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MAINTENANCE OF RACIAL HARMONY ACT 2025 (RHA)
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Contents

1. General

1.1 What is the Maintenance of Racial Harmony Act 2025 (RHA)?

The RHA consolidates existing legislation that safeguards racial harmony and strengthens Singapore's legal framework to protect racial harmony in a single standalone Act. The RHA takes close reference from existing legislation such as the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act 1990 (MRHA) and the Penal Code 1871, and introduces new measures, including safeguards to prevent entities from being used as vectors of foreign influence.

The RHA has two key objectives:

a. protect racial harmony by prohibiting conduct that promotes enmity, hatred, ill-will or hostility between different races, or incites violence on the basis of race; and
b. safeguard entities whose activities relate to race in Singapore against malicious foreign influence.

1.2 When does the RHA come into operation?

The RHA was passed by Parliament in February 2025 and came into operation on 15 September 2026. The commencement of the RHA does not, by itself, mean that an entity has been designated. An entity becomes a designated entity only from the designation date specified in a *Notice of Designation* that the Competent Authority issues to it.

1.3 Who is the competent authority under the RHA?

The Registrar of Foreign and Political Disclosures, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), is appointed as the competent authority by the Minister for Home Affairs, under section 5(1) of the RHA. The Registrar performs the functions conferred on him under the RHA, including the designation of entities.

2. Designation of Entities

2.1 What is an "entity" under the RHA?

An "entity" is defined under section 11 of the RHA and includes various types of organisations and business structures such as companies, societies, partnerships, sole proprietorships, co-operative societies, trade unions, trusts and unincorporated associations.

2.2 What is a "designated entity" under the RHA?

A designated entity is one that has been designated by the competent authority under section 15 of the RHA. An entity may be designated if the competent authority is satisfied that its primary or other objects, purposes or activities include:

a. representing or promoting the social, economic, political, educational, linguistic, cultural or other interest, or discussing issues relating to, any race in Singapore (including a geographical, linguistic or other subset of any race in Singapore); and

b. the competent authority considers designation necessary or expedient to pre-empt, prevent or reduce foreign influence that may undermine racial harmony in Singapore.

For a start, clan associations and business associations linked to the Chinese, Malay and Indian races will be designated. Other entities may also be designated subsequently if they meet the criteria in section 15 of the RHA. Once designated, the entity is subject to measures under the RHA including reporting requirements and leadership restrictions, to safeguard against foreign influence.

We wish to emphasise that designation is not a reflection of any wrongdoing by the entity and should not be perceived as such. Rather, a designation reflects the competent authority's assessment that the entity is or may be at risk of being a vector for malicious foreign influence, and it is necessary or expedient to designate the entity as a precaution.

2.3 What is the procedure for designation under the RHA?

Before designating an entity, the competent authority will:

a. issue the entity a *Notice of Intended Designation* setting out the grounds for the designation; and

b. allow the entity an opportunity to make representations within 14 days after the *Notice of Intended Designation* is given, or any longer period specified by the competent authority.

The competent authority will consider any representations made before deciding whether to designate the entity. If the competent authority decides to designate the entity, it will proceed to issue the entity a *Notice of Designation.*

2.4 When does the designation of an entity take effect?

The designation takes effect from the designation date specified in the *Notice of Designation* issued by the competent authority. From that date, the entity becomes a designated race-based entity under the RHA and is subject to the applicable requirements stated in Part 4 of the RHA.

2.5 Can an entity appeal against the designation?

There is no mechanism for an entity to appeal against the designation. Once the *Notice of Designation* is issued, the decision is final. A designated entity may, however, apply to the competent authority to have its designation cancelled if it is of the view that it no longer meets the criteria for designation under section 15 of the RHA.

2.6 How does an entity submit a representation against its intended designation?

A representation against an intended designation must be made in writing and in English. It should identify the entity and its authorised representative, be signed and dated by the authorised representative, and set out the relevant facts, issues and reasons why the entity considers that it should not be designated, including the extent (if any) to which the entity contends that the intended designation is based on an error of fact or is wrong in law. The representation should be accompanied by a copy of the *Notice of Intended Designation* as well as all relevant supporting documents.

