

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES PRO-ENTERPRISE OFFICE (SME PEO)

MR No.: 032/24

1. At the National Day Rally 2024, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong spoke about keeping regulatory burden to a minimum to help businesses foster innovation and manage costs amid growing global competition.
2. While Singapore's strong reputation as a business-friendly economy is supported by an efficient, effective, and fair regulatory regime that facilitates the growth of good businesses, the Government recognises that more can be done to reduce regulatory burden. The Alliance for Action (AfA) on Business Competitiveness, which was set up earlier this year, has also provided feedback that the Government can do more to support enterprises in navigating regulatory requirements.
3. The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for Pro-Enterprise Rules Review chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong was hence formed in April 2024, to look into cross-cutting issues and reducing compliance costs.
4. In line with this spirit of helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) stay competitive and tap on new business opportunities, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Low Yen Ling had announced the establishment of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Pro-Enterprise Office (SME PEO) today, on the sidelines of a visit to ADDP Architects LLP with Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong.
5. Established under Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG), the SME PEO will serve as a one-stop, business-facing entity to assist SMEs with their regulatory feedback. It will support SMEs in navigating Whole-of-Government rules and regulations, especially for nascent or cross-cutting issues. The new office will:
 - a. Triage and direct regulatory feedback received from businesses to relevant Government agencies for review and reply;
 - b. Establish and track Whole-of-Government service standards on regulatory issues; and
 - c. Monitor case resolution outcomes and analyse feedback to identify systemic regulatory issues for early review and resolution.
6. The work of the SME PEO will enable the Government to look into areas for improved regulatory effectiveness, such as better inter-agency coordination, and

shortened process times for regulatory applications and approvals. Examples of common regulatory processes that can be improved include: (a) sequential inter-agency clearances for licensing-related matters that may take a long time, leading to delays and additional operating costs; and (b) complex regulatory requirements that may lead to erroneous or incomplete application submissions.

7. The SME PEO will complement the work of other Government regulatory agencies, which will continue to handle regulatory cases that are straightforward and specific to their agencies, through their own hotlines or feedback channels.

8. The new office is targeted for launch in 1Q 2025. More details will be shared later.

9. Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong said: “At this year’s National Day Rally, Prime Minister Lawrence Wong spoke about the importance of simplifying our regulatory measures so as to reduce the burden on our businesses, especially our SMEs, and help them remain competitive. Over the last few months, we have engaged our SMEs to better understand and address their concerns. As a further step to coordinate follow up efforts by the various agencies and ensure timely resolution of identified issues, we will set up the SME Pro-Enterprise Office (PEO). The PEO will focus on supporting our enterprises, particularly SMEs, as they transform and grow their businesses.”

10. EnterpriseSG’s Managing Director Cindy Khoo added: “The business operating landscape, including the associated regulatory requirements, has evolved over the years and become more complex. Through our engagements with SMEs, we understand that a challenge they face is in navigating multiple regulatory requirements, especially in nascent and cross-cutting areas. The SME PEO will be a central coordinating unit to help SMEs address this, while also working with other regulatory agencies to improve regulatory effectiveness and identify other potential complex issues that may impede industry and enterprise growth.”

**JOINTLY ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE SINGAPORE**

23 September 2024

For media enquiries, please contact:

Gary Wong
Communications and Engagement
Ministry of Trade and Industry
Email: gary_wong@mti.gov.sg

Teo Wan Gek
Communications and Engagement
Ministry of Trade and Industry
Email: teo_wan_gek@mti.gov.sg

Cheng Kiat Loon
Corporate Communications
Enterprise Singapore
Email:
cheng_kiat_loon@enterprisesg.gov.sg

Factsheet on ADDP Architects LLP

Review of Regulatory Approval Processes for Building Works to generate time and cost savings for businesses

1. The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) have been working to transform the regulatory approval process for building works under CORENET X to address key pain points within the Built Environment sector. For instance, Qualified Persons (QPs) had to make separate submissions to agencies, which could lead to conflicting requirements imposed by different agencies. Besides taking more time to resolve, there could be more abortive work downstream, which can incur significant time and cost to rectify.
2. CORENET X consolidates more than 20 approval touchpoints across multiple regulatory agencies into three main submission gateways, Design, Construction, and Occupancy Permit/Statutory Completion. With this upfront coordination, consultant firms like ADDP Architects LLP have been able to put up coordinated submissions and receive consolidated replies from different regulatory agencies at the design, piling and construction gateways, instead of having to liaise with individual agencies separately.
3. ADDP Architects LLP is a multi-faceted architectural firm based in Singapore that has also pioneered the use of prefabricated construction methods locally. It is one of the early adopters and beneficiaries of CORENET X, having used the platform to submit building plans when it was soft launched in December 2023. For a structurally complex project like the Champions Way Condominium, the use of CORENET X with strong support from regulatory agencies has reduced the time taken for ADDP to get approval for their applications. It is estimated that an overall 20% improvement in time taken for regulatory approvals could be achieved due to less iterations with each agency before the respective approval is released. With the new coordinated process for review by agencies and upfront collaboration among consultants prior to submission, potential design conflicts have also been detected and resolved earlier, allowing the construction to proceed with certainty.
4. ADDP's forward thinking, particularly its ability to not only manage and adapt to the change in regulatory approval processes, but to go a step further and leverage on such changes, has put it in a stronger position and increased its market competitiveness. ADDP is now reaping the first mover advantages of onboarding and submitting a project via the CORENET X during the voluntary phase.

For media queries specific to the platform, please contact:

Agency	Name / Designation	Email
BCA	Helen Lee, Senior Communications Manager	Helen_LEE@bca.gov.sg