

# RESCUE 995

THE SINGAPORE CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE MAGAZINE



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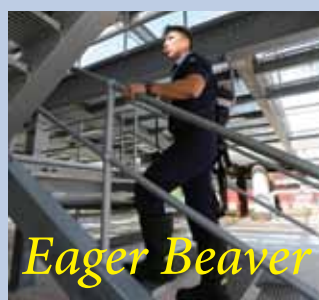
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Home Team Volunteer Network

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# Editor's Note



Picture (Left to Right): Ms Michelle Lim (Editor) and MAJ Foo Yiing Kai

The journey of putting together the Men's issue was a lot more challenging than the previous ones. Truth be told, the editorial team had a hard time deciding on who we should feature as there was a big pool of eligible career officers to choose from.

In fact, we organised several rounds of photo shoots and interview sessions to find out more about their achievements and contributions to the SCDF.

Just when we thought that we have nailed the nomination list, we were introduced with more new names.

To be fair to everyone, we were reluctant to put a stop to the selection process.

Many ideas sprung up as to how we should feature these career officers. We attempted several layouts and even had the artwork ready. We were thrilled with the outcome but we did not stop there.

We continued to explore other possibilities of including all the career officers whom we have shortlisted but we were limited by the space we have in this issue.

Well, even though the best-laid plans may not materialise at times, the editorial team still found it an enjoyable experience as it presented us with the opportunity to learn

about a side of our fellow colleagues we never knew.

If you always had the impression of our emergency responders being all brawn, you may have mistaken. When I first approached LTC Shaiful Herman for an interview, he chuckled shyly and asked if he met our criteria. It was not until when I found out more about his achievements that I realised he was just being modest. In fact, LTC Shaiful is also a romantic at heart. Another officer who left a deep impression in me was MAJ Foo Yiing Kai and his Operation Lionheart experience. If you are into men with charming eyes, he would definitely be your cup of tea.

As 2016 is almost coming to an end, the editorial committee has also put together a pull-out 2017 calendar in this issue for you.

We hope that we have inspired you with the stories of our lifesavers in the last 11 months.

Till we meet again next year!

**Michelle Lim**  
November 2016  
Editor, Rescue 995  
Public Affairs Department

## National Day Awards 2016

A total of 26 SCDF officers received the National Day Awards this year. Three officers, including former DC Jackson Lim, received the Public Administration (GOLD) medal. 29 other SCDF officers were awarded with the Commendation, Efficiency and Long Service Medals.

## Sentosa Fire Station

Sentosa Fire Station, SCDF's 21st fire station, was officially opened by Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, on 7 September 2016. About 100 guests, including key stakeholders and partners were also present to witness the event.

Sentosa Fire Station is the first fire station in Singapore to acquire the Building and Construction Authority Green Mark Platinum award for the advanced eco-friendly systems installed within the building. The solar panels on the rooftop supplies electricity to meet at least 6% of the station's total energy consumption while the solar water heaters, 100% LED lighting, as well as the 'cool' facade paint which reduces the heat transfer into the building interior, are some of the sustainable and environmentally-friendly features integrated into the building's design.

## National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council Fire Safety Seminar

On 16 August 2016, the National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council (NFEC) held its annual Fire Safety Seminar at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre. The event, graced by Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, was attended by more than 600 participants including Fire Safety Managers and Security Personnel.

The theme for this year's seminar was "Keep Electrical Hazards at Bay for a Fire Safe Environment".

## ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management

The annual ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) was held on 19 August 2016 and graced by Mr K Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law. Also in attendance were H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN and H.E. Willem Rampangilei, Chief/Minister of National Disaster Management Authority of Indonesia. The Dialogue was attended by some 120 participants, including officials from the ASEAN member states, international organisations, civil society partners, private sector and academia.

Held in conjunction with the World Humanitarian Day and taking place for the second time since 2015, the ASEAN SPDDM provides an avenue to exercise ASEAN's thought leadership in disaster management. It was jointly organised by the ASEAN Secretariat, the SCDF and Corporate Citizen Foundation.

The theme for the event was "Change and Innovation: Learning from the Private Sector to Enhance Disaster Management in ASEAN". One of the event highlights was the "CEOs Talk", where three corporate leaders from the private sector shared their perspectives on change and innovation vis-à-vis disaster management.

## Official Launch of NTU Civil Defence Lionhearter Club

SCDF, in collaboration with the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), officially launched the Civil Defence (CD) Lionhearter club at NTU on 11 August 2016. The event was graced by Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Chairman of the Home Team Volunteer Network.

