The enhanced Electronic Monitoring Services 2.0 (EMS 2.0) has improved the effectiveness of electronic supervision while offering supervisees more suitable, discreet wrist tags to accommodate their needs and reduce stigmatisation.



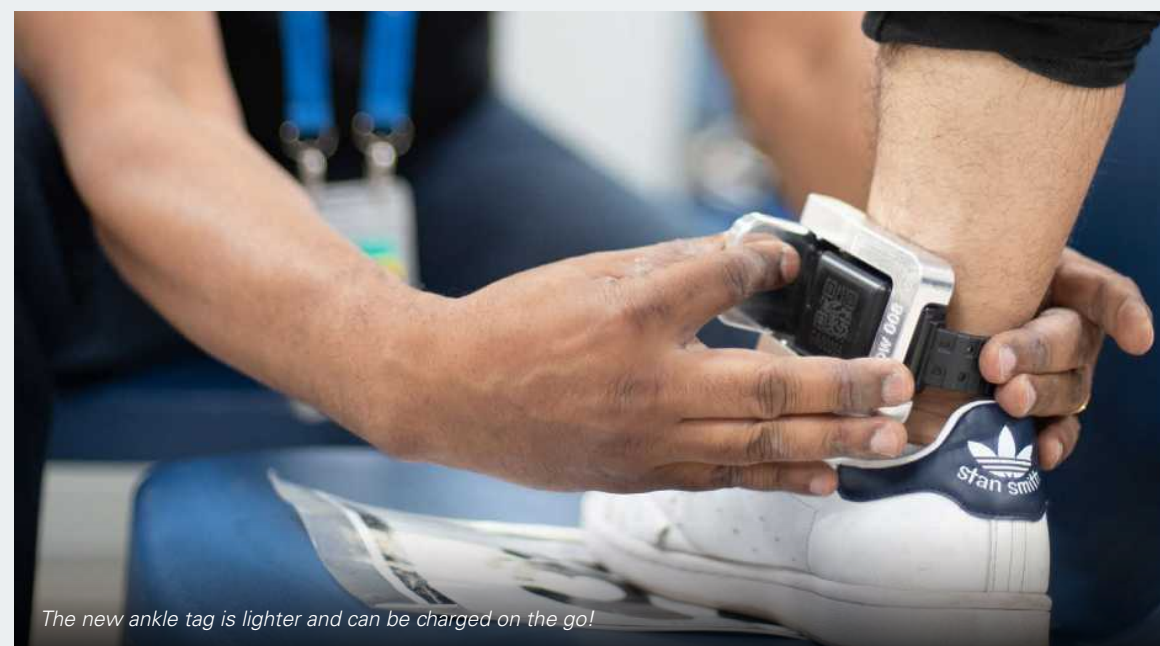
Reported by RO2 Joel Ng

Wrist Tags — an Alternative to Ankle Tags

Supervisees could have medical issues that prevented them from wearing pre-existing ankle tags, and ankle tags could cause discomfort to supervisees who were required to wear safety boots for their work. Over time, the ankle tag had also become a distinct indicator that its user was an inmate and drew unwanted attention. Hence, EMS 2.0 introduced the new wrist tag to support supervisee with medical issues, alleviate discomfort for supervisees who had to wear boots for work and was a more discreet option to reduce the stigma associated with electronic tagging.



The wrist tag is a more discreet option and can be donned by supervisees who cannot wear the ankle tags due to medical conditions.



The new ankle tag is lighter and can be charged on the go!

Increasing Portability of Electronic Tags

The previous ankle tags were bulky and charged through a charger that was directly connected to a power socket, thus supervisees would need to sit next to a power socket while waiting for their tags to be fully charged. EMS 2.0 introduced more compact, lighter ankle tags, and portable charging devices for both ankle and wrist tags. The introduction of portable charging devices enabled supervisees to charge their tags on the go and ensure their tags remained operational throughout the day.

Leveraging Technology for More Effective Supervision

EMS 2.0 also introduced a new Home Monitoring Unit (HMU) – a device that is installed in the homes of supervisees to ensure curfew adherence – and mobile application. The new HMU featured a new biometric function which enabled

supervisees to verify their identity through fingerprint authentication from their homes when required, while the mobile application provided real-time monitoring of incident reports, enabled staff to adjust curfew timings and remotely track supervisees' location and movement trails. Together, the technological enhancements enabled more effective supervision.

Old HMU



New HMU



The new HMU (right) can track both RF and GPS tags and has a more futuristic design than the old HMU (left).



ASP1 Goh participated in the planning and deployment of EMS 2.0!