Representations must be submitted to the competent authority within 14 days from the date of *Notice of Intended Designation* or any longer period specified by the competent authority.

2.7 Will the designation of an entity be made public?

Yes. To promote transparency, the list of designated entities will be published on the MHA website.

2.8 What are the requirements that a designated entity has to comply with under the RHA?

A designated entity has to comply with the following requirements under Part 4 of the RHA:

a. submit a key management report detailing its governing body composition within 60 days of the designation date. Thereafter, for any subsequent changes to the governing body composition, an updated key management report detailing the changes must be submitted no later than 30 days after the date the change takes effect;

b. comply with the leadership restrictions set out in sections 23 and 24 of the RHA, i.e. that the responsible officers of the entity must be Singapore citizens or Singapore permanent residents; and more than half of the total number of seats of the governing body must be occupied or held by Singapore citizens; and

c. submit an annual declaration of foreign donations, anonymous donations and foreign affiliations by 1 April each year for the preceding reporting year.

Failure to comply with the above obligations is an offence under section 22 of the RHA read with Regulations 26 – 29 of the Maintenance of Racial Harmony (Measures Against Foreign Influence) Regulations 2026 (as the case may be).

2.9 Does designation prevent an entity from receiving foreign donations or having foreign affiliations?

No. The requirements imposed on designated entities focus on disclosure and transparency. Designation does not, by itself, prohibit an entity from receiving foreign donations or having foreign affiliations. The designated entity must, however, declare reportable donations and foreign affiliations in accordance with the RHA.

3. Governing Body Disclosures and Leadership Restrictions

3.1 What is meant by "governing body"?

The governing body is the group of elected or appointed individuals entrusted with the leadership and management of the entity. The governing body is:

a. for a society registered under the Societies Act 1966 - the committee of the society;

b. for a company as defined by the Companies Act 1967 - the board of directors; and

c. for a partnership, including a limited partnership and a limited liability partnership - the partners.

3.2 Who are the "responsible officers" of an entity?

The responsible officers of the entity are:

a. for a society registered under the Societies Act 1966 - the president, secretary and treasurer.

b. for a company as defined by the Companies Act 1967 - the chairperson of the board of directors, the chief executive officer (whether called by that title or by some other title such as managing director), and the company secretary.

c. for a partnership, including a limited partnership or limited liability partnership - every partner.

If any of these offices are vacant, a person carrying out the duties of that office may be treated as the responsible officer.

3.3 What are the leadership restrictions under the RHA?

A designated entity must ensure that:

a. more than half of the total number of seats of the entity's governing body must be occupied or held by Singapore citizens; and

b. responsible officers of the entity must be Singapore citizens or Singapore permanent residents.

(collectively known as the "RHA Leadership Restrictions")

A designated entity must comply with the RHA Leadership Restrictions, unless exempted by the Minister for Home Affairs under section 32 of the RHA. Failure to do so may result in the entity having to remove the relevant responsible officers and/or governing body members, pursuant to a removal direction issued by the competent authority.

3.4 What happens if a designated entity does not meet the RHA Leadership Restrictions at the point of designation?

If a designated entity does not meet the RHA Leadership Restrictions at the point of designation, it should take steps to ensure compliance within the stipulated period as indicated in the *Notice of Designation.* If the entity is unable to comply with the leadership restrictions within the stipulated period, it should provide reasons for the non-compliance and furnish concrete plans to align with the RHA Leadership Restrictions to the competent authority. Designated entities may email MHA_RFPD@mha.gov.sg with their reasons and plans before the end of the stipulated period.

A designated entity with difficulties in meeting the leadership restrictions may apply for approval to deviate from the RHA Leadership Restrictions. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If the entity does not comply with the RHA Leadership Restrictions within the stipulated period, appropriate action may be taken against the designated entity under the RHA, including the issuance of a removal direction where applicable.