NTU is the first university in Singapore to establish a CD Lionhearter Club, which provides an avenue for tertiary students to be engaged in civil defence, emergency preparedness and overseas humanitarian missions.

## 10 Years of CDAU

The Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU), a volunteer arm of the SCDF, celebrated its 10th anniversary on 12 August 2016. The event was graced by Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs.

The CDAU was established in 2006 to engage the community and allow volunteers to contribute to the nation's civil defence efforts. Today, the CDAU has 7 vocations, which includes Firefighting, Emergency Medical Service, Public Education, Community Involvement, Enforcement, Heritage Gallery Guide, and Expertise Group.

At the event, Mr Amrin Amin also presented 12 CDAU Exemplary Officer Awards and one CDAU Outstanding Officer Award. WO (V) Yunnos Bin Shariff, the oldest CDAU volunteer, was recognised with the CDAU Outstanding Officer Award for his dedication and service.

Also present at the event were Mr Loh Ngai Seng (Second Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs), Commissioner Eric Yap, Deputy Commissioner Chong Hoi Hung, Mr James Tan (former Commissioner SCDF) and Mr Jackson Lim (former Deputy Commissioner SCDF).

Mr James Tan, who set up the CDAU when he was Commissioner SCDF, said: "When I formed the CDAU ten years ago, it was akin to planting a seed and aspiring to see it grow. We started with 26 volunteers and yes, my wish came true today for the CDAU has grown steadily to over 250 volunteers that branches into 7 different vocations."



Picture (Credits to Home Team Volunteer Network): (Left to Right) Deputy Commissioner Chong Hoi Hung, Mr James Tan (former Commissioner SCDF and Founder of CDAU), Commissioner Eric Yap, and Mr Amrin Amin (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs) at the CDAU 10th Anniversary celebration.

# Snippets of SCDF Events and Activities

# ONLINE CONTENTS

– [facebook.com/SCDFpage](https://facebook.com/SCDFpage)



**facebook**

**Singapore Civil Defence Force**  
76,799 likes

**Singapore Civil Defence Force**  
14 September at 17:00pm

Hope we didn't go man overboard with the puns yesterday. Most of you guessed right! This is the new Rapid Response Fire Vessel (RFV), the first purpose-built vessel designed entirely by the SCDF Marine Command.

Equipped with water jet propulsion, the vessel can reach high speeds of more than 40 knots with high maneuverability. Apart from firefighting capabilities, it can also perform water rescue operations.

The launching ceremony officiated by Commissioner Eric Yap, Commissioner of SCDF, on 11 Sep 2016 in Suao Harbour, Yilan County, Taiwan, capped years of hard work and marked a new chapter for SCDF - the crossing of a new frontier in enhancing our marine firefighting and rescue capability.

#ANationofLifesavers



592 Likes, 10 Comments, 69 Shares

**Singapore Civil Defence Force**  
17 August at 21:08pm

[Fire @ No. 39, Tampines St 92]  
Our firefighters who were hard at work are having their dinner and resting before being redeployed into the building to fight the fire.



9,400 Likes, 585 Comments, 2,630 Shares

**Singapore Civil Defence Force**  
17 August at 15:35pm

[Fire @ No. 39, Tampines St 92]  
The raging fire had been encircled by 6 water jets on the building exterior including the deployment of two aerial monitors. The high fire load of the premises includes paper products, household items and aerosol cans which had generated intense heat impeding an interior attack.



1,000 Likes, 53 Comments, 687 Shares

# ONLINE CONTENTS

– [twitter.com/SCDF](https://twitter.com/SCDF)



**SCDF**  
The Life Saving Force

4,717 TWEETS   67 FOLLOWING   20K FOLLOWERS   Follow

**TheLifeSavingForce @SCDF** • September 1

Teachers are our role models and heroes in life. They're the real MVP. Happy Teachers' Day!



**TheLifeSavingForce @SCDF** • September 6

Rich in history, integral to our heritage. It's not just another pretty building for photo-shoots!

**Singapore Government @govsingapore** • September 6

Firefighters are tough, but Singapore's most iconic fire station is tougher. <http://sg.sg/2cjw7Y6>



**TheLifeSavingForce @SCDF** • August 17

Firefighters having dinner and resting before being redeployed into the building to continue the ops.



**TheLifeSavingForce @SCDF** • August 17

Fire at CK Building extinguished around 6 am. Damping down operation in progress.



**TheLifeSavingForce @SCDF** • August 11

NTU launched its CD Lion-hearter Club today, the first uni to join the CD Lionhearter fraternity.



# ONLINE CONTENTS

– Instagram #ANATIONOFLIFESAVERS



Instagram



Embark on an Extraordinary Journey.  
Be a Home Team Volunteer!

