

MEDIA RELEASE

OCBC INKS RM1.4 MILLION SEARCH AGREEMENT WITH SME CREDIT BUREAU

Contract allows Bank hassle-free access to SME credit ratings and reports

Kuala Lumpur, 7 January 2010 – OCBC Bank (Malaysia) Berhad (OCBC Bank) today inked an agreement with SME Credit Bureau (M) Sdn Bhd (SME Credit Bureau) for RM1.4 million worth of credit-related reports on SMEs, the first bank to purchase such reports in volume.

The agreement allows OCBC Bank to “pull” the entire range of reports generated by the Bureau, particularly credit ratings and business information reports on Malaysian SMEs, whenever they are needed for assessing prospective customers.

OCBC Bank has up to three years to utilise the RM1.4 million worth of reports.

Speaking at a signing ceremony to seal the agreement today, OCBC Bank’s Director & CEO Mr Jeffrey Chew said the move enhances the Bank’s already-robust credit assessment structures that currently include tools such as its



Left to right: Mr Wong Chee Seng (Head of Retail Commercial Banking, OCBC Bank); Mr Jeffrey Chew (Director & CEO of OCBC Bank); Datuk Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad (Chairman of SME Credit Bureau), Mr Alex Lim (CEO of SME Credit Bureau) and Mr Eric Chin (Chief Operating Officer of SME Credit Bureau).

proprietary credit scoring model (CSM) and early warning & account monitoring system (EWAMs).

“The signing of this agreement today takes us to yet another level of credit risk management and customer convenience as it both enhances our risk assessment capability as well as ensures we are able to assess loans applications in an even timelier manner.

“It also eliminates past hassles such as having to make piece-meal requests, which can ultimately result in longer turnaround time,” he said, noting that for SME loan applications every minute tends to count.

The SME Credit Bureau was established in 2008 by Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) to provide comprehensive and credible credit information on SMEs in Malaysia. These include information on SME credit ratings, related banking and trade credit data, and other company details. The Bureau is fully supported by Bank Negara Malaysia.

Speaking for SME Credit Bureau, Chief Executive Officer, Mr Alex Lim said the agreement is testimony of OCBC Bank’s confidence in the Bureau as a one-stop provider of quality reports and credible credit ratings.

“The OCBC business development team can expect much faster turnaround when requesting credit rating and business information reports, because they will no longer have to go through the processes involved in obtaining individual reports from various sources.

“We have set up a special account from which they can draw-down reports in a hassle-free manner, until the RM1.4 million is fully utilised.

“We believe this move by OCBC Bank, already one of the biggest lenders to the SME sector, will help further improve SMEs’ access to financing, which is in line with the business objective of the Bureau and Bank Negara Malaysia.

“And once the B2B link between OCBC Bank and the Bureau is completed, information will flow at an even faster rate, almost instant, and this will enable the Bank to respond to the financing needs of SMEs quicker than before,” he said.

Speaking on its broad approach to SME lending, Mr Chew said the Bank continues to maintain its long-held stance of providing meaningful support to SMEs.

“OCBC Bank has long had in place a strong credit risk process that is designed to ensure that, within the limits of the necessary safeguards, we do not miss out on providing assistance to those who are worthy. Now, with our tie up with SME

Credit Bureau, we have even more reason to be confident when lending to the truly worthy prospective borrowers out there.

“Through our experience we know that, given a chance, SMEs can do well. We continue to support the government’s initiatives to assist SMEs and we remain bullish about this sector,” he said.

The SME business, Mr Chew added, has always been important to OCBC Bank as demonstrated by its long history with this segment, recent initiatives, growth, and being recognized as the only foreign bank to be accorded the CGC Top SMI Supporter Award (Financial Institutions).

Also present at the signing ceremony today were Datuk Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad, Chairman, SME Credit Bureau; Mr Wong Chee Seng, Head of Retail Commercial Banking, OCBC Bank; and Mr Eric Chin, Chief Operating Officer, SME Credit Bureau.

About SME Credit Bureau (M) Sdn Bhd

The Bureau was set up by the CGC in 2008 as a major initiative under its transformation exercise to help strengthen the financial positioning of SMEs. As Malaysia’s premier one-stop centre for comprehensive and credible credit information and ratings on SMEs, the Bureau consolidates both positive and negative information obtained from credible sources such as Bank Negara Malaysia and SSM, to provide a balance view of SMEs credit standing.

The credit information and ratings are made available to both SMEs and potential financiers whether they are financial institutions or other credit grantors to ultimately facilitate improved access to financing for Malaysia’s SMEs.

For further information, please visit: www.smeccb.com.

About OCBC Bank

OCBC Bank is Singapore’s longest established local bank. It has assets of S\$188 billion and a network of more than 490 branches and representative offices in 15 countries and territories including Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, Hong Kong SAR, Brunei, Japan, Australia, UK and USA. This network includes more than 380 branches and offices in Indonesia operated by OCBC Bank’s subsidiary, Bank OCBC NISP. OCBC Bank and its banking subsidiaries offer a wide range of specialist financial services, from consumer, corporate, investment, private and transaction banking to treasury and stock-broking services to meet the needs of its customers across communities.

OCBC Bank’s insurance subsidiary, Great Eastern Holdings, is the largest insurance group in Singapore and Malaysia by assets, and its asset management subsidiary, Lion Global Investors, is one of the largest asset management companies in Southeast Asia.

OCBC Bank offers Islamic banking products and services in Malaysia through its wholly-owned subsidiary, OCBC Al-Amin Bank Berhad.

Additional information may be found at www.ocbc.com.