

# STATISTICS ACT

## (CHAPTER 317)

An Act relating to statistics.

[7th September 1973]

### Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the Statistics Act.

### Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“anonymised microdata” means particulars or information pertaining to any person which is in a form that conceals or protects the identity of that person, whether by presenting such particulars or information in statistical form or otherwise, such that the identity of that person cannot be readily discovered or ascertained from the particulars or information;

“public agency” means a public officer, an Organ of State or a ministry or department of the Government, or a public authority established by or under any written law for a public purpose or a member, an officer or an employee thereof;

"requisition" means a requisition issued under section 5;

“research and statistics unit” means a research and statistics unit specified in the Second Schedule;

“statistical purposes” means the compilation of statistics or the preparation of anonymised microdata relating to any subject matter listed in the First Schedule.

### Statistics Department and research and statistics units

3. —(1) The Department of Statistics and all research and statistics units may, in accordance with the provisions of this Act, collect and process data for statistical purposes.

(2) The Department of Statistics shall be under the control and management of a Chief Statistician and such other officers as the Minister may appoint.

(3) A research and statistics unit shall be under the control and management of a director and such other officers as the appropriate Minister responsible for the unit may appoint.

## **National statistical co-ordinator**

**4.** —(1) The Chief Statistician shall be the national statistical co-ordinator whose duties shall be —

(a) to co-ordinate statistical activities in public agencies, including the allocation of the subject matters in respect of which research and statistics units may exercise their powers under section 5;

(b) to advise public agencies in the gathering, compiling, analysis and utilisation of statistics;

(c) to develop national statistical standards and standardise definitions, classifications, terms, procedures and concepts for use in statistical activities; and

(d) to promote the observance of approved national statistical standards by public agencies.

(2) All research and statistics units shall comply with the recommendations of the Chief Statistician on any matter specified in subsection (1) (c) and (d).

(3) If a research and statistics unit refuses to accept a recommendation of the Chief Statistician, the director of the research and statistics unit shall notify the Chief Statistician in writing of such refusal and the reasons therefor.

(4) On receipt of any notice from a research and statistics unit under subsection (3), the Chief Statistician shall —

(a) reconsider the recommendation in question; and

(b) in the event of the inability of the Chief Statistician to rescind or revise the recommendation, refer the matter to the Minister who shall give directions to the research and statistics unit as he thinks fit and that research and statistics unit shall comply with the directions of the Minister.

## **Power of Chief Statistician and director of research and statistics unit to issue requisition for information**

**5.** —(1) It shall be lawful for the Chief Statistician or the director of a research and statistics unit to issue a requisition to any person or the occupier of any premises to furnish particulars and supply information to him, for the purpose of obtaining data for statistical purposes, and every such person or occupier is bound to furnish the particulars and supply the information to the best of his knowledge and belief.

(2) A requisition shall —

(a) be in writing;

(b) be served upon the person to whom it is addressed or the occupier of any premises, as the case may be, in the manner specified in section 11; and

(c) specify the particulars of information required.

(3) A requisition may —

(a) specify the form in which and the time within which the particulars and information are to be furnished;

(b) require the particulars and information to be furnished periodically at or within such time or times and in such form or forms as are specified in the requisition; and

(c) specify the place or manner at or in which the particulars and information are to be delivered.

(4) No person is bound to furnish any particulars or information other than those which are accessible to him or derived by him from any business, occupation or work in the conduct or supervision of which he is engaged.

### **Power to request information from research and statistics units and other public agencies**

**6.** —(1) For the purpose of obtaining data for statistical purposes, the Chief Statistician may in writing direct —

(a) the director of any research and statistics unit to furnish or supply to him any particulars or information obtained pursuant to any requisition issued by the director under section 5; or

(b) any public agency to furnish or supply to him any particulars or information in the possession of the public agency, whether or not —

(i) the particulars or information were provided to the public agency by another person or public agency (referred to in this section as the data source); or

(ii) the public agency directed to furnish the particulars or information, or the data source, is under any obligation (whether imposed by any written law or otherwise) not to disclose the particulars or information.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act or any other written law, the director of any research and statistics unit or the public agency shall furnish the particulars and information as directed under subsection (1) except, in relation to a direction under

subsection (1)(b), any particulars or information which have been exempted from being so furnished by —

(a) the Minister responsible for the public agency directed to furnish or supply the particulars or information under subsection (1)(b); or

(b) the Minister responsible for the data source.