For more information, please visit:



<http://www.htv.gov.sg>



/htvolunteers

# Got Your Game On?



Picture: WO Eddie Ho



## Masculine Insights

### Define "Masculinity".

Masculinity is the ability to be strong both physically and mentally.

### What constitutes 'brains and brawn'?

I quote Ian Caldwell - "The strong take from the weak and the smart take from the strong." It is never enough to be strong or smart. You have to be both and at the same time, learn from those who are different from you. This will be the complete package for brains and brawn.

WO Eddie arrived for our photo shoot with a helmet slung over his forearm. Spotting a darker than usual tan on his skin, WO Eddie does not come across as the geek that he described himself to be at first glance.

"I became a scrabble enthusiast by accident", said WO Eddie Ho, a senior instructor at the Civil Defence Academy's Marine Firefighting Specialist Branch.

In 2012, WO Eddie was approached by a fellow colleague to represent SCDF in a scrabble competition. He candidly agreed to take part in the mind sport but little did he know that he would be winning a bronze medal.

That was the first time WO Eddie took scrabble seriously and he has not looked back since.

After his maiden competition, WO Eddie went on to take part in scrabble training sessions and today, Eddie has emerged as the scrabble master of SCDF.

When asked if his Diploma in Communications and Media Management gave him a head start in scrabble, WO Eddie clarified that the command of the English language has little to do with excelling the game.

Instead, WO Eddie described the game as a mind-flexing session.

In order to win this mind sport, a player must be well-versed with the scrabble's vocabulary bank, especially that of the two-letter and three-letter word lists as well as unusual words such as QAT and EUOI. His winning strategy is the use of two-letter words as they are not only helpful for getting out of difficult situations but also come with high scores.

WO Eddie is not only enthusiastic about scrabble training but physical training as well.

When he was a Section Commander at Bishan Fire Station, he took the initiative to put together a gruelling physical training schedule for his fellow firefighters. Now that he is a senior instructor at the Marine Firefighting Specialist Branch, he imparts both marine firefighting skills and knowledge to SCDF emergency responders as well as officers from other agencies.

The chainsaw is WO Eddie's favourite equipment. As a seasoned fireman, WO Eddie said that while this equipment looks dangerous, it has the power to free

someone who is trapped during road traffic accidents.

WO Eddie explained that it is important for emergency responders to keep fit so as to perform their tasks well. The perfectly chiselled body that comes with the hard work is merely a bonus of this job.

When asked if an intensive exercise regime is a necessity in his daily life, WO Eddie broke out in a shy smile and revealed that he is actually a bigger fan of plays and books instead.

One of his all-time favourite plays is 'The Pillowman', that marries comedy and psychological drama.

"The Pillowman has definitely left a deep impression in me. I remember that I was so immersed in the darkly funny and brutal imaginations of Martin McDonagh, the writer of the play, when I was watching it", said WO Eddie.

WO Eddie, who is still single and available, certainly has plenty of brains and brawn.

Got your game-on?

## 10 words that a scrabble-master must know:

AA  
AERIE  
BEZIQUE  
CAZIQUES  
CHUTZPAH  
FAQIR  
JOUSTED  
MUZJIKS  
QANAT  
QI

*Think you can beat WO Eddie Ho in scrabble? Contact CPT Goh Bing Yu at [Goh\\_Bing\\_Yu@SCDF.gov.sg](mailto:Goh_Bing_Yu@SCDF.gov.sg) or WO June Yap at [June\\_Yap@SCDF.gov.sg](mailto:June_Yap@SCDF.gov.sg) to join the SCDF Scrabble Team.*

# The Heat Is On



**SGFPC** 2016  
SINGAPORE GLOBAL  
FIREFIGHTERS & PARAMEDICS  
CHALLENGE

11 - 12 NOVEMBER

**LIFESAVERS' CONNECT**

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For details on the programme:  
[www.sgfdc.org](http://www.sgfdc.org)

## January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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29	30	31				

Picture: SCDF Emergency Responders



**Protect and Save Lives and Property**

## February 2017

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Picture: Emergency Medical Services

**With PRIDE and CARE, We Serve**

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## March 2017

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Picture: HazMat Control Vehicle and Mitigation Capabilities



**Courage and Control**

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# Fast, Nimble and Agile

Picture: 5th Generation Light Fire Attack Vehicle, also known as Red Rhino



## April 2017

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Picture: Elite DART carrying out a height rescue operation



