



Grassroots movement must reach out to non-traditional partners: Chan Chun Sing



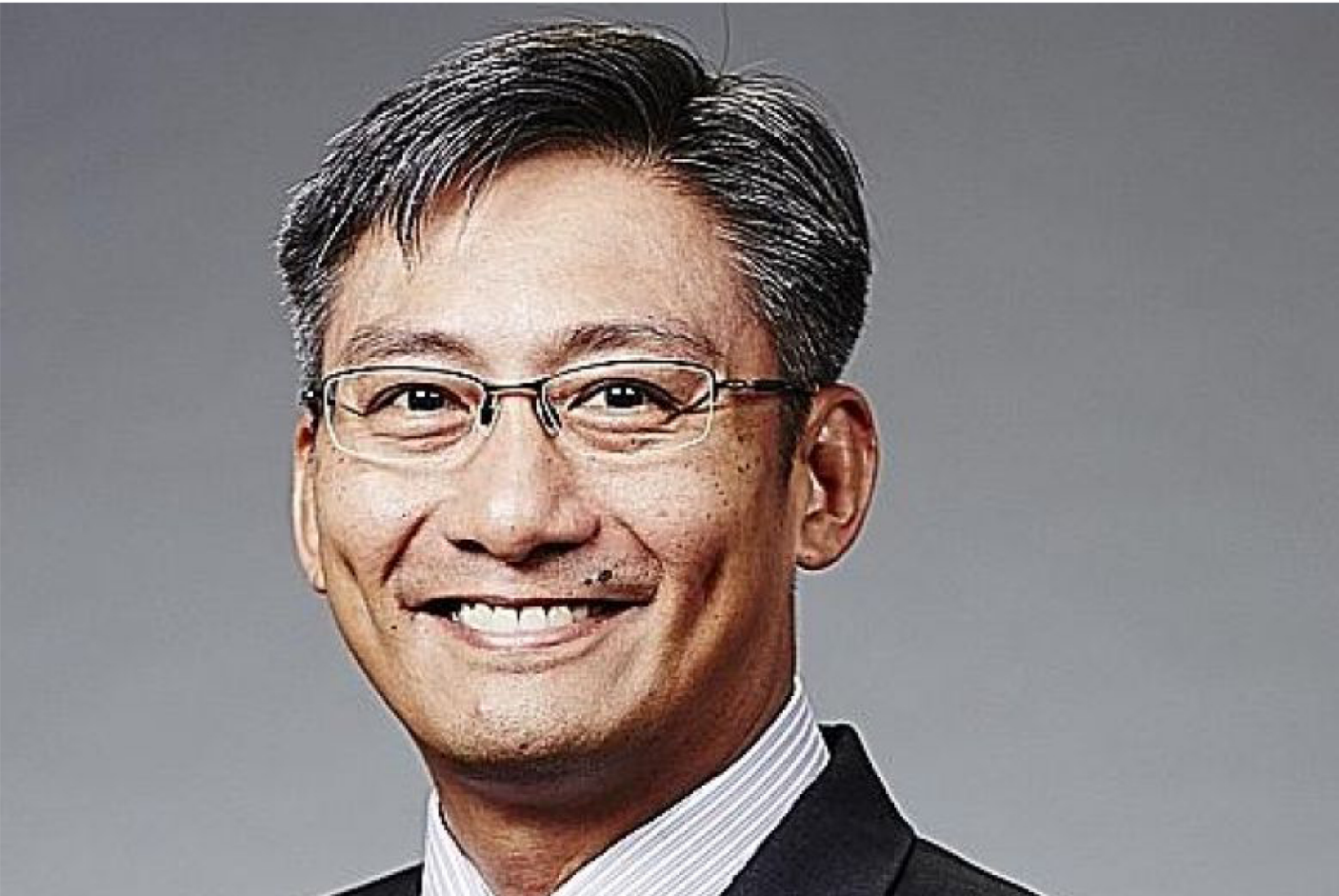
Technology innovations



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Talent retention at organisation above industry norm



DSO chief executive Cheong Chee Hoo said people are "the greatest asset" in the research organisation.

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Despite having only a limited pool of scientific talent to choose from as it can hire only Singapore citizens, DSO has managed to retain its people at a rate above the industry norm.

In a recent media tour of DSO projects, many of the staff said they have worked at DSO for at least 10 years. The average length of service at the organisation is 13 years, while the average age is 39 among its 1,500 or so research scientists and engineers.

"Our people have devoted years with us because we provide challenging and purposeful work in a conducive environment," said DSO chief executive Cheong Chee Hoo.

Some challenges DSO faces include being able to hire only Singaporeans and naturalised citizens due to its sensitive nature of work.

With increasing competition for engineering and scientific talent across the public service and larger firms, the already limited pool of highly trained Singaporeans has become even more sought after, added Mr Cheong.

"Our attrition rate of 4 per cent average over the last three years is below the industry norm. Although pay is not the sole factor in deciding to join or stay in DSO, we are currently competitively positioned in the market."



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With research and development being a long-term endeavour, Mr Cheong stressed the importance of having engineers and scientists who are dedicated and experienced in realising big ideas from start to end.

"The work in DSO is also never a solo effort... We believe in pushing the limits. This is not a mindset and attitude that was built overnight. That is why people will always be the greatest asset in DSO," he said.