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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Less mobile beneficiaries to enjoy free SMRT taxi services**

*- New SMRT SPACE with automated ramp gives wheelchair-bound freedom to travel -*

1. Fulfilling the dream of the less mobile for the freedom to travel, SMRT today, through the SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme, donated \$180,000 worth of SMRT taxi services to four hospitals and two voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs). About 150 less mobile beneficiaries from Alexandra Hospital, Changi General Hospital, KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Bizlink Centre and Society for the Physically Disabled will benefit from free SMRT taxi services. These beneficiaries are financially needy and require dedicated point-to-point travel services for medical treatment, therapy sessions or to work.
2. At the same time, SMRT Taxis also launched the new *SMRT All-in-one SPACE*, Singapore's first taxi equipped with an automated hydraulic ramp, offering wheelchair users point-to-point travel service in safety and comfort.
3. SMRT President & CEO Ms Saw Phaik Hwa explained the rationale behind the latest sponsorship, "SMRT has been a strong supporter of corporate philanthropic and outreach activities that meet the needs of the community. The SMRT Silver Tribute Fund is one such cause. Launched in 2006, this organisation-wide initiative and island-wide effort aims to heighten awareness of elderly and caregiver needs as well as raise funds to support programmes that will help elderly and caregivers lead more meaningful lives.

**Press Release**

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4. With the launch of the new SMRT *SPACE* and our gift of taxi services, we hope to help alleviate the transport costs of the beneficiaries who require point to point travel services to seek medical treatment at the hospitals or for work at the VWOs. The goal is to help them be self-reliant”.
  
5. Twenty-eight year old Mr Rasherman Bin Ibrahim is a beneficiary of the SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme. Mr Rasherman sustained spinal cord injury in a recent car accident and currently, attends therapy sessions at the Society of the Physically Disabled (SPD) Rehabilitation Centre once a week. The father of a newborn baby girl said, “I want to get well quickly so I can go back to work again and help my wife look after my daughter. With this help from SMRT, I can go for therapy at SPD more often and get well faster. I hope to be able to walk on my own very soon.”

#### **Catering to commuters’ different needs**

6. The new *SMRT SPACE* is a 2.5-litre diesel-run Hyundai Starex. Besides the automatic wheelchair ramp, the new *SMRT SPACE* seats four adults comfortably and has ample legroom and storage space for luggage and bulky items. In keeping with SMRT’s eco-friendly policy, the new *SPACE* complies with Euro IV emission standards.
  
7. Said Mr Lo Chee Wen, Vice President of SMRT Taxis, “SMRT Taxis is pleased to be the first taxi operator in Singapore to offer taxis fitted with automated facilities that cater to wheelchair users.”

**Skills to support special needs commuters**

8. “SMRT also has 60 taxi drivers who are trained as Taxi Medical Chaperones. They are equipped with skills to assist and transport less mobile passengers, as well as knowledge about medical service providers in Singapore,” added Mr Lo.
  
9. Mr Chia Kwee Guan, a 47-year old London taxi driver for four years, is one such chaperone. He attended the training in 2006 and is a certified Taxi Medical Chaperone. Said Mr Chia, “I gain a lot of satisfaction in helping customers with special needs. The Taxi Medical Chaperone training gave me confidence in what I do so that I can ferry them to and from school, work or their medical appointment safely.”

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## **MEDIA FACT SHEET: SMRT CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMME**

### ***SMRT Cares***

At SMRT, we believe our success has to be channeled towards the greater good of the community. Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme sets out to build an inclusive society and to make a positive impact on the economic, social and environmental well being of the communities we serve.

To enhance the lives of those around us, we have a sustained *SMRT Cares* programme of corporate philanthropy, volunteerism, environmental conservation and community outreach.

Some key activities under *SMRT Cares*

- Silver Tribute Fund – focus on the elderly and their caregivers
- SMRT is Green – care for the environment
- SMRT Corporate Volunteer Programme, with three adopted charities:
  - Geylang East Home for the Aged
  - Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centres
  - Singapore Red Cross Blood Donor Recruitment Programme
- SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme – support for the financially needy disabled and less mobile

### ***SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme***

The SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme is a key CSR initiative under *SMRT Cares*, to better the lives of the needy, physically disabled and less mobile in Singapore. It is a concerted effort by the company to dismantle the physical and mental barriers that impede the progress of our disabled citizens, and to provide greater mobility to a less mobile, aging population.

