



8 January 2018

MEDIA FACTSHEET ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR (GOVERNANCE) BILL

What is the PSGB?

The Public Sector (Governance) Bill (PSGB) serves to strengthen the governance of statutory boards to better deliver services for the benefit of all Singaporeans. It is introduced to standardise key provisions that already exist across many statutory board Acts, formalise alignment with key corporate policies (e.g. human resource (HR), finance, office administration, information and communications technology (ICT) and data policies that are put out for statutory board compliance in the Government Instruction Manuals), and formalise the data sharing framework with strengthened safeguards across government agencies.

Why introduce the PSGB?

2 The constituting Acts of Statutory boards reflect key provisions for good governance. A stock-take of the statutory board Acts showed that, of the key governance provisions that are important to sustain good governance, not all were uniformly present across all Acts, as the Acts were drafted at different times when the statutory boards were set up. While the absence of these provisions has not caused practical problems, it is timely to remove such differences.

3 To standardise the governance standards of statutory boards and enable them to work closely together to provide better public services, we are passing this Bill.

What is the scope of the PSGB?

4 The PSGB covers 61 statutory boards in the Singapore public sector, which have been categorised into three main groups:

- Group 1: Typical statutory boards that fulfil public functions e.g. Housing Development Board, Public Utilities Board
- Group 2: Professional boards established to self-regulate members of their respective professions e.g. Board of Architects, Singapore Medical Council
- Group 3: Bodies whose main function is to represent particular community interests or the volunteer movement e.g. Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura

5 The complete list of the agencies under each group can be found in the Schedule of the Bill.

What does the PSGB do?

6 The PSGB will institutionalise a clearer and more consistent governance framework for statutory boards through the following:

- a. Standardise key governance requirements across statutory board Acts, particularly in the four main areas of governance that are already present in many statutory board Acts:
 - i. The power for the Minister charged with the responsibility for a statutory board to give it directions on the performance of its functions.
 - ii. Personnel matters regarding the role, appointment, removal, promotion and discipline of the Chief Executives of statutory boards.
 - iii. The requirement for statutory board Governing Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest.
 - iv. Finance-related requirements relating to the preparation and adoption of budget estimates, the keeping of proper accounts, audit requirements and the presentation of the audited financial statements and annual reports to Parliament.
- b. Formalise existing administrative requirements for statutory boards to comply with key central policies in HR, finance, office administration, and ICT.
- c. Formalise the data sharing framework. The bill formalises existing data sharing practises. Agencies can share data for the seven purposes indicated in the Bill (clause four). The bill also clarifies the responsibilities of agencies involved in data sharing. Information that is currently protected by specific legislation, such as the Income Tax Act, the Banking Act and the Statistics Act, will continue to be protected and not be affected by this bill. To strengthen safeguards, the government will enhance existing processes, including the conduct of regular audits, removing personal identifiers where appropriate, and limiting access to sensitive personal data. Criminal offences for data-related offences will also be introduced in the bill.

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