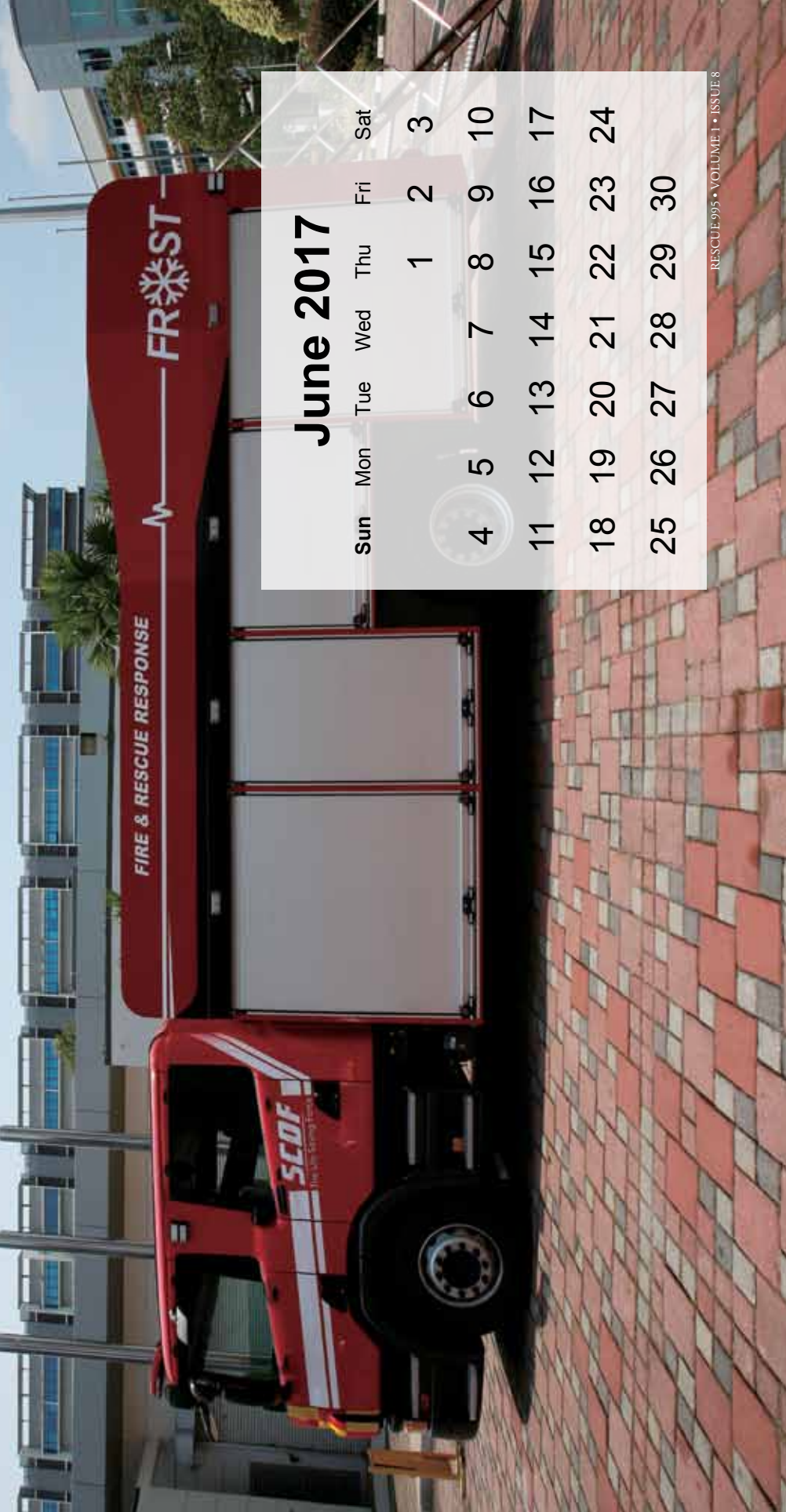
## May 2017

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	31					

# We Fear No Heights

# Innovation at Heart

Picture: Fire and Rescue Operations Support Tender, also known as FROST



June 2017						
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July 2017						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Picture: Unmanned Firefighting Machine deployed for a firefighting operation



# Operational Excellence

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## August 2017

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## A Nation's Civil Defence



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## August 2017

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## A Nation's Civil Defence



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Picture: SCDF Mobile Column  
Display at the National Day  
Parade 2015

## September 2017

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## A Noble Calling



Picture: SCDF Parade 2015

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## October 2017

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## A Nation of Lifesavers

## Singapore-Global Firefighters and Paramedics Challenge

## November 2017

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Picture: ORNSmen (in black polo shirts) from the Public Shelter and Resilience Unit



## December 2017

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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and Stay Strong**



Everything can change in the blink of an eye. SCDF officers are empowered with the responsibility to make split-second, life-saving decisions in real-time situations. Be part of The Life Saving Force today. For more information, visit [www.scdf.gov.sg](http://www.scdf.gov.sg)

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## Courage and Control When Life Matters



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Timeless satisfaction from a career like no other.