Reflections by Staff Officer, Community Corrections Policy and Planning Branch, Community Corrections Command, ASP1 Goh Yan Xiu

Developing and operationalising the new system posed some challenges as we needed to ensure all key performance measurements were met for operations to run 24/7, without fail in the community. Like many other new SPS initiatives, EMS 2.0 leveraged technology to enhance supervision capabilities and support the reintegration needs of supervisees.

The mobile application provided greater convenience to staff and enabled them to adjust curfew hours seamlessly to support supervisees who take on jobs that require flexible working hours. We are exploring improvements to make it more user-friendly and intuitive to enable staff to perform any quick action required in a shorter time!



SPS Awards Ceremony 2024



Reported by MX12
Azhari Tay Bin Akber

The SPS Awards Ceremony 2024 was held on 23 January 2025. Over 800 awards were presented to recognise the outstanding work done by SPS staff, including innovative projects that further enhance operational efficiency and tactical competencies of officers. In addition to the 3i Champion, Innovation and Dare to Try Awards, SPS introduced a new award category: the SPS Artificial Intelligence (AI) / Robotic Process Automation (RPA) Commendation Award. The AI/RPA Commendation Award aims to acknowledge project teams that have utilised AI or RPA to develop innovative solutions and encourage other staff to do the same. Now, let us learn more about some of the innovative award-winning projects!



SGT3 Hafiz (right) receiving the 3i Champion Award at the Awards Ceremony!

SPS 3i Champion Award

SGT3 Muhd Noor Hafiz Sajali

During his previous deployment to Institution B5, SGT3 Hafiz noticed the need to introduce a ticketing system to ensure a more streamlined process to manage inmates' feedback on the DIRECT tablets. He briefed inmates on how to raise a ticket with officers for DIRECT issues, developing a proper tracking system which enabled technical issues to be rectified faster. Inmates were also aware of the workflow and there was transparency in the rectification process.

On encouraging others to integrate innovation at the workplace, SGT3 Hafiz says: "Everyone has innovative ideas, but many hesitate to share them. Don't just follow established processes – view tasks from new angles and seek efficiency."

SGT3 Hafiz is now an Institution Control Centre Officer at Institution B4 and his experience in developing the ticketing system has enabled him to provide insights in enhancing other Correctional Unit (CU) operations. SGT3 Hafiz's proactiveness in developing innovative solutions helped him to bag the 3i Champion Award!

SPS Dare to Try Award

Bite Resistant Sleeves

DSP2 Rajashekar Karnagaran; SGT3 Wong Ik Kee

At times, SPS officers may be bitten by aggressive inmates and supervisees. The team recognised that such incidences can compromise staff safety due to the potential of physical injury and transmission of diseases. Hence, the team implemented the use of bite resistant sleeves to protect officers from sustaining severe injuries when bitten.

Some factors the team considered in implementing the sleeve was the effectiveness of the sleeve in reducing injury from bites, the ease of use of the sleeve to encourage staff to proactively maintain their own safety and how to develop a training plan to ensure proper use of the sleeve. The team gathered feedback from staff on the wearability and durability of the sleeve to ensure it effectively protected officers from bites.

"We hope this innovation creates a safer work environment for our colleagues and encourages others to constantly lookout for innovative ideas and products to solve day-to-day challenges," the team shared. "This idea demonstrates our commitment to support our colleagues who are working in the institutions."



SGT3 Jia Min (left) and team member SGT3 Wong Ik Kee (right) donning the bite resistant sleeves which was developed to keep officers safe from being bitten by inmates.

Strike Dummy for Training Realism

DSP2 Tan Yew Chuan

CW2 Tow Chee Choy

SGT2 Nurul Amin Bin Nordin

SGT2 Muhammad Rhazaly Bin Ridhuan

Like other law enforcement agencies, SPS employs the use of strike pads and strike dummies for tactical training practices to improve officers' form, power and speed without the need for live opponents in a safe and controlled environment. In recent years, the Singapore Prisons Emergency and Response (SPEAR) team acquired free standing strike dummies designed for tactical training, but noticed that the dummies did not have a human form factor and were unable to simulate the posture of a typical confrontational subject in the real world due to the lack of upper limbs.

This spurred the team to contact multiple vendors on customising upper limbs for training purposes. Although the vendors said factories were not keen on such customisations, the team did not give up and spent more time finding a solution to improve training standards.

This led the team to chance upon the "Arms Extension Jacket" (AEJ), which can be attached onto a strike dummy as an add-on to accessorise it with a pair of upper limbs and replicate an aggressive fighting posture to enhance training realism. However, the overseas manufacturer of AEJ informed the team that it would be costly to send a sample and the attachment might not fit SPEAR's current strike dummy model.