(3) All particulars and information required to be furnished under subsection (1) shall be furnished within such time as may be agreed to between the Chief Statistician and the director of a research and statistics unit or the public agency, as the case may be.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act or any other written law —

(a) no person shall be guilty of an offence under this Act or that other written law or of any breach of confidence or incur any liability, criminal or civil, by virtue merely of his disclosing any particulars or information to the Chief Statistician pursuant to any direction under subsection (1); and

(b) no officer of the Department of Statistics (including the Chief Statistician) shall be guilty of an offence under this Act or that other written law or incur any liability, criminal or civil, by virtue merely of his assessing, or disclosing to another officer of the Department of Statistics, any particulars or information obtained pursuant to any direction under subsection (1), in the performance of his duties or functions as an officer of the Department of Statistics.

(5) Subsection (1) shall not apply to any particulars or information obtained under any written law administered by the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

### **Disclosure of information**

7. —(1) No person shall disclose any particulars or information obtained under section 5 or 6 in a form that may identify any person without the prior consent in writing of the person that may be identified by such disclosure.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Chief Statistician or the director of a research and statistics unit, as the case may be, may disclose particulars or information obtained under section 5 or 6 —

(a) as statistics which do not identify any person;

(b) as anonymised microdata to —

(i) any public agency; or

(ii) any other person within a class specified in the Third Schedule;

(c) for the purposes of any proceedings for an offence under this Act or any report of those proceedings;

(d) that are of a general nature relating to the products or services provided by, the number of employees in or the addresses of, an establishment; or

(e) that are already available in the public domain.

(3) The Chief Statistician or the director of a research and statistics unit may, in respect of any particulars or information disclosed to any person under subsection (2), impose conditions as to the use of such particulars or information by notice in writing to that person.

(4) If any person discloses any returns or any particulars or information contrary to this section, or fails to comply with any conditions imposed on him under subsection (3), he shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

### **Impersonation of statistical officer**

**8.** —(1) Any person who impersonates a statistical officer shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.

(2) In this section, statistical officer means —

(a) an officer of the Department of Statistics; or

(b) an officer of a research and statistics unit.

### **Penalties**

**9.** —(1) Any person who —

(a) wilfully refuses or without lawful excuse (the proof of which lies on him) neglects to furnish the particulars or information required by a requisition within the time allowed for furnishing them or to furnish them in the form specified or prescribed, or to authenticate them in the prescribed manner, or to deliver them at the place or in the manner specified or prescribed for the delivery thereof;

(b) wilfully furnishes or causes to be furnished any false particulars or information in respect of any matter specified in the requisition requiring particulars or information to be furnished; or

(c) refuses to answer, or wilfully gives a false answer to, any question necessary for obtaining any information or particulars required by a requisition to be furnished under this Act,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not exceeding \$100 for every day during which the offence continues after conviction.

(2) A certificate under the hand of the Chief Statistician or the director of a research and statistics unit stating that such returns have not been furnished or are incorrect shall be prima facie evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

### **Composition of offences**

**10.** The Chief Statistician or the director of a research and statistics unit may compound any of the offences under section 9 (1) by accepting from a person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence a sum not exceeding \$200.