# Commander in-charge?



## Masculine Insights

**Define "Masculinity".**  
Ability to man up and face all the challenges in life without running or shunning away from responsibility.

## What constitutes 'brains and brawn'?

Brains would be EQ over IQ. No matter how intelligent one is, it is still important to consider the feelings of others in everything that we do. As for Brawn, I would say a Gold in IPPT!

Picture: MAJ Neo Jia Qi



MAJ Neo Jia Qi, a Geography and Urban Planning graduate from the University of California, Los Angeles (more commonly known as the UCLA), is currently the Commander of West Coast Marine Fire Station.

When asked about his choice of study in university, MAJ Jia Qi revealed that he always had an interest in this field since his secondary school days at The Chinese High School. "To do well, one has to have passion in what he does", said MAJ Jia Qi.

For the same reason, MAJ Jia Qi signed up with The Life Saving Force upon graduating from UCLA.

When queried about his choice of career, MAJ Jia Qi said in an upbeat tone that "Everything we do in the SCDF, from training and planning to actual response and operations, are geared towards saving lives. It gives me great satisfaction to know that people put their trust in us when they are faced with danger."

Other than being a helping hand to those in need, MAJ Jia Qi is also thankful that the SCDF has given him the exposure to an wide array of skills, ranging from project management, equipment evaluation, policy planning, to ground command positions.

Work life has never been mundane.

In a typical day at work, MAJ Jia Qi and his team of officers run the West Coast Marine fire station so that the safety and security of our Singapore waters are well taken care of. He is also involved in the long term capability development for the SCDF Marine Command, drafting plans to expand the infrastructure as well as improve the skill levels and readiness of the personnel in the unit. In other words, both brain and brawn are essential elements of a SCDF career officer.

Most importantly, MAJ Jia Qi enjoys the balance between office work and attending to incidents as he sees it as a form of application of skills to real life situations.

Of course, there are days when he had to deal with

difficult situations when executing his work.

At one of the many incidents that he attended to, a member of the public demanded for MAJ Jia Qi to move the firefighting vehicle elsewhere as it was blocking his personal vehicle.

"SCDF was already in the thick of the action with the firefighting appliance deployed for the operation. Shifting the vehicle will take time and compromise the firefighting operation. Sir, I would like to assure you that your car is in a safe location and out of harm's way," MAJ Jia Qi explained himself politely.

The man did not accept MAJ Jia Qi's explanation and retorted, "Who are you? I want to see the Commander in-charge here!"

MAJ Jia Qi replied calmly, "Sir, I am the in-charge here. I would like to assure you that your car is parked in a safe spot. Meanwhile, please be patient while the SCDF emergency responders continue to put out the raging fire."

He then requested for a Police officer onsite to escort the gentleman to a safe waiting area.

No doubt, sometimes the role of a SCDF officer includes having to deal with members of the public who can be very demanding and assertive.

MAJ Jia Qi has big dreams for the SCDF Marine Command. He envisions this vocation to become one of the best marine units in the world one day.

This bachelor is not to be mistaken for a workaholic.

To MAJ Jia Qi, family remains top priority. Aside from work and spending quality time with his loved ones, he is also a fan of sporty cars with good acceleration and smooth handling.

And his weak spot?

Furry animals. 🐶



### Masculine Insights

#### Define "Masculinity".

I think 'masculinity' indicates qualities or traits which are considered typical of men, for example strength and assertiveness. But that's not to say only men can have this behaviour. In my career, I've come across a fair share of women in the SCDF and the Home Team who are equally, if not more, "garang" than their male counterparts. And yes, I meant that as a compliment!

#### What constitutes 'brains and brawn'?

Someone who we describe as having both 'brains and brawn' embodies what we think the perfect "package" should be - someone who combines his intellectual capability with physical prowess to take on any task. But I feel there's another important element, which is "spirit" or what we call "semangat" in Malay - the spirit to succeed and not give up when the going gets tough. Now, that would embody the perfect SCDF officer in my view, a person with brains, brawn and "semangat".



# Chemistry and an Unusual Romance

Standing at 1.78m tall, the broad-shouldered LTC Shaiful Herman has more than just the physical qualities that will make your heart race.

