

**WELCOME ADDRESS
BY MINISTER JOSEPHINE TEO
AT THE SICW WOMEN IN CYBER EVENT
ON 17 OCTOBER 2023**

Distinguished guests

Colleagues and Friends

Introduction

1. Good afternoon. I am happy to be here again at the Singapore International Cyber Week Women in Cyber event. I want to thank all the speakers for making time especially for SICW, and more importantly, to put this on your calendar and seeing this as an important part of our work to promote the advancement of women.
2. In cybersecurity, women remain a minority. But our panels today have managed to assemble a sterling group. Each one of the speakers are leaders of their respective organisations and their achievements in cybersecurity are internationally recognised.
3. I am personally looking forward to the discussions and I am sure that we have much to learn from each one of them.
4. In Singapore, we are seeing healthy and growing interest among women and girls to take on roles in cybersecurity. Part of the reason is because there are more role models now.
 - a. Take for example, **Jenny Tan**, the president of ISACA. ISACA Singapore Chapter has been around for 40 years, and she is its first female President. Professionally, Jenny has won numerous accolades, including the Singapore Top Woman in Security 2022 Award and The Cybersecurity Awards 2023 Leaders Category. But she has also spearheaded ISACA's SheLeadsTech programme, that developed a conversion programme to mentor girls and women interested to work in tech. The women who have benefitted include homemakers and mid-career professionals.

- b. We also have **Sherin Lee**. She founded the Ladies in Cyber Charter, for the Association of Information Security Professionals (AiSP). Their volunteers have touched the lives of over 4,000 aspiring girls and women.

Addressing the Talent Gap

5. Because demand far outstrips supply, it's a really good time to welcome more women to the cybersecurity profession. It also fits well with our holistic yet practical approach to grow a sustainable talent pipeline for cyber.

6. The Singapore Government sees this as important but we also do not do this alone. In fact, we prefer to draw on the strengths of our partners to develop multiple pathways for crowding in talents into cyber.

- a. For example, CSA works with our Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to provide more opportunities in education. Our IHLs now offer more than 20 degree and diploma cybersecurity courses that attract the best students and produce more than 900 graduates annually. This is certainly a far cry from just a few years ago when there weren't even specialised courses in cybersecurity in our Institutes of Higher Learning. So, we have come a long way.

- b. CSA also works closely with our professional associations, who have strong networks on the ground, and support their outreach efforts.

7. We're not stopping there. Just last month, I announced that CSA will invest \$50 million in the Cybersecurity Talent, Innovation and Growth (TIG) Plan. Under this plan,

- a. CSA will expand opportunities for mid-career conversions. This is important because many of the most outstanding cybersecurity professionals that we encountered did not necessarily start their careers in cybersecurity, but they have grown into their roles and distinguished themselves.

- b. The TIG Plan will also help the existing cybersecurity workforce raise professional standards.

8. Because cybersecurity is a team effort, we believe it is **important to also include non-cyber professionals in our plans**. These can be professionals in finance, law, procurement, operations and engineering whose primary duties are not cybersecurity, but whose involvement in designing effective cyber defences cannot be overlooked. They are essential to be part of the team that can safeguard an organisation's assets properly against cyber risks.

9. Therefore, as part of the TIG Plan, CSA will launch the **SG Cyber Associates** programme. We will partner professional bodies, training providers, and institutes of higher learning, to offer training programmes to equip non-cybersecurity professionals with cybersecurity competencies aligned with their scope of work. If you are an engineer, it will be cybersecurity for engineers. If you are in law, it will be cybersecurity for lawyers.

10. We will be starting with two pilots.

- a. The first will be with ISC2, to offer 10,000 training places under their One Million Certified in Cybersecurity (1MCC) programme.
- b. The second will be with the Institution of Engineers Singapore (IES) to deliver short cybersecurity courses on targeted technology domains for engineers.

Conclusion

11. As you can see, this is an all-out effort to raise the quality of cybersecurity in Singapore.

12. Cyber or non-cyber, you're on our radar.

13. Student or already in the workforce, you're on our radar too.

14. Needless to say, man or woman, you're also on our radar.

15. I look forward to the panel discussions and am confident they will offer valuable insights into how we can continue to nurture a **broad range of cyber talents** as well as to **develop deep skills among our cyber professionals**.

16. Finally, as a shout out to all our partners, we really appreciate having you on board these programmes, and welcome more of you to work with us to secure our cyberspace. Thank you.