Despite this setback, the team was not deterred and acquired a local contact to loan an AEJ for fit testing. Unfortunately, the physical dimension of the AEJ was not compatible with the existing strike dummies and the team was unable to trial the durability of the AEJ. Nevertheless, the team continued to conduct further research on other baton strike dummies which would be able to withstand constant wear and tear from training loads, exemplifying the Dare to Try attitude!

"Despite the many challenges in looking for a suitable training product, what motivated us was wanting to improve training for our officers for the safety of both the officers and inmates," the team reflected. "We believe that whenever you see something that can be improved, you act on it."



Team member SGT2 Nurul Amin Bin Nordin receives the Dare to Try Award on behalf of the team!

Gold Award for Innovative Projects

Building BOTS Capital in Operations Security Branch (OSB)

CW2 Salehudin Bin Abu

CW2 Muzakir Bin Mohamad Ariff

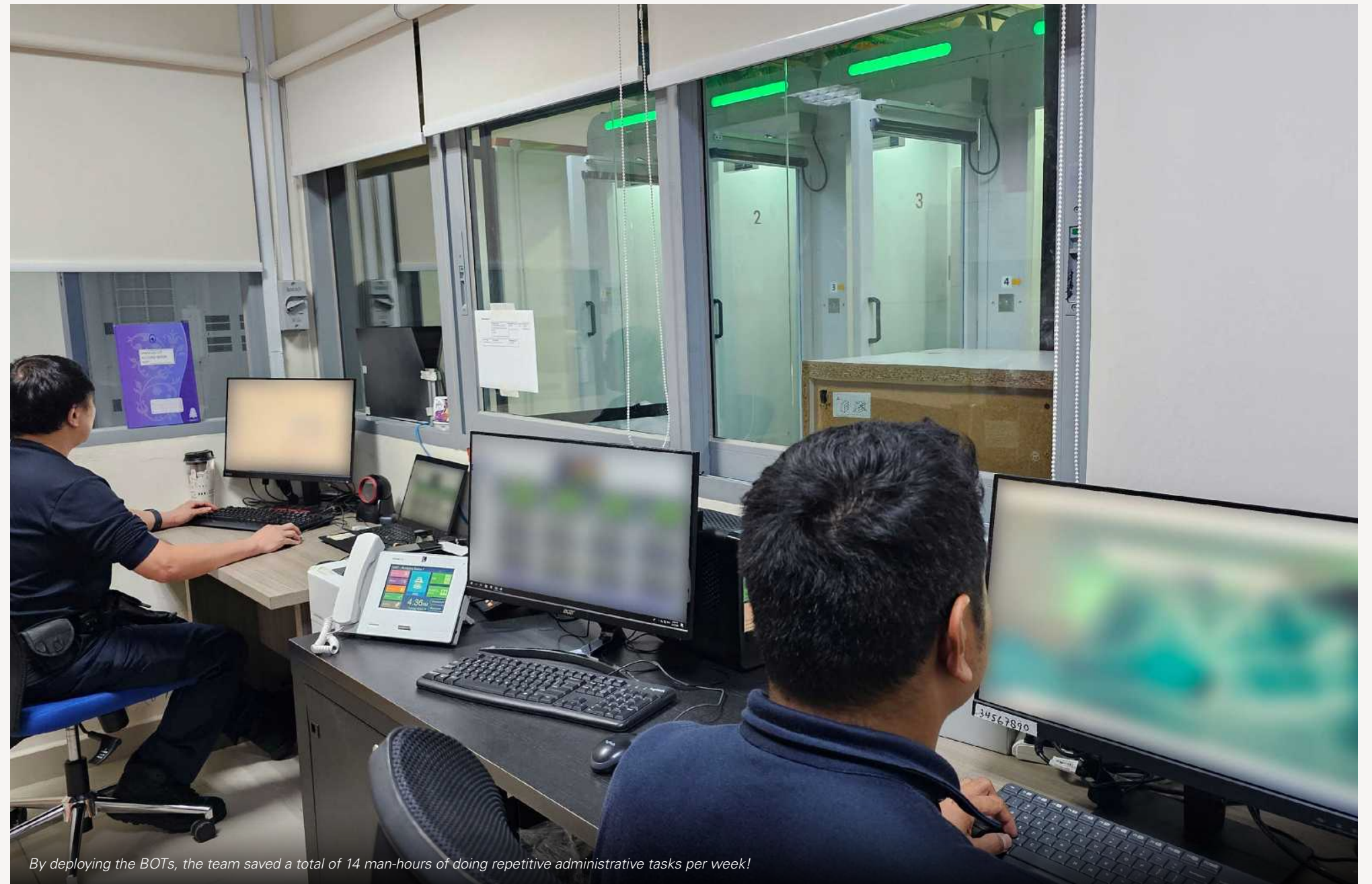
CW2 Sukhvinder Singh

CW1 Muhammad Farhan Bin Murat

CW1 Mohamad Bin Mansor

SSGT Ahmad Rifa'ie Bin Mustapha

SGT3 Muhammad Asraf Bin Abdullah Sani



By deploying the BOTs, the team saved a total of 14 man-hours of doing repetitive administrative tasks per week!