LTC Shaiful, SCDF's first ever overseas scholar who obtained the Singapore Government Scholarship, is a Chemistry enthusiast. When asked about his fascination with the subject, LTC Shaiful revealed that he has always "been in love with Chemistry" since his secondary school days at Raffles Institution. Apart from the periodic table, LTC Shaiful also has a strong interest in current affairs, economics, business management and organisational behaviour. It is for this reason that he pursued a joint Honours degree in Chemistry and Management during his undergraduate years at the Imperial College London.

LTC Shaiful is not just all looks and books. As an SCDF officer, he has acquired years of operational experience. There is one incident that he attended to which he still vividly remembers till today.

LTC Shaiful was a ROTA Commander at Alexandra Fire Station when he responded to the rescue incident. When he arrived at the location, he saw that a domestic helper had fallen off the kitchen parapet and was hanging on the ledge of the eighth storey. As SCDF was commencing the rescue operation, the weather took a turn and it started to drizzle.

The parapet was getting slippery.

LTC Shaiful knew that there was a chance that the lady could slip. With teamwork, tenacity and determination, LTC Shaiful and his rescue team manually pulled the lady to safety within minutes, to the applause of onlookers' on the ground floor.

Today, LTC Shaiful continues to pursue his love

for Chemistry through his work in the Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Department. He describes HazMat as "a highly specialised field in the SCDF where an officer must not only have very good knowledge about HazMat, but must be able to piece together information quickly during an incident so as to determine the best way to mitigate it in the shortest possible time".

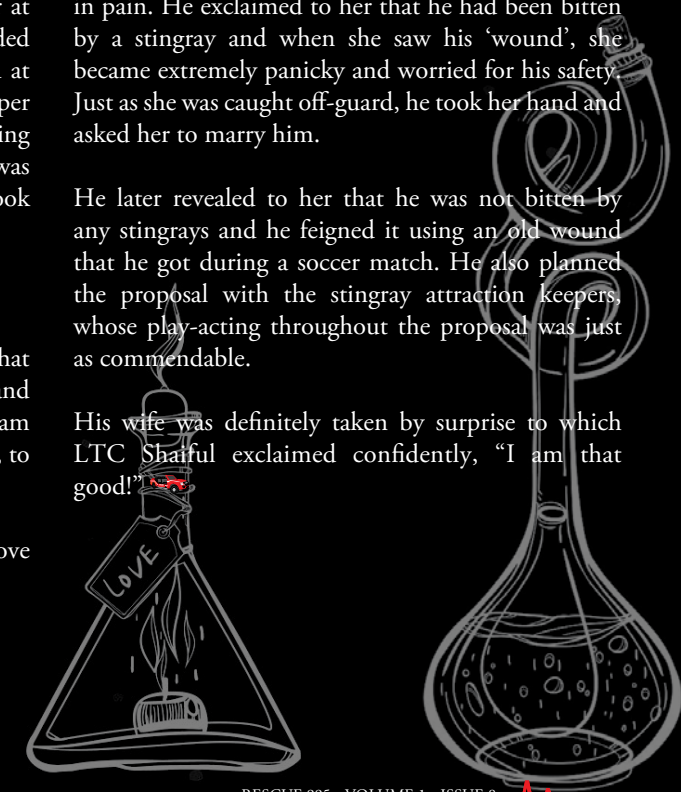
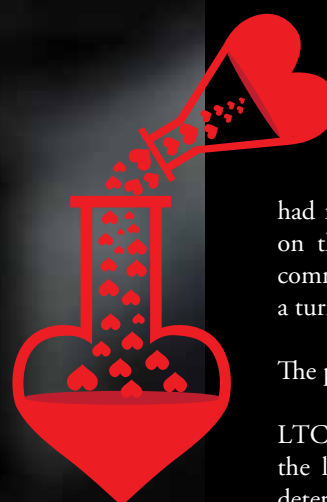
LTC Shaiful was recently awarded the Ministry of Home Affairs Post Graduate Sponsorship to further his studies in Fire Investigation, at the University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom.

On an unrelated note, LTC Shaiful can be rather cheeky. When asked about how he proposed to his wife, he covered his face and began to laugh sheepishly. Since his wife is an animal lover, he thought of a brilliant (but exotic) idea to propose to her in an aquatic attraction filled with stingrays. When she first entered the tank to feed the stingrays, she became slightly petrified by the experience. LTC Shaiful recalled her asking "how long is this gonna take? I am rather scared!"

Halfway through, LTC Shaiful went down on one knee but instead of asking for her hand, he squealed in pain. He exclaimed to her that he had been bitten by a stingray and when she saw his 'wound', she became extremely panicky and worried for his safety. Just as she was caught off-guard, he took her hand and asked her to marry him.

