

REPLACEMENT OF THE SAFNA ACT

A. The SAFNA Act to be replaced by the National Symbols Act

1. The SAFNA Act, also known as the Singapore Arms and Flag and National Anthem Act, was introduced following the introduction of the State Crest, National Flag and National Anthem in 1959, when Singapore gained self-governance and inaugurated our first Malayan-born Head of State. Since then, other National Symbols have been introduced, namely, the National Pledge in 1966, the National Flower in 1981, and the Lion Head symbol in 1985. As the SAFNA Act has not been amended since 1959, these symbols have not been recognised formally in legislation. We are also proposing the inclusion of the Presidential Symbols and the Public Seal under the Act, given that the President is the Head of State and the Public Seal represents the Republic.

2. The SAFNA Act will be replaced by a National Symbols Act to include the following, in addition to the existing State Crest, National Flag and National Anthem:

- i. National Flower;
- ii. National Pledge;
- iii. Lion Head Symbol;
- iv. Presidential Symbols (Presidential Crest, Presidential Standard, and Presidential seal); and
- v. Public Seal¹.

B. Update the penalties under the SAFNA Act for misuse of National Symbols

3. We can allow more use of the National Symbols for expressing national pride and solidarity, if we are able to put in stronger safeguards to prevent their disrespectful use. Public feedback on extending use of the National Symbols was also consistently accompanied by requests for more robust public education efforts and penalties for deliberate misuse. The current penalty for offences under the SAFNA Act, if convicted, is a fine not exceeding \$1,000, an amount set in 1959.

4. Under the new National Symbols Act, offenders may face a maximum fine of \$30,000 or a maximum of six months' imprisonment or both. The new penalty is similar to the existing penalties for defacing a national monument under the Preservation of

¹ See Annex B for images of the Presidential Symbols and the Public Seal.

National Monuments Act 2009. As not all offences are deemed equally severe, the precise penalties for individual offences will be calibrated in the regulations. As an alternative to prosecution, the offences can also be compounded for an amount not exceeding \$2,000.

C. Provide for a specified person to approve any matter relating to the use of a National Symbol or Presidential Symbol under the new regulations.

5. This new regulation will provide for a specified person such as the Minister to approve specific uses of the symbols under the new National Symbols Act. For instance, under the new regulations, an exception can be made by the Minister to allow the display of the National Flag outside the National Day period, which is currently fixed from July to September annually.

IMAGES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SYMBOLS AND PUBLIC SEAL

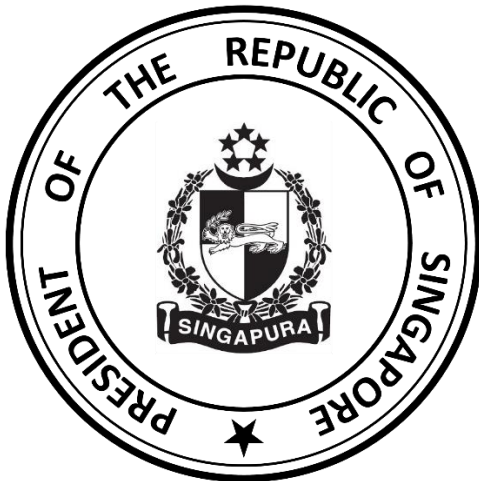
Presidential Crest



Presidential Standard



Presidential seal



Public Seal

