Surbana Jurong launches 'Smart City in a Box'

It's an open platform that gels various smart city solutions together

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FROM the monitoring of city traffic conditions, security, energy efficiency to predicting lift breakdowns, mayors and city officials are finally able to do so through one integrated solutions platform.

Surbana Jurong said on Monday that it has come up with a platform dubbed "Smart City in a Box", which gels various smart city solutions together. This open platform allows customisable applications (Apps) to be loaded on a dashboard for city officials to monitor cities, collate and analyse data, and in so doing, deploy solutions to specific problems in a timely manner.

For a start, there are 14 Apps available under the first batch of solutions, with another 13 Apps currently under trial.

By year-end, Surbana Jurong will be upgrading the servers in all 16 town councils here managed by the
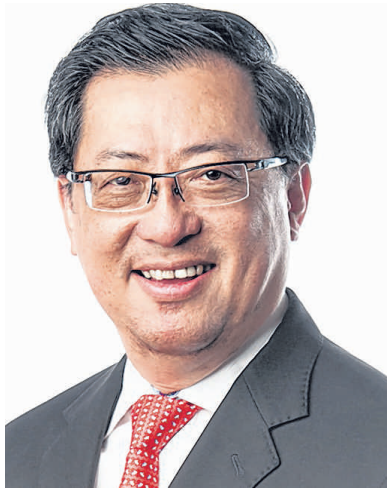
Surbana CEO Wong Heang Fine:
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group to this cloud-based platform, before rolling this out to cities in Africa and China, group CEO Wong Heang Fine told the media.

This platform is also introduced in a hospitality suite at the World Cities Summit at Marina Bay Sands to mayors and city planners from all over the world.

The pool of potential customers extends to any asset owner looking to monitor the security of buildings, energy management and lighting, and the performance of the asset.

"Up till now, Smart City technologies are deployed on a piecemeal basis and are often focused on technologies rather than on how technologies can best help to run a city and benefit the communities and businesses living and interacting there," he said.

"We have developed an integrated smart cities solution that is easy to deploy, customise, maintain, and at the same time, able to upscale over time as cities develop. Taking a leaf from how consumers use Apps in their daily lives, we realised that city planners also need the same convenience of a plug and play integrated solution to manage cities."

The integrated smart city solutions platform is built on Surbana Jurong's some 30 years of deploying its proprietary Integrated Estate Management System (IEMS) in Singapore's public housing estates and culminated from millions of dollars of investment. The IEMS helps to monitor, relay and analyse information to facilitate estate management.

Of the 14 Apps available, about half have already been implemented or tested in existing developments. For instance, the "smart toilet" system that detects if a toilet requires cleaning has been used in Changi Airport, drowning-detection cameras have been tested in one public swimming pool, and smart home solutions have been tested in some newer condominiums. The water quality management App has been tested in reservoirs here.

Other Apps that can now be implemented at a township level include the installation of sensors in homes to detect the well-being of elderly persons and their movements, and predictive lift maintenance, which enables the analysis of data received from sensors installed in lifts to predict breakdowns.

Surbana Jurong has been working with partners to co-develop solutions. They include international players such as DNV GL as well as local firms like ZWECC, a video analytic solutions firm, and a Temasek unit Aetos Holdings.

Said Aetos Holdings vice-president for business development Robin Littau: "By engaging our services through 'Smart City in a Box', one can mitigate fire risks effectively with our innovative early warning Smoke & Fire Detection Camera; conduct covert intelligence gathering with our Social Media Monitoring solution, or even safely immobilise a potentially dangerous vehicle with our Vehicle GPS Tracking System."

Surbana Jurong group chief technology officer and managing director Poon Joe Keen said that all current and future Apps come under four key areas of sustainability, security, people (feedback and engagement) and efficiency (asset upkeep and maintenance).

This technological backbone allows the group to work with cities based on their unique buying power, key priorities, and level of maturity to roll out the right solutions, he added. In other words, this same "Box" offers different applications in every city in the world.

The cost of deploying this platform also varies depending on the extent of infrastructure and monitoring required. Being independently run, the platform can be used across different service and equipment providers. Mr Poon said that future Apps that Surbana Jurong co-develops with its partners will depend on customers' feedback and their needs.

Mr Wong added: "Cities need to be in tune with the residents' needs and demands. Our system provides feedback from residents regarding the level of services and the efficiency of services that the various cities provide."