He later revealed to her that he was not bitten by any stingrays and he feigned it using an old wound that he got during a soccer match. He also planned the proposal with the stingray attraction keepers, whose play-acting throughout the proposal was just as commendable.

His wife was definitely taken by surprise to which LTC Shaiful exclaimed confidently, "I am that good!"



Picture: LTC Shaiful Herman



# AMUSEMENT RIDES?

CPT Ivan Chng would rather meet with exhilarated amusement park-goers than those tainted with fear and anxiety. In some sense, that is also where he gets his satisfaction from the hard work that he has put in.

CPT Ivan has an out-of-the-ordinary portfolio as an SCDF career officer.

While most people patronise amusement parks with an uplifted spirit and a ready attitude to hop on the steepest rollercoasters, CPT Ivan takes on the persona akin to an auditor instead. As a Team Leader in the Certification Branch of the Central Enforcement Department (CED), he plays a crucial role in upholding the safety and security standards at amusement parks.

To CPT Ivan, who has a Bachelor of Arts (Sociology) from Nanyang Technological University, the amusement parks are supposed to be venues that are filled with joy and laughter from both the young and old. To achieve that, it is important that safety measures are put in place and that is where SCDF comes into play.



Picture: CPT Ivan Chung

While some amusement park-goers would be naturally disappointed when amusement rides are temporarily closed, CPT Ivan said safety is paramount and should never be looked over in the interest of allowing a ride to operate when it has not met the required safety assessment.

Before joining the CED as a Staff Officer, CPT Ivan was a Rota Commander at Bukit Batok Fire Station. He stressed that the operational personnel in the SCDF need both brawn and brains in order to excel in their line of work.

"When I was a Rota Commander, I was trained to remain composed during operations. Apart from having to physically fight fire or rescue those in need, my team and I were also required to think on a strategic level as first responders. More often than not, we had to think on our feet and decide what to do next especially during life and death situations," said CPT Ivan.

CPT Ivan added that the job of a SCDF career officer is also about "keeping it real". At one of the incidents he attended to as a Rota Commander, his team went the extra mile and helped save the pet birds trapped in a house that caught fire. When they met with the home owner after the fire was extinguished, he thanked them profusely and explained how important his pets were to him.

"Every life matters", said CPT Ivan.

His wife describes him to be "a serious-looking tough guy who gyms a lot and enjoys frontline operations. On the inside, he is a gentle, sensitive, funny and caring chap."

CPT Ivan sure has an affiliation with water. Other than using it to put out fire, he has also been an avid swimmer since the age of five. 🚒



## Masculine Insights Define "Masculinity".

I think we have evolved as a society to look beyond traditional meanings and instead ascribe more forward-looking definitions to being masculine and strength in general. A father who is responsible and takes care of his family at the expense of his personal enjoyments, a son who shares a tear with his mother, or a brother who sacrifices time with his friends to tend to his sibling who requires special attention; different perspectives but all displaying traits of masculinity depending on which angle you view it from.

### What constitutes 'brains and brawn'?

**Brains:** Having the capacity to think about others and be emotionally sensitive.

**Brawn:** Having both mental and physical strength is equally important.



A massive earthquake hit Eastern Sichuan, China on 12 May 2008, leaving tens of thousands missing and injured. Many of the victims were also rendered homeless. Following this 7.8-magnitude quake, SCDF deployed its overseas Lionheart Contingent to China on 16 May 2008. Led by COL Francis Ng, then the Commander of 4th SCDF Division, its mission was to assist local authorities in search and rescue efforts at the quake-hit region.

The SCDF contingent was based in Hongbai Township in Shifang city. The Singapore team was one of four foreign rescue teams deployed to provide relief efforts. The other foreign teams came from Japan, Russia and Republic of Korea.

MAJ Foo Yiing Kai from SCDF's Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (DART), a member of the 55-strong contingent, shares his experience.

# Lion HEART

lady sat down on an uneven pavement and waited.

Five hours later, the team located the victim. MAJ Yiing Kai knew immediately that she had passed on but persevered on to extricate her body. It was about 11pm when they carried the deceased to her daughter. With the portable lighting unit deployed by DART, she identified the body and broke down in tears. MAJ Yiing Kai revealed that the toughest part of the mission was to break the sad news to the family members. Each time he had to do so, he felt a lump in his throat. The team waited as she grieved over her mother's death before they buried the body at a mass grave.