3.5 What should a designated entity do if it subsequently ceases to meet the leadership restrictions after designation?

If a designated entity ceases to meet the leadership restrictions under the RHA, it must notify the competent authority within 30 days after the date on which the non-compliance occurs. This includes if:

a. the composition of the entity's governing body changes such that at least half of its total number of seats is occupied or held by individuals who are not Singapore citizens; or
b. a responsible officer of the entity ceases to be either a citizen of Singapore or a Singapore permanent resident.

3.6 When must a designated entity disclose its governing body composition?

<u>Within 60 days of the designation date (Initial disclosure)</u>

A designated entity must submit a key management report detailing its governing body composition to RFPD within 60 days of the designation date.

<u>Within 30 days of any changes (Subsequent disclosures)</u>

Following the initial disclosure, should there be any changes to the entity's governing body, an updated key management report detailing the changes must be submitted no later than 30 days after the date the change takes effect.

The above obligations will continue to apply regardless of whether similar information has already been submitted to its registering or regulatory authority (e.g. ROS or ACRA).

3.7 What information must be disclosed about the governing body?

Under the RHA, a designated entity must disclose the following particulars to the competent authority:

<u>Within 60 days of the designation date (Initial disclosure)</u>

a. Particulars of every individual who is a member of the entity's governing body or a responsible officer – Full name, passport or other identity document number, nationality, date of birth, contact email address, every office he/she holds (including the title), and term of office; **<u>and</u>**

b. The constitution, memorandum or articles of association, trust deed or equivalent instrument of the entity as in effect on the designation date.

<u>Within 30 days of any changes (Subsequent disclosures)</u>

a. An updated list of all individuals who are members of the entity's governing body following the change, including the following particulars of every member – Full name, passport or other identity document number, nationality, date of birth, contact email address, every office he/she holds (including the title), and the effective date of assuming position; and

b. If there are any changes in the entity's constitution, memorandum or articles of association, trust deed or equivalent instrument which directly or indirectly affect the entity's size or composition (or both) of its governing body as in effect at the time of declaration – to upload as a supporting document.

A key management report must be signed by every responsible officer of the designated entity. It must be completed in English and submitted via the Registry of Foreign and Political Disclosures System (RDS) online portal: https://eservices2.mha.gov.sg/rds.

3.8 Is a designated entity still required to make the initial disclosure to the competent authority within 60 days even if there is no change in its governing body based on the recent declaration made to ROS/ACRA?

Yes. A designated entity must still submit a key management report disclosing its governing body composition to the competent authority within 60 days of its designation date as required under section 20(1) of the RHA read with Regulation 22 of the Maintenance of Racial Harmony (Measures against Foreign Influence) Regulations 2026. This is regardless of whether the entity submitted similar information to its registering or regulatory agency (e.g. ROS or ACRA).

4. Changes to Constitution and Other Governing Instruments

4.1 When must changes to the entity's governing instruments be disclosed?

A designated entity must submit a key management report if a change to its governing instrument (constitution, memorandum or articles of association, trust deed or equivalent instrument) affects the size or composition of its governing body. The key management report, together with a copy of the revised governing instrument, must be submitted to the competent authority no later than 30 days after the change takes effect.

4.2 Must changes that do not affect the governing body be disclosed?

No. A change to a governing instrument does not need to be disclosed if it does not directly or indirectly affect the size or composition of the entity's governing body.

5. Annual Declaration of Reportable Donations and Foreign Affiliations

5.1 What are the reporting periods for the annual declaration?

The reporting periods for a designated entity are as follows:

a. <u>Initial reporting period (i.e. the year in which the entity is designated)</u>

   From the date the entity is designated to 31 December of that year (both dates inclusive).

b. <u>Subsequent reporting periods</u>

   From 1 January to 31 December of the relevant year (both dates inclusive)

5.2 When must the annual declaration be submitted?

The annual declaration for foreign donations, anonymous donations and foreign affiliations for each reporting period must be submitted by 1 April of the following year. For example, if an entity is designated on 1 June 2027, an annual declaration for the reporting period 1 June 2027 to 31 December 2027 must be submitted by 1 April 2028, and the next declaration for the reporting period 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2028 must be submitted by 1 April 2029.