The Selarang Park Community Supervision Centre (SPCSC)'s Security Control Centre (SCC) and Urine Test Reporting Centre (RC) enforce the security of the SPCSC and manage the urine reporting process for supervisees. To automate daily manual administrative duties, the team implemented 6 Robotic Process Automation (RPA) BOTs.

For the SCC, the team designed three BOTs to automate the process of gathering supervisee details, generating draft reports and sending relevant information to other law enforcement agencies. For the RC, the team designed 3 BOTs

to automate the scheduling of supervisees' urine tests, uploading supervisees' information into the Prison Automated Screening System (PASS), generate urine testing results and the name list of supervisees who were absent from urine testing. The BOTs also highlighted scheduling errors, ensuring the accuracy of the scheduling process.

The BOTs have helped to identify and minimise the risks of human error, providing the SPCSC and RC teams with an extra pair of hands in their fast-paced working environment and enhancing their operational efficiency!

Gold Award for Innovative Projects & SPS AI/RPA Commendation Award

Streamlining Scheduling Process through Automation and Data Integration

DSP2 Raymond Ong

DSP1 Mohamed Firman Bin Mansoor

CW2 Wong Tam Moy

CW1 Khairil Anuar Bin Ibrahim

By implementing the use of Excel and Robotic Process Automation (RPA), the team eliminated the need for manual data collation and ensured accurate extraction of required inmate information when scheduling inmates to serve their punishment. Despite facing initial challenges of operationalising the new workflow, the team's resilience and unwavering dedication has led their CU to embrace innovation.

The team implemented their innovation throughout Institution A5 and continuously upgraded the workflow after receiving valuable feedback. Regular evaluation meetings were also carried out to address any areas of improvement to refine the process. Eventually, the team collaborated

with the Accelerating Digitalisation and Automation of Processes Team (ADAPT) from SPS's Operations Division to incorporate their innovation as a Common Used Bots (CUBs), facilitating its use across SPS and enabling other institutions to achieve similar enhancements in efficiency.

"This recognition validates our team's commitment to innovation," said team leader DSP2 Raymond Ong. "What started as a solution to streamline our workflows has evolved into a transformative tool that benefits the entire department. We are grateful for our colleagues' support to refine the process and we look forward to seeing how other institutions will adapt and build upon our solution!"



The team bagged 2 awards – the Gold Award for Innovative Projects and the SPS AI-RPA Commendation Award!

SPS Fitness Advocate Course

The SPS Fitness Advocate Course was launched by the Singapore Prison Training Institute (SPTI) in 2024 to form a network of well-trained officers with the knowledge and skills to support their colleagues in staying fit and achieving better results in their Physical Fitness Tests (PFT). Let us hear about how this programme has elevated the standards of physical fitness of SPS officers, from the perspectives of the Fitness Advocates (FAs) and their colleagues!



Reported by RO2 Vincent Lian



CW1 Nizam (standing) empathises with the needs of his colleagues and provides tailored support to enhance their fitness.

CW1 Mohamed Nizam Bin Abdul Razak and CW1 Muhammad Farhan Bin Hassan

CW1 Mohamed Nizam Bin Abdul Razak has been a fan of boxing since he was 11 years old and was inspired by “The Greatest Boxer of All Time” – the late Muhammad Ali. CW1 Nizam learned basic boxing techniques and realised that practising them improved his fitness level. He was approached to be a FA as his active participation in departmental sporting cohesion activities and passion for sharing fitness knowledge with others was recognised.

“I asked my peers for advice on whether to join and understood that the knowledge and skills I gain during the course would benefit me in the long run,” CW1 Nizam shared. “Thus, I decided to sign up for the programme!”

CW1 Nizam is the FA supporting CW1 Muhammad Farhan Bin Hassan, who connected with CW1 Nizam because he was struggling to pass the push-up and sit-up stations in his PFT. “I desired to improve my strength and performance, so I sought CW1 Nizam’s guidance to help me train more effectively,” CW1 Farhan shared.



CW1 Farhan gained greater confidence in himself and his ability to push his limits to improve his fitness!