### **Service of requisition**

**11.** (1) Subject to any rules made under section 12, a requisition may be served as follows:

(a) in the case of an individual —

- (i) by delivering it to the individual personally;
- (ii) by leaving it with an adult person apparently resident at, or by sending it by pre-paid registered post to, the usual or last known address of the place of residence of the individual;
- (iii) by leaving it with an adult person apparently employed at, or by sending it by pre-paid registered post to, the usual or last known address of the place of business of the individual; or
- (iv) by affixing a copy of the requisition in a conspicuous place at the usual or last known address of residence or business of the individual; or

(b) in the case of a partnership other than a limited liability partnership —

- (i) by delivering it to any one of the partners or the secretary or other like officer of the partnership;
- (ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by pre-paid registered post to, the principal or last known place of business of the partnership in Singapore; or
- (iii) by sending it by facsimile transmission to the fax transmission number operated at the principal or last known place of business of the partnership in Singapore; and

(c) in the case of any limited liability partnership or any other body corporate

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- (i) by delivering it to the secretary or other like officer of the body corporate or, in the case of a limited liability partnership, the manager thereof;
- (ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by pre-paid registered post to, the registered office or principal office of the limited liability partnership or body corporate in Singapore; or
- (iii) by sending it by facsimile transmission to the fax transmission number operated at the registered office or principal office of the limited liability partnership or body corporate in Singapore.

(2) Any requisition to be served on the occupier of any premises may be served by delivering it to an adult person on the premises or, if there is no such person on the premises to whom it can with reasonable diligence be delivered, by affixing the requisition to a conspicuous part of the premises.

(3) Any requisition to be served on the occupier of any premises shall be deemed to be properly addressed if addressed by the description of the occupier of the premises without further name or description.

(4) If the person on whom service is to be effected has an agent within Singapore, the requisition may be delivered to the agent..

## **Rules**

**12.** —(1) The Minister may make rules —

- (a) regulating the method of collecting data for statistical purposes, the staff to be employed in connection therewith, the duties to be performed and the publication to be issued;
- (b) prescribing the forms in which and the times, places and manner at and in which particulars or information shall be furnished, and the manner in which they shall be authenticated, and any other thing which under this Act is to be prescribed;
- (c) exempting from the obligation to furnish particulars or information under this Act, either wholly or partly and either unconditionally or subject to such conditions as may be prescribed; and
- (d) generally for carrying out the purposes and provisions of this Act.

(2) All rules made under this section shall be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication in the *Gazette*.

### **Amendment of Schedules**

**13.** —(1) The Minister may, by order in the *Gazette*, amend the First, Second or Third Schedule.

## **FIRST SCHEDULE**

Sections 2 and 13

### **SUBJECT MATTERS**

- 1.** Accidents
- 2.** Agriculture
- 3.** Animal husbandry
- 4.** Banking
- 5.** Births and deaths
- 6.** Building
- 7.** Citizenship
- 8.** Commerce
- 9.** Communications
- 10.** Construction
- 11.** Crime
- 12.** Culture
- 13.** Education
- 14.** Energy
- 15.** External trade
- 16.** Family planning
- 17.** Fisheries
- 18.** Forestry
- 19.** Finance
- 20.** Health
- 21.** Housing
- 22.** Immigration and emigration
- 23.** Income and expenditure
- 23A.** Information and communications technology
- 24.** Insurance
- 25.** Internal trade
- 26.** Labour
- 27.** Land use
- 28.** Manpower
- 29.** Manufacturing
- 30.** Marriage and divorce
- 31.** Meteorology

32. Mining
33. Narcotics
34. Pollution
35. Population
36. Power
37. Prisons
38. Quarrying
39. Recreation
40. Social security
41. Sports
42. Tourism
43. Transport
44. Utilities.

## **SECOND SCHEDULE**

Sections 2 and 13

### **RESEARCH AND STATISTICS UNITS**

1. Economic Research Department of the Building and Construction Authority.
2. Research and Statistics Unit of the Economic Development Board.
3. Management Information and Research Branch of the Ministry of Education.
4. Planning Division of the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.
5. Health Information Operations of the Ministry of Health.
6. Manpower Research and Statistics Department of the Ministry of Manpower.
7. Financial Surveillance Division of the Monetary Authority of Singapore.
8. Strategic Planning Division of the Info-communications Development Authority of Singapore.

## **THIRD SCHEDULE**

Sections 7(2)(b) and 13

### **SPECIFIED CLASS**

1. Any consultant commissioned by a public agency.