

Announcement

Commissioner of Charities issues restriction order to Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd.

The Commissioner of Charities (COC) has imposed a restriction order under Section 39B(1) of the Charities Act to Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. with effect from 11 November 2013. With this Order, Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. will be able to carry on with its fund-raising efforts in support of their charitable activities as long as they comply with the following conditions:

- (a) it has proper systems and controls in place to ensure compliance with the Charities (Fund-raising Appeals for Local and Foreign Charitable Purposes) Regulations 2012;
- (b) William Soh Sim Song (NRIC: S7638187I) is not involved, directly or indirectly, in the conduct and management of any fund-raising appeal; and
- (c) any bank account for the receipt of proceeds from any fund-raising appeal it conducts must be in the name of Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. and no other.

2. The COC's Office has established that William Soh was substantially involved in the management of Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte Ltd, including its fund-raising appeals. The COC's Office has also looked into the fund-raising practices and found that there was a lack of proper internal controls with incomplete records and documentation. The COC's Office also notes that William Soh is an undischarged bankrupt.

3. The COC will work with Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. to address the various issues identified so as to improve its management, particularly in its management of donations. This will enable Project Awareness (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. to continue to render its services to the community with better transparency and accountability.

4. The COC's Office will like to advise donors to practise caution and to donate to causes and donations that they are familiar with and have confidence in. When in doubt, donors are encouraged to clarify with the fund-raiser how the funds raised will be used, and how much of the funds raised will directly benefit its beneficiaries before proceeding to give.

Issued by

The Office of the Commissioner of Charities
11 November 2013

BACKGROUND INFORMATION - CHARITIES ACT - SECTION 39B(1)(b) [Extract]

Section 39B. — (1) Notwithstanding any exemption or permit granted under section 39A, the Commissioner may, at any time, by order published in the *Gazette* —

(b) restrict the conduct of any fund-raising appeal by any charity or person by imposing conditions,

if he is satisfied —

- (i) that any fund-raising appeal conducted by the charity or person has not been conducted in good faith for charitable, benevolent or philanthropic purposes;
- (ii) that any of the persons who have conducted a fund-raising appeal, or any persons associated with any such appeal, are not fit and proper persons to administer, or to be associated with, a fund-raising appeal for charitable, benevolent or philanthropic purposes;
- (iii) that any fund-raising appeal has been improperly administered;
- (iv) that, in connection with any fund-raising appeal conducted, the provisions of this Act or the regulations or the conditions imposed by the Commissioner were not complied with by any person conducting or participating in the appeal; or
- (v) that, in the public interest, the fund-raising appeal should not be conducted.