Commitment Forms the Foundation for Improvement

"The most valuable aspect of CW1 Nizam's guidance was his commitment to monitoring my progress, even beyond working hours," CW1 Farhan reflected. "CW1 Nizam helped me stay accountable and motivated by suggesting a structured monthly training schedule. This provided me with a clear plan to follow, kept me disciplined and ensured I remained consistent in my progress."

CW1 Farhan gained greater confidence in himself and his ability to improve and push his limits. The support he received from CW1 Nizam inspires him to share what he has learned with other colleagues to help them improve their fitness too. "Learn the basics, trust the process and believe in yourself. Progress takes time, but with the right guide and consistency, you will see real improvements," CW1 Farhan shared. "Stay committed and do not be afraid to push your limits!"

Providing Tailored Support and Empathy

CW1 Nizam said some individuals who sought help from him chose not to reveal their vulnerable side, even after he reassured them that the training sessions will be relaxed. "To overcome this, I consistently make an effort to learn about their fitness levels before applying the appropriate intensity and method to ensure they can enjoy and trust the process," CW1 Nizam said.

"There was an officer who consistently declined my invitations to train together and would respond with various excuses. Yet, amusingly, I will often see him running around our residential area," CW1 Nizam shared. "The officer was at his lower fitness level during that period, however I assured him that we were on this journey together. Since then, he has lost 20kg and achieved a silver in his PFT!"



CW1 Nizam was inspired by the late Muhammad Ali to learn basic boxing techniques!

CW1 Nizam believes that once someone starts to enjoy exercising and stop feeling that it is burden, he will be committed to exercising consistently. To anyone out there who has just started their fitness journey, he offers these simple yet poignant words of encouragement: "Start small, end big!"

RO2 Brenna Sim and SGT3 Mohammad Khairil Bin Saad

RO2 Brenna Sim has actively participated in spin and functional training lessons since 2020 as they helped her to gradually feel fitter and stronger over time. “I came across the Fitness Advocate Course recruitment broadcast and saw it as an opportunity to improve my knowledge on how to conduct classes for various groups of people, as well as to broaden my knowledge in the fitness field,” RO2 Brenna said.

SGT3 Mohammad Khairil Bin Saad has been powerlifting for a while and wanted to try new exercises. “I approached RO2 Brenna for guidance on new workouts to try and she introduced me to a gym that specialised in strength conditioning,” SGT3 Khairil shared. “This aligned with goal to diversify my training regime.”



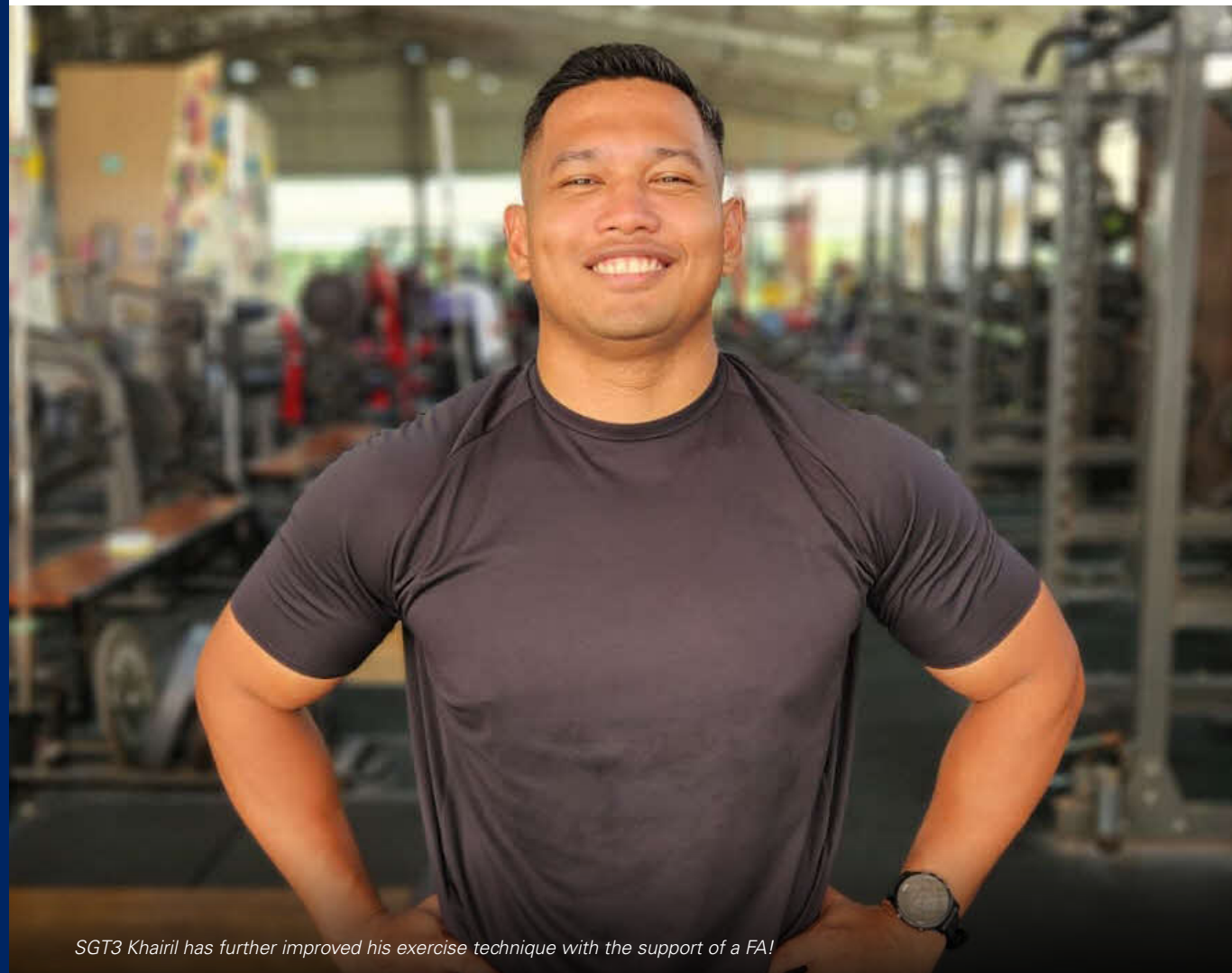
RO2 Brenna and SGT3 Khairil working on strength conditioning!