5.3 What is a "reportable donation" under the RHA?

A <u>reportable donation</u> includes a single <u>foreign donation of $10,000</u> or more, or a single <u>anonymous donation of $10,000 or more</u>, received by a designated entity during the reporting period, regardless of the intended purpose or payment method of the donations. This includes donations intended for use outside Singapore or to be transferred for external causes. As long as the donation is received by the designated entity, it must be reported.

A foreign donation is a donation made by, or on behalf of a "foreign principal". A "foreign principal" refers to either an individual who is not a Singapore citizen and is not a Singapore permanent resident, or an entity which:

a. is constituted or organised under a law of a foreign country and is not registered in Singapore under any written law;
b. has its principal place of business in a foreign country, even if incorporated or registered in Singapore under any written law; or
c. is the government of a foreign country or an authority of the government of a foreign country.

An anonymous donation is a donation made by, or on behalf of, a person whose identity cannot reasonably be ascertained, whether because the donation is made anonymously or because of deception or concealment. Donations from donors who are known to the recipient but have requested the recipient not to reveal their identities are not anonymous donations. Such donations should be reported accordingly.

A donation of any property or services is deemed to be accepted by the designated entity if the donation is received and retained by or on behalf of the designated entity for its use or benefit. If the donation is made to a third party, it would be deemed accepted if the donation is accepted by the third party as payment towards any expenditure that is incurred by, or that would otherwise be incurred by the designated entity.

5.4 What are some examples of donations that do not need to be reported?

A designated entity need not report:

a. any foreign or anonymous donations consisting of money that is less than $10,000 in value; and
b. any non-monetary donations (i.e. gifting, transfer of property, provision of services or facilities), unless additional reporting requirements apply to the entity.

5.5 What information is required for the purposes of the annual donation report?

A designated entity must provide the following information:

a. Source of reportable donation, where applicable:
   (i) Foreign individual donor – donor's full name, passport number or other identity document number, nationality, date of birth and email address;
   (ii) Foreign corporate donor – entity's full name, country of incorporation and email address; and

(iii) Anonymous donation if the donation is transferred by a third party – the third party's full name, passport number or other identity document number, nationality, date of birth and email address.

b. Details of reportable donation:
   (i) Amount of the donation in Singapore dollars (rounded up to the nearest whole dollar) when it was received;
   (ii) Manner in which the donation was made (e.g. cash, cheque or electronic bank transfer);
   (iii) Date on which the donation was received and accepted; and
   (iv) The particular purpose for which the donation was made, if any.

5.6 What is considered a "foreign affiliation" under the RHA?

An entity has a "foreign affiliation" if

(a) the entity has an arrangement or an agreement with a foreign principal; and
(b) under the arrangement or agreement –
   (i) the entity is accustomed, or under an obligation (whether formal or informal), to act in accordance with the directions, instructions or wishes of the foreign principal; or
   (ii) the foreign principal is in a position to exercise, in any other way, total or substantial control over the entity's activities in Singapore.

If you are unclear as to whether your entity has a "foreign affiliation", please seek your own legal advice.

5.7 If some of the entity's activities are conducted locally in collaboration with a foreign organisation, would this be considered a foreign affiliation?

The entity should make its own assessment as to whether the arrangement falls within the statutory definition of "foreign affiliation" under section 14 of the RHA. If unsure, please seek your own legal advice.

5.8 What information is required for the purposes of the annual foreign affiliations report?

The entity must provide the particulars of the affiliated foreign individual or foreign entity, together with a description of the arrangement or agreement and when it began. The following details are required:

a. Affiliated foreign individual - Full name, passport number or other identity document number, nationality, date of birth and email address;
b. Affiliated foreign entity - Full name, entity's country and particulars of incorporation and email address; and

c. A description of the arrangement/agreement between the designated entity and the foreign individual/entity, including when and how the arrangement or agreement started and, if it was terminated during the reporting period, when it ended.

