

Statistics (Amendment) Bill

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Bill No: 24/2009

Read the first time: 23rd November 2009

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Statistics (Amendment) Bill

Bill No. 24/2009

Read the first time on 23rd November 2009.

An Act to amend the Statistics Act (Chapter 317 of the 1999 Revised Edition).

Be it enacted by the President with the advice and consent of the Parliament of Singapore, as follows:

Short title and commencement

1. This Act may be cited as the Statistics (Amendment) Act 2009 and shall come into operation on such date as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, appoint.

Amendment of section 2

2. Section 2 of the Statistics Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the definition of “competent authority” and substituting the following definitions:

““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;”; and

- (b) by deleting the full-stop at the end of the definition of “requisition” and substituting a semi-colon, and by inserting immediately thereafter the following definitions:

““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.”.

Amendment of section 3

3. Section 3 of the Statistics Act is amended by deleting subsection (1) and substituting the following subsection:

“(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.”.

Amendment of section 4

4. Section 4 of the Statistics Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “Government departments, Ministries, research and statistics units and statutory bodies” in subsection (1)(a) and substituting the words “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) by deleting the words “Government departments, Ministries, research and statistics units and statutory bodies” in subsection (1)(b) and (d) and substituting in each case the words “public agencies”; and
- (c) by deleting the words “specified in the Second Schedule” in subsections (2) and (3).

Amendment of section 5

5. Section 5 of the Statistics Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting subsection (1) and substituting the following subsection:

“(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.”; and

- (b) by inserting, immediately after the word “addressed” in subsection (2)(b), the words “or the occupier of any premises, as the case may be,”.

Amendment of section 6

6. Section 6 of the Statistics Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting subsections (1) to (4) and substituting the following subsections:

“(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 accessing, 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.”; and

- (b) by deleting the words “competent authorities” in the section heading and substituting the words “public agencies”.

Repeal and re-enactment of section 7

7. Section 7 of the Statistics Act is repealed and the following section substituted therefor:

“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