Be Familiar With the Underlying Techniques

Through the new training regime, SGT3 Khairil noticed improvements in his overall endurance and movement efficiency. “RO2 Brenna’s technical knowledge and ability to dissect movement patterns were immensely helpful. She didn’t simply instruct me on what to do — she explained the reasoning behind each technique, which enabled me to apply them effectively,” SGT3 Khairil shared. “The gym members have praised my efficiency on the machines, which stands as a testament to her coaching ability!”

SGT3 Khairil has also learned that strength and conditioning was not about lifting weights, but also efficiency, mobility and endurance. “I prioritise my strength training and conditioning workouts now – which is something I had not done before,” SGT3 Khairil said.

To other officers who are considering working with a FA, SGT3 Khairil shares the following advice: “Be open to learning and trust the process. Don’t hesitate to ask questions — understanding the “why” behind the training makes a big difference. At the end of the day, they can only guide you, but you have to do the work. Happy training!”



SGT3 Khairil has further improved his exercise technique with the support of a FA!



RO2 Brenna works hard to encourage other officers embarking on their fitness journey!

Help Others Overcome the Fear of Failure

RO2 Brenna believes the only bad workout is the one that didn’t happen. “The fear of failure or hardship often holds people back from trying new things,” RO2 Brenna reflected. “However, I usually encourage them to take that leap, as it’s only by trying that they can truly discover what they are capable of achieving.”

RO2 Brenna shared that achieving fitness often involves intense exercise and a strict diet, however the perception of being “fit” varies from person to person and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. RO2 Brenna stays motivated by having a clear goal in mind, whether it is an upcoming fitness event or striving for a new personal best.

“Like everyone else, we all begin somewhere. With patience and hard work, we can achieve whatever we set our minds to!” RO2 Brenna said.

To date, a total of 46 FAs have been trained. Moving forward, SPTI will promote the role of the FAs to more officers, recognise their efforts and continue to work closely with the FAs to explore ways to expand their role in supporting officers' fitness. This programme symbolises SPS's commitment to fostering a sustainable culture of fitness that benefits individual officers and enhances the overall effectiveness of SPS!





A behind-the-scenes shot with actors Richie Koh and Simon Khung!

Yellow Ribbon Project Events and Activities

We share more about the behind-the-scenes efforts in filming the heartwarming Mediacorp drama *Another Wok of Life* and the Yellow Ribbon Project's school outreach programmes which are aimed at educating youth about second chances and breaking the stigma faced by ex-offenders!



Scan this QR code to check out *Another Wok of Life* on MeWatch!



Reported by HTS12 Wong Shi Ning

Behind the Scenes of *Another Wok of Life*

What happens when a second chance comes served in a steaming bowl of hotpot? *Another Wok of Life* tells the inspiring story of Zhen Bang, an ex-offender who turns his life around through the power of food, family, social support and redemption. From learning culinary skills behind bars to finding purpose in a bustling hotpot restaurant, the drama serves up a heartfelt tale of resilience, hope, and the belief that everyone deserves a fresh start.