In the five-day Operation Lionheart mission, the contingent conducted search operations at over a dozen sites of collapsed buildings. Five bodies were extricated from the collapsed structures and rubbles. The rescuers also rendered other forms of assistance to the locals affected by the disastrous aftermath of the quake and its many aftershocks. This included the construction of a makeshift link bridge on 19 May 2008 at an area hit by a massive landslide. But as operations in Hongbai town shifted to the "recovery" phase, arrangements were made for the contingent's return to Singapore.

MAJ Yiing Kai, who recently became the Commander of Yishun Fire Station, was also part of the Home Team Operation Lionheart contingent that was deployed to Nepal in July 2015. 🚒

His five senses hit him immediately as he landed on site. The pillars that held buildings that once stood tall had collapsed. The belongings of the residents were covered with dust and some, stained with blood. As he surveyed the scene for the first time, he heard the abrasion of his boots on the uneven and broken walkways as he moved around to assess the area. The presence of other rescuers and survivors became oblivious to him as he was greeted by the strong smell of decomposed bodies.

MAJ Yiing Kai and his team were briefed that the surface casualties were already rescued by local rescue forces. The presence of SCDF's Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Team was to penetrate into the rubbles to render assistance to survivors trapped as well as to extricate bodies. As the only Chinese-speaking officer and translator of the contingent, MAJ Yiing Kai spoke with a lady in her forties who had sought help to find her mother. The lady described how her mother looked like, what she was dressed in, and that she wore a gold chain around her neck daily. It was about 6pm in the evening and rescue efforts were ongoing. The



## Masculine Insights Define "Masculinity".

To me, a masculine man is one who is unafraid of danger and adversity. He would muster all courage to do what is right.

## What constitutes 'brains and brawn'?

If we were to view it simply, it refers to someone who is both intelligent and physically attractive. Of course, it is important to be analytical especially for lifesavers ourselves. This is because every operation is unique and we are required to crack our brains for a solution all the time. As for the need for a physically attractive body, I am more of a believer of training to keep fit and healthy.



Picture: MAJ Foo Yiing Kai



*Picture: SSG (V) Vincent Lim,  
Volunteer with the Civil Defence  
Auxiliary Unit*

# Eager Beaver

SSG (V) Vincent Lim is always dressed up to the nines no matter which uniform he dons. The eager beaver is a career officer with the Singapore Police Force (SPF) by day and a volunteer with the Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit (CDAU) by night.

SSG (V) Vincent had his first encounter with the Home Team when serving his National Service with the SPF as a medical orderly. "Medical orderlies play a very noble and altruistic role. For this reason, I felt an inner calling in me to sign up with the CDAU as a medical orderly so as to continue to contribute to society", said SSG (V) Vincent.

2016 marks his eighth year as a CDAU volunteer.

Last year, SSG (V) Vincent enrolled in the inaugural Volunteer Firefighting Course. For three days a week, he attended night lessons at the Civil Defence Academy where he learned basic firefighting and rescue skills.

Before that, SSG (V) Vincent admitted that whenever he meets a SCDF firefighter at an operation, he is always curious about how it feels like to have a "hot suit" on while carrying other equipment including the heavy breathing apparatus set. He broke into a smile when describing his maiden experience of donning the bunker gear (firefighting gear). He explained that while the act of donning on the bunker gear was simple, the need to be agile and the ability to withstand the heat trapped within the suit are the real challenges to him.

As part of the Volunteer Firefighting Course training, he was tasked to run and climb flights of stairs while dressed in bunker gear. SSG (V) Vincent revealed that it looks easier than it really is. He finally understood why SCDF firefighters always look so calm even when battling the heat from a raging fire. The secret is to maintain composure at all times and breathe as per usual. An alarmed firefighter who panics may end up hyperventilating and this may quickly deplete the oxygen from the breathing apparatus set.

With the guidance from his instructors and more practice over time, SSG (V) Vincent found himself carrying additional heavy firefighting equipment such as water hoses while covering greater distances.

Apart from physical fitness, SSG (V) Vincent also stressed that firefighters are not just physically strong. They are also required to be mentally resilient and capable of thinking on their feet at all times. Even though all emergency responders are guided by a set of standard operating procedures, reality is such that every incident is still unique by itself. For this reason, it is important to take on the persona of a thinking SCDF emergency responder when being deployed to operations as there will never be a one-size-fits-all solution.

In his free time, SSG (V) Vincent enjoys good conversations with friends over some beer. 🍺



**Masculine Insights**  
Define "Masculinity".  
Masculinity is all about  
keeping fit!

What constitutes "brains and  
brawn"?  
Perfection.



***SCDF***  
The Life Saving Force



**TOGETHER** ———   
**A NATION OF LIFESAVERS**