

OCBC SETS UP TRADE FINANCE ACADEMY FOR SMEs

Academy offers training on foundations, technical applications and case studies to equip customers with latest updates on trade finance developments

Kuala Lumpur, 26 May 2009 – OCBC Bank (Malaysia) Berhad has set up a trade finance academy for the staff of its customers to help them gain the most from their trade activities.

The *OCBC Trade Finance Academy*, which initially focuses on providing training in documentary credit for exporters, will later include aspects such as issues facing importers and the effective use of treasury solutions for trade finance.

According to OCBC Bank’s Chairman, Tan Sri Dato Nasruddin Bin Bahari the philosophy of the academy is predicated on three learning bases with incremental benefits: foundational information, technical applications and case studies.

“The systematic courses aim to educate customers on the latest technical and practical skills required to engage effectively in trade finance. And this is all the result of an assessment of the real needs facing SMEs today. SMEs are often unable to optimise on opportunities that are presented to them due to lack of know-how in trade finance, especially when there is attrition involving key staff who previously dealt with this aspect of their business.



OCBC Bank Chairman Tan Sri Dato Nasruddin Bahari (right) presenting a mock-up book to Head of Global Trade Finance, Ms Chuang Boon Kheng (left), to signify the learning that the OCBC Trade Finance Academy will bring to corporations in Malaysia. Looking on is Head of Group Trade Finance Operations, En Jaafar Abu (centre).

“Accordingly, we expect that the sessions we have on offer would be well-received by our customers, who have already responded favourably to our ongoing one-off seminars. Ultimately, through the efforts of the Academy, we see SMEs being better equipped in order to better manage the cost of running their businesses.

“On top of acquiring fresh technical and practical skills, we believe SMEs that participate in the *OCBC Trade Finance Academy* courses would also be able to save in terms of operating costs and improve their cash flow as the sessions are designed to highlight ways to maximise gains and minimise inefficiencies.

“As we aim to make the complexities of international trade processes less imposing for our customers, we are confident they would ultimately adapt more easily to face the current trade finance challenges and apply their learnings more effectively,” he said.

According to Ms Chuang Boon Kheng, OCBC Bank’s Head of Global Trade Finance, the Bank would initially offer a two-day course, involving six modules, on documentary credit for exporters.

“Each of these full-day training sessions would be restricted to 40 people in order to maintain an interactive learning environment. The courses will be conducted by five OCBC Bank staff with combined related experience of over 100 years.

“Initially, we will hold the sessions at our headquarters at Menara OCBC, Kuala Lumpur, but we plan to progress into other states as well in due course,” she said.

Also present at the launch of the *OCBC Trade Finance Academy* was OCBC Bank’s Head of Trade Finance Operations, En Jaafar bin Abu.

The *OCBC Trade Finance Academy* will roll out its first two-day session on 4 June 2009. There is no charge to attend. For details on how to participate, customers may contact the Bank’s Global Trade Finance Department at 03-27834095.

About OCBC Bank

OCBC Bank is Singapore’s longest established local bank. It has assets of S\$180 billion and a network of more than 480 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 360 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, in terms of assets and market share, and its asset management subsidiary, Lion Global Investors is one of the largest asset management companies in Southeast Asia. Additional information may be found at www.ocbc.com.