Culinary training is one of the various vocational training and work programmes provided to inmates to enhance their employability. The last Yellow Ribbon Culinary Competition (YRCC) held in 2024 was organised in collaboration with the Singapore Chef's Association and HCSA Academy Culinary Training Centre. The competition provided 27 inmates and ex-offenders from the culinary training centre with the opportunity to show off their culinary prowess through the preparation of unique dishes using plant-based ingredients.



Everyone was focused as they filmed the tense kitchen scene.



One of the winning teams of the YRCC 2024 prepared a delectable Hawaiian teriyaki burger!

Through initiatives like the YRCC, the YRP endeavours to raise more awareness of the vocational training programmes in prisons to support inmates' reintegration into society. Now, let us hear from our officers about their experience participating in the filming process and their reflections on the importance of vocational training and work programmes in prisons!



Participants in the YRCC 2024 prepared a variety of dishes with plant-based ingredients.

Hearing From the Officers

*Staff Officer, Rehabilitation Management Branch,
Rehabilitation and Reintegration Division
ASP1 Soh Chi Yiong*

Standing under studio lights and delivering lines in front of cameras isn't part of ASP1 Soh's usual routine, but *Another Wok of Life* offered him just that opportunity! Although it was his second time taking part in a Mediacorp production, the nerves still kicked in. "I only had four lines in Mandarin, but I rehearsed them in my head for days," ASP1 Soh shared. "What amazed me was how much effort goes into just a few seconds on screen – multiple takes and hours of set-up. It was an eye-opening experience."

"*Another Wok of Life* really drives home the importance of second chances, family support, and community reintegration," he said. "It's not just a drama, it reflects the very real stories we see unfolding at our work."

ASP1 Soh is a strong advocate for the transformative impact of vocational training in prisons, especially those offered by SPS and YRSG's TAP & Grow initiative. Programmes are offered in the domains of Food Services, Media, Precision Engineering, and Logistics, and aim to equip inmates with hands-on skills and recognised certifications that prepare them for employment and personal growth.



The drama struck a personal chord with ASP1 Soh, as the storyline reflected the very real challenges inmates and ex-offenders face.

"The Hope Café featured in the show is a place where inmates learn culinary skills that they can carry with them after release," he explained. "That's the kind of opportunity that makes a difference."

To inmates and ex-offenders, ASP1 Soh offers these words of encouragement: "Your past is part of your life story, but it does not determine your future. Every waking day, you have the power and autonomy to decide who you wish to be, regardless of your current circumstances. Embrace each setback as valuable life lessons and always remember that everyone is worthy of a second chance and continue to move forward and stay committed to your personal grow no matter how arduous the journey may seem."



ASP1 Soh played the role of a Correctional Unit Officer who provided the main character with words of encouragement as he prepared for this release.



Filming would not have been possible without ASP1 Valladares' coordination efforts!

**Staff Officer, Planning & Organisation,
Cluster B**
ASP1 Valladares Marc Jude

While the spotlight was on the cast of *Another Wok of Life*, there was another crucial player working quietly behind the scenes: ASP1 Valladares. He was tasked with coordinating the logistics for filming and ensuring every detail was in place – from securing the venue to preparing authentic set pieces, including inmate uniforms, meal trays, and fabricated cell dockets. “Even a simple breakfast scene took careful planning,” ASP1 Valladares shared.

ASP1 Valladares has seen firsthand the transformative power of vocational training in prisons. “These are not just skill-building courses, they are lifelines.”

“Training gives inmates something more than a certificate – it gives them hope, direction, and a reason to believe in a better future,” he reflected. “The drama really captured the power of second chances,” he said. “It reminds us that when we remove labels and give people a fair shot, they can thrive.”

To those on the path of change, ASP1 Valladares offers this heartfelt message: “Life is hard, there will be obstacles and we will encounter failures that make us question our worth, but this must not stop you from picking yourself up and pushing ahead. Surround yourself with positive company, reflect on your actions as every setback carries valuable lessons, keep persevering, and most importantly, practise self-compassion. Trust in yourself and ability to overcome obstacles and believe in your capacity for redemption.”



ASP1 Valladares (second from left) and the crew commemorated the filming process with a photo in the institution!

Yellow Ribbon Community Engagement

The Yellow Ribbon Community Engagement (YRCE) works closely with students and schools from different educational levels to curate and organise student-led projects and outreach activities, like interactive talks, learning journeys and essay and art competitions. These efforts aim to provide students with insights into the challenges ex-offenders face during reintegration, highlight the importance of acceptance and support, share more about the Yellow Ribbon Project, and empower the next generation to nurture a more compassionate and supportive society.