Over the past years, SMRT has rolled out many initiatives under the SMRT Gift of Mobility Programme. These include the provision of wheelchair spaces in our upgraded trains, purchase of wheelchair-friendly Euro V buses, as well as the donation of a van to the Handicapped Welfare Association.

SMRT's Gift of Mobility Programme to four hospitals and two Volunteer Welfare Organisations will provide point-to-point taxi-transfers for the financially-needy disabled and less mobile. The highlights of the new initiative include:

- **SMRT “All-In-One” SPACE taxi** – This is Singapore's first large-capacity taxi (2.5 litre diesel-run Hyundai Starex) that is retrofitted with a hydraulic ramp to provide easy access to wheelchair users.
- **Cash donation of \$180,000 to four hospitals and two VWOs** – SMRT will be donating \$180,000 cash to four hospitals (Alexandra Hospital, Changi General Hospital, KK Women's & Children's Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital) and two VWOs (Bizlink Centre Singapore and Society for the Physically Disabled) for them to disburse money to the financially-needy who require point-to-point travel services.
- **SMRT Taxis Medical Chaperon** – To better cater to the needs of the wheelchair-bound, SMRT has 60 taxi drivers who have been trained as Taxi Medical Chaperons. Certified by the Singapore Taxi Academy, our taxi partners are equipped with skills to assist and transport less mobile passengers as well as knowledge about medical service providers in Singapore.

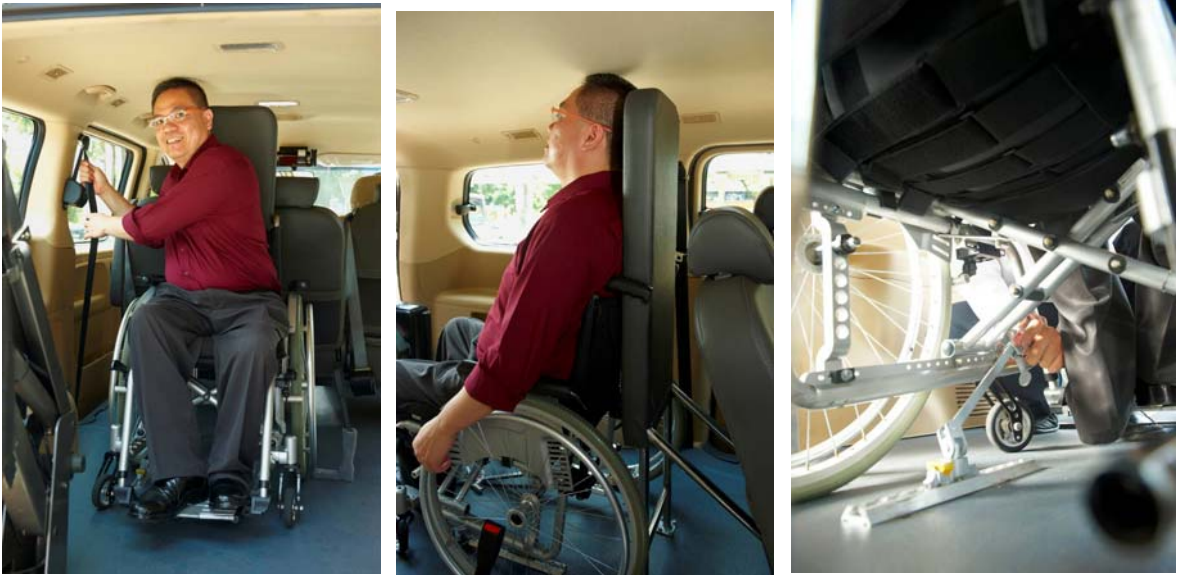
**MEDIA FACT SHEET: ALL IN ONE SMRT SPACE**



The new *All in one SMRT SPACE* is a 2.5-litre diesel-run Hyundai Starex, which seats four adults and one wheelchair passenger comfortably. It features two sliding doors at the side, and has ample legroom and storage space for luggage and bulky items.



The *All in one SMRT SPACE* is the first taxi in Singapore with a fully automated ramp for wheelchair user. The automated ramp provides convenience to both the wheelchair passenger and taxi driver at the touch of a button.



Safety features for our wheelchair passenger onboard the *All in one SMRT SPACE* include a seatbelt, clamp for the wheelchair and a headrest.



The *All in one SMRT SPACE* has a decal at the rear window to highlight its wheelchair-friendly features.