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Infrastructure Protection Bill 2017

11 September 2017

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1. The Infrastructure Protection Bill was introduced for First Reading in Parliament today, as part of the Ministry of Home Affairs' (MHA) counter-terrorism strategy to keep Singapore safe and secure.

Background

2. Buildings which house essential services, are iconic, or with high human traffic, could be targeted by terrorists, with the intent of disrupting such services or inflicting mass casualties. Therefore, it is important to ensure that there are adequate building security measures in place. Such measures, which include video surveillance, security personnel, vehicle barriers, and strengthening the building against blast effects, will help deter and deny attackers, as well as minimise casualties and damage in an attack. Where possible, security measures should be incorporated at the building design stage as it is the more cost-efficient and effective way to secure a building.

3. The Bill will:

(i) Require selected new buildings in Singapore to integrate security measures within their design before they are built, and selected existing buildings to do so when they are about to be renovated;

(ii) Allow MHA to direct selected buildings to put in place security measures to protect against terrorist attacks; and

(iii) Provide security personnel of sensitive installations with powers to deal with threats to the installation.

Key Provisions of the Infrastructure Protection Bill

Enhancing Building Security in Singapore

4. The Bill will allow MHA to designate selected new buildings as 'Special Developments', and selected existing buildings as 'Special Infrastructures'. These buildings will need to address security risks as part of the building's design before they are built or when they are about to be renovated. MHA's approval of the security plans for the buildings will need to be obtained before construction or renovation can commence. This requirement may apply to critical infrastructure providing essential services, and iconic or large commercial developments.

5. The Bill will also allow MHA to direct owners of selected buildings to put in place security measures, such as vehicle barriers or video surveillance, to guard against terrorist attacks.
6. In addition, if a terrorist attack is assessed to be imminent, emergency orders can be issued to protect a building; for example, orders can be issued to close part of the building or deploy additional security measures.
7. However, as far as possible, MHA will continue to try to rely on engagement with facility owners to persuade them to develop and implement practical security measures.

Enhancing Security Powers to Protect Sensitive Installations

8. Under the existing Protected Areas and Protected Places Act (PAPPA), sensitive installations (such as military camps and immigration checkpoints) are declared as Protected Areas (PAs) or Protected Places (PPs) if public access needs to be controlled for security reasons.
9. The Bill will enhance the security of PAs and PPs by giving the security personnel of these sensitive installations, powers to deal with threats in the surrounding area. This will include powers to question suspicious persons and inspect their belongings, and to require them to leave the area.
10. The Bill will also make unauthorised photography and videography of PAs or PPs an offence, to prevent surveillance by terrorists. Security personnel will be able to stop persons from taking photographs and videos, and take follow-up actions, such as examining and requiring deletion of the photos and videos.
11. The PAPPA will be repealed and the relevant provisions will be incorporated into the Infrastructure Protection Bill.

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