Fairizal is one of many ex-offenders who continue to use their skills and experiences to give back to society.



Students were engrossed in the sharing by ISCOS Titan Fairizal!

At a recent YRCE school engagement session on 12 Mar 2025, ISCOS Titan and ex-offender Mr Mohamad Fairizal Bin Jaffar shared the raw, unfiltered journey of his transformation with students at the Singapore Management University's (SMU) School of Accountancy. For the past two years, Fairizal has been speaking in schools and prisons, using his lived experience to break down stigma and build bridges of understanding.

"It's not just about awareness," he said. "It's about opening minds to the reality of our day-to-day struggles, and why support is everything for people like me."

Having spent a decade with ISCOS, Fairizal admits his earlier post-release years were consumed by the grind of rebuilding his life. "I can only say I 'made it' two years ago. That is when I finally had the space to give back," he reflected. When asked what keeps

him going, Fairizal candidly said: "We all have different strengths. I've learned to use what I have, transforming my anger into something positive to push forward. The key is to never give up."

To ex-offenders in their reintegration journey, his message is simple yet powerful: "Find what drives you and keep moving. Even if it's tough — especially when it's tough — push yourself forward."



ISCOS Titans are a group of ex-offenders who have successfully turned their lives around and are willing to share their experiences to inspire and deter others from going down a path of crime. Scan this QR code to learn more about the work done by ISCOS Titans!

Hearing from The Participants

*Adjunct Lecturer, School of Accountancy,
Singapore Management University
Ms Wang Yean Sung*

To Adjunct Lecturer Ms Wang Yean Sung, giving second chances are not just about charity — they are about recognising potential and shared humanity. “I would hire an ex-offender,” she said without hesitation. “It is not about what you have done, but who you are and your value system.”

Yean Sung believes Singapore’s highly competitive nature can make society less forgiving, but sees promise in the government’s efforts to uplift and support ex-offenders. “If we leave people behind, what’s the point of being in front?” she reflected.

Yean Sung’s most memorable moment from the school engagement is the desistor’s personal story of struggle. She believes her students are at a vulnerable stage where the right message can make a lasting difference — not through fear, but through hope and purpose. “Gangs offer a sense of belonging. But so can opportunity, mentorship and care,” she said.

Yean Sung urges more adults, retirees, and companies to step up. “There does not have to be grand gestures, just small, meaningful acts,” Yean Sung said. “We don’t always know how to give back, but it starts with caring. Everyone deserves a fair shot.”



Adjunct Lecturer Wang Yean Sung urges the community to step up and create a more inclusive society!



The outreach session has deepened Dexter’s understanding of what the YRP does!

*Student, School of Accountancy,
Singapore Management University
Tan Ye Kai, Dexter*

The sharing session was an eye-opening experience for Dexter. What resonated most with him was the powerful personal account shared by Fairizal and the emotional impact of understanding the psychological barriers ex-offenders face even after release.

Dexter realised how stigma forces ex-offenders to expend significant effort simply to regain trust, leaving them with limited energy to showcase their true potential. “If we show a bit more empathy, it really can go a long way in helping ex-offenders reintegrate,” Dexter reflected. “Greater societal acceptance could lower recidivism and create a healthier community.”

Previously, he viewed YRP as a non-profit organisation who partnered with companies like Ninja Van and 18 Chefs. However, the school outreach engagement broadened his perspective, highlighting that everyone plays a role in shifting societal perceptions — whether through active participation in outreach, encouraging peers to attend future sessions, or simply offering a compassionate smile to someone who might otherwise feel marginalised.

*Student, School of Accountancy,
Singapore Management University
Soong Jia Xin, Livia*

Livia felt the most powerful moment in the sharing session was when Fairizal opened up about his journey as an ex-offender. “It is not something we usually get to hear,” she reflected. “What we see in the news is often surface level, but his sharing gave real insight into how long and difficult the journey to regain trust is.” Hearing about Fairizal’s struggles made Livia more aware of the importance of empathy and patience.

Livia was also curious about how rehabilitation differs for those who may not have the same resources or abilities. “What happens to ex-offenders who aren’t high achievers? How do they find meaning after release? These are some thoughts I had after the session,” Livia shared.

From both a human and economic perspective, Livia believes second chances are vital. “With an ageing population and a shrinking workforce, reintegration isn’t just the right thing to do — it’s necessary,” Livia said. “Giving someone the chance to change creates a ripple effect that benefits all of society.”



Livia believes that giving second chances will benefit society.