

SINGAPORE STANDARD OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION 2010

Introduction

The Singapore Standard Occupational Classification (SSOC) is designed for use in the collection of data (e.g. censuses, surveys, administrative records) that requires the classification of occupations. It is also used in the compilation, presentation and analysis of a wide range of statistics, including demographic, social and labour statistics. To ensure the continuing relevance of the SSOC, the classification is revised and updated regularly, taking into account economic, technological and organisational changes which tend to bring about emergence of new types of work as well as redundancy of some existing jobs.

2 The SSOC 2010 adopts the basic framework of the International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008 (ISCO-08) with appropriate modifications to take into account changes in Singapore's employment landscape while enhancing international comparability. It replaces the SSOC 2005 which was based on ISCO-88.

Scope of the Classification

3 The SSOC 2010 is a classification of occupations according to the type of work performed. Its primary objective is to classify the occupations of the civilian working population, but with provisions for the collective classification of those in the armed services and the foreign diplomatic personnel. It is not applicable to the economically inactive population such as housewives, full-time students, retired persons and voluntary social workers.

Principles of the Classification

4 The basic principle used in the classification of occupations in the SSOC 2010 is the main type of work performed. Persons who perform the same principal tasks are considered as doing the same type of work and classified under the same occupational group irrespective of work experience, skills and qualifications.

5 In defining the broad types of work in the SSOC 2010, the basic concept of skill is adopted. Skill refers to the ability to carry out the tasks and duties of an occupation and has the following two dimensions:

- a **Skill level**, which is a function of the complexity and range of the tasks and duties involved; and
- b **Skill specialisation**, defined by the field of knowledge required, the tools and machinery used, the materials worked on or with, as well as the kinds of goods and services produced.

6 There are basically four broad skill levels which can be defined in operational terms as follows:

- a The **first skill level** is defined as requiring primary or no education.
- b The **second skill level** is defined as requiring secondary or post secondary education.
- c The **third skill level** is defined as requiring tertiary education leading to an award not equivalent to a first university degree.
- d The **fourth skill level** is defined as requiring tertiary education leading to a university or postgraduate university degree, or the equivalent.

7 The use of educational categories to define the four skill levels does not imply that the skills necessary to perform the tasks and duties of a given job can be acquired only through formal education. The skills may be, and often are, acquired through informal training and experience. In addition, the focus is on the skills required to carry out the tasks and duties of an occupation and not on whether a worker in a particular occupation is more or less skilled than another worker in the same occupation.