

THE PURSUIT EXCELLENCE

Together, ComfortDelGro Chairman Lim Jit Poh and Managing Director/Group Chief Executive Officer (MD/Group CEO) Kua Hong Pak have traversed thousands of miles – not just trekking the globe in search of new business opportunities, but also pounding the challenging tracks of Singapore’s MacRitchie Reservoir in pursuit of the physical and mental ruggedness that marks their leadership style.



T O F E N C E





I WAS 63 THEN. TODAY, I AM NEARLY 10 YEARS OLDER AND I'M MUCH FITTER. I CAN ACCOMPANY HIM TO RUN AT MY OWN PACE.



- Lim Jit Poh, Chairman, ComfortDelGro

Jit Poh: In 2003, I was on a business trip in China with Hong Pak – it was our usual punishing routine, short trip, three days, three cities that sort of thing. We were in a hotel and I was trying to climb up a long flight of stairs. I was limping and had to pull myself up using the banister.

Hong Pak asked me what was wrong and said: “I will get you some supplements and you just come walking with me.”

So I took some glucosamine, put on my shoes and went walking with him at MacRitchie. Well, I was walking, he was running – and he gave me a half-hour head start. We’d meet up after a while, and complete the route together. We did this four times a week, I was very determined. After all I had played a lot of sports when I was in school – was very active in soccer, rugby and basketball – so the discipline for training was ingrained.

I was 63 then. Today, I am nearly 10 years older and I’m much fitter. I can accompany him to run at my own pace.

Hong Pak: And beat quite a few younger men in the process! Like him, I was always into sports, and I maintained the habit. I was riding the mountain bike until some years ago when I broke a couple of ribs and I thought, OK, maybe running is good enough.

Jit Poh: It is not just a physical challenge. It is mental strength and the will to want to do more. And this is something we have been trying to inculcate in the Company – that it takes hard work, both physical and mental, to succeed.

Hong Pak: This is the ethos of the Company, to look for growth continuously, relentlessly. In the 10 years since the merger, we

have gone truly global. This is not because our industry demands it – we are not like the airlines, whose nature of business spans the world. For us, expansion is a matter of careful corporate strategy and a sense of mission to go beyond Singapore.

There is a higher purpose to this expansion – it is to create wealth and to do good for the people who work for us. Part of this comes from my own upbringing – I come from a very humble background. I know what it means when the head of the family is without a job. This is why the ethos for the Group must be to provide good, secure and well-paying jobs for our employees.

ComfortDelGro is a large company. Our wage bill is about S\$1 billion a year. Every morning we wake up, we must find S\$3 million to pay everybody. This is our larger purpose.

Jit Poh: And to do this, we have a sense of fair play – we deliver on our promises to our customers, but we also defend the men and women who work for us. Transport is a public service. Emotions can run very high, and our drivers have been abused both physically and verbally over the years. We have always stood behind them, footing their legal bills, defending their rights.

Hong Pak: In Singapore, I remember an incident in which one of our customer service agents was abused verbally for more than half an hour. The customer made lewd comments, hurled vulgarities and was very aggressive. The agent remained polite, and took the abuse, thinking it was part of her job. Nothing can be further from the truth. No one should be subjected to abuse at work, whether physical or verbal. And as a Group, we protect our people.

“
THIS IS THE
ETHOS OF THE
COMPANY,
TO LOOK FOR
GROWTH
CONTINUOUSLY,
RELENTLESSLY.
”

- Kua Hong Pak,
Managing Director/Group
Chief Executive Officer,
ComfortDelGro







“ WE WILL NEVER SHY AWAY FROM PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE, NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT THINGS GET. ”

Jit Poh: We will never shy away from protecting our people, no matter how difficult things get. There was a very famous talkshow host in Singapore who abused one of our taxi drivers in 2010. She hit him, hurled abuses at him and vandalised his taxi. We made a police report and she publicly denied everything. We refused to let the matter rest and spared no effort in collecting CCTV evidence from buses that were passing by and searching for witnesses who could help us. We brought the case to court and the judge finally ruled in our driver's favour. It was a battle fought and won.

Hong Pak: This is how we, as a Group, operate. We are not just about making money. We also want to make people's lives better.

Jit Poh: There is a deeper conviction that we are doing this from a sense of service. Service not just to our customers and commuters, but also serving the people who work with us.

A LETTER OF APPRECIATION

ON 2 JANUARY 2012, CABBY CHAN SWEE KONG EMAILED A LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO THE COMPANY, THANKING ALL WHO STOOD BY HIM AFTER HE WAS ATTACKED BY A FAMOUS TELEVISION PERSONALITY IN SINGAPORE.

THE LETTER IS PUBLISHED HERE WITH CABBY CHAN'S PERMISSION.

2 January 2012

To: The Management of ComfortDelGro

I was involved in the incident with Quan Yi Feng. Now that the trials are over and the fact that justice is done, I would like to give my deepest appreciation to the Management from the bottom of my heart.

The Management trusted that I was innocent and with the help of Joshua Soon, the Investigation Officer (IO), who had worked relentlessly to find the witnesses, go through the evidence, and collate the information to support the police investigation in a precise and concise manner, we achieved a quick resolution to this case. If not for his hard work, I would not have been able to prove my innocence. Hence, I would like to thank him for believing in me ... Without his help, I would have had a mental breakdown. It was his calm demeanour that helped me through this ordeal.

I am also grateful to all the witnesses for their precious time in supporting the investigation. I am relieved to know that the Company has a very good IO. The Management must have known that Joshua is a very capable person and the most suitable IO to handle this incident.

The Company has restored the confidence of taxi drivers like me, to know that it does not tolerate any unjustifiable acts against us regardless of whoever that person is.

Simply said, I give my deepest appreciation to everyone who has supported and encouraged me to move on during this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,

Chan Swee Kong

Hirer of SH 8887M