5.9 Must an entity submit an annual declaration if it has no reportable donations and foreign affiliations for the reporting period?

Yes. A designated entity with no reportable donations and/or no reportable foreign affiliations for the reporting period is still required to submit an Annual Declaration indicating “Nil”. Failure to submit the required annual declaration may constitute an offence under the RHA.

6. Submission of Declarations and Disclosures

6.1 How does a designated entity submit a declaration?

All declarations must be submitted via the Registry of Foreign and Political Disclosures System (RDS) online portal: https://eservices2.mha.gov.sg/rds by selecting the relevant RHA digital service.

6.2 How can a designated entity access RDS?

A designated entity can log in to the RDS portal using the entity’s Singpass (Corporate) account. To access RDS to submit or verify submission of declarations, the submitter and Responsible Officers must be granted access rights to the RDS digital service, which is listed as “MHA-RDS CP” in their entity’s Corppass account.

6.3 What are the requirements for the submission of the annual declarations for reportable donations and foreign affiliations?

All declarations submitted must:

a. be signed by every Responsible Officer of the designated entity; and

b. be accompanied by:

    (i) [For a donation declaration] A declaration by every Responsible Officer that states that, to the knowledge and belief of every Responsible Officer, the designated entity has not accepted any other reportable donation (other than those in the report) during the reporting period to which the report relates.

    (ii) [For a foreign affiliations declaration] A declaration by every Responsible Officer that states that, to the knowledge and belief of every Responsible Officer, the designated entity has not had any foreign affiliation (other than those contained in the report) during the reporting period to which the report relates.

6.4 Will an entity receive an acknowledgement after submitting a declaration?

Yes. After a declaration is successfully submitted, all the Responsible Officers will receive a system generated acknowledgement via email. If clarification or additional information is required, RFPD may contact the person who submitted the declaration.

6.5 Are hard-copy submissions accepted?

No. Declarations must be submitted online through the RDS portal. A designated entity that encounters difficulties with an online submission may contact RFPD at MHA_RFPD@mha.gov.sg for assistance at the earliest opportunity. Late submissions may constitute an offence.

7. Others

7.1 Can an entity be subject to both the RHA and the MRHA?

Yes. An entity may be subject to the MRHA if it fulfils the criteria of a religious group and may also be subject to the RHA if it fulfils the criteria of a designated entity.

7.2 Does an entity subject to both the MRHA and RHA need to submit two separate declarations?

The requirements differ depending on the type of submission:

Disclosure of governing body composition

An entity must make the initial governing body submission required under each Act when it first becomes subject to that Act. Thereafter, where the reporting processes are aligned, only one submission is required to notify a change to the governing body composition.

Disclosure of reportable donations and foreign affiliations

Only one annual declaration is required where the online reporting process allows a combined submission. An entity that is subject to both the MRHA and RHA requirements should select the RHA category in the RDS portal and submit the Annual Declaration of Donations and Foreign Affiliations.

8. Quick Reference Guide

8.1 Summary of declaration timelines and submission methods

Frequency	Disclosure / Declaration	Timeframe	Submission method
Upon designation (one-time)	Governing body composition (Key Management Report)	Within 60 days of the designation date	RDS portal → RHA / Designated Entity → Disclosure of Governing Body
Annual	Reportable donations and foreign affiliations	By 1 April each year for the preceding reporting period	RDS portal → RHA / Designated Entity → Annual Declaration of Donations and Foreign Affiliations
Ad hoc	Changes to governing body composition (Key Management Report)	Within 30 days of any change to the governing body	RDS portal → RHA / Designated Entity → Updating of Governing Body
Ad hoc	Changes to governing instruments affecting governing body size or composition	Within 30 days of any change that directly or indirectly affects the size or composition of the governing body	RDS portal → RHA / Designated Entity → Updating of Governing Body

9. Contact Us

For enquiries or assistance with RHA reporting requirements, please email the Registry of Foreign and Political Disclosures (RFPD) at MHA_RFPD@mha.gov.sg.