

IFIAR 2023 Member Profile – ACRA

1. Jurisdiction	1.1 Insert the name of the jurisdiction in English: Singapore
2. Member¹	<p>2.1 Insert the name of the Member, both in the local language and in English:</p> <p>Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA)</p> <hr/> <p>2.2 Include relevant contact information, including postal address, telephone number(s), a general email address (if any) and a link to the Member’s website:</p> <p>55 Newton Road #03-02 Revenue House Singapore 307987 Tel: (65) 6248 6028 URL: www.acra.gov.sg</p> <hr/> <p>2.3 Include the basis for establishment of the Member, as well as the legislation or regulations which provide the Member the authority/mandate with respect to audit regulation. Please describe with an appropriate level of detail the mission and responsibilities of the Member with respect to audit regulation:</p> <p>The Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) is the national regulator of business entities, public accountants and corporate service providers in Singapore. Established under the ACRA Act, it was formed on 1 April 2004, following the merger of the former Registry of Companies and Businesses and the Public Accountants’ Board and is under the purview of the Ministry of Finance (MOF).</p> <p>ACRA seeks to promote a trusted and vibrant business environment in Singapore. With regard to the public accountancy sector, ACRA aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high regulatory compliance to raise the bar for quality audits and financial reporting • Build strong public confidence in audit and financial reporting • Provide influential contributions to audit regulatory developments regionally and internationally

¹ In the case where there are two or more regulators from the same jurisdiction that have been approved according to Section 2.3 of the IFIAR Charter, they together are considered as one Member. In that case, regulators are requested to include information for both organizations in the Member Profile.

	<p>Note: On 9 November 2022, the Accountancy Functions (Consolidation) Act was passed to effect the merger of the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA), the Accounting Standards Council (ASC), and the Singapore Accountancy Commission (SAC) into a single entity. SAC develops the accountancy sector and oversees the Chartered Accountant of Singapore (CA (Singapore)) designation, as well as its qualification programme – the Singapore Chartered Accountant Qualification programme; ASC sets accounting standards for companies, charities, societies, and co-operative societies.</p> <p>The merger will strengthen effectiveness of regulation, standards-setting, and sector development by harnessing synergies across complementary functions.</p> <p>The merged entity will retain the name of ACRA and will take effect on 1 April 2023.</p> <p>2.4 Please indicate whether the Member has responsibility for the following tasks within the area of Audit Oversight:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensing <input type="checkbox"/> Registration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audit and/or Ethics Standard Setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent Education / Continuous Training of Auditors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inspection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>
<p>3. Governing Body Composition and members</p>	<p>3.1 Describe with an appropriate level of detail the current composition of the Member’s governing body, including, where possible, the names, the organization they represent (if any) and brief backgrounds of the governing body members, or provide a link to a page on your website where this information is provided.</p> <p>The highest governing body of ACRA is the ACRA Board whose members are appointed by Singapore's Minister of Finance. The Board comprises individuals from the business, investment and regulation communities, as well as the legal and audit professions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>ACRA Board Members</u> (as of 31 December 2022): <p>2 Audit Practitioners (denoted *); 11 Non-Audit Practitioners</p>

No	Name	Designation / Professional Activity
1	Mr Ong Chong Tee (Chairman)	Chairman, ACRA
2	Mr Ong Khiaw Hong	Chief Executive, ACRA
3	Mr Paul Lee*	Managing Partner, RSM Chio Lim LLP
4	Mr Kevin Wong	Non-Executive Company Director
5	Ms Ameera Ashraf	Partner and Head of Antitrust & Competition Practice, Wong Partnership LLP
6	Mr Mohammad Shariq Sayeed Barmaky*	Audit & Assurance Business Leader, Singapore and Regional Managing Partner, Audit & Assurance, Southeast Asia, Deloitte & Touche LLP
7	Mr Ow Fook Chuen	Accountant-General, Accountant-General's Department
8	Ms Lai Chin Yee	Finance Director, Qian Hu Corporation Ltd
9	Ms Catherine Lee	Independent Director, Far East Hospitality Trust
10	Mr Muhammad Hidhir Bin Abdul Majid	Principal District Judge and Principal Director (Strategic Planning and Research Division), Family Justice Courts
11	Mr Glen Francis	Strategic Advisor, 1CloudHub Pte Ltd
12	Ms Lock Yin Mei	Partner, Allen & Overy LLP

A committee comprising ACRA Board Members called the Public Accountants Oversight Committee (PAOC) is appointed to assist the ACRA Board with matters relating to the regulation of public accountants. The PAOC is responsible for registering, monitoring and disciplining public accountants and public accounting entities, as well as prescribing the code

of ethics, professional conduct and other standards applied by public accountants when providing public accountancy services².

- PAOC Members (as at 31 December 2022)

2 Audit Practitioners (denoted *); 4 Non-Audit Practitioners

No.	Name	Designation
1	Mr Kevin Wong (Chairman)	Non-Executive Company Director
2	Mr Paul Lee*	Managing Partner, RSM Chio Lim LLP
3	Mr Ow Fook Chuen (Temporary Chairman)	Accountant-General, Accountant-General's Department
4	Ms Ameera Ashraf	Partner and Head of of Antitrust & Competition Practice, Wong Partnership LLP
5	Mr Mohammad Shariq Sayeed Barmaky*	Audit & Assurance Business Leader, Singapore and Regional Managing Partner, Audit & Assurance, Southeast Asia, Deloitte & Touche LLP
6	Ms Catherine Lee	Independent Director, Far East Hospitality Trust

The majority of the ACRA Board and the PAOC are made up of non-practitioners.

3.2 What are the eligibility criteria / requirements and composition requirements for the members of the governing body? E.g. Does national legislation require representatives on the governing body from certain organizations, or with specific experience, etc.

ACRA Board

The ACRA Act provides the composition requirement for ACRA Board. The Board consists of the following members, all of whom must be appointed by the Minister for Finance:

- Chairperson;
- Not less than 10 but not more than 15 other members

² “Public accountancy services” means the audit and reporting on financial statements and the doing of such other acts that are required by any written law to be done by a public accountant.

	<p>The members appointed are to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) one public accountant to be selected by Minister from a list of at least 2 public accountants nominated by Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants; and b) one non-practicing accountant to be selected by Minister from a list of at least 2 non-practicing accountants nominated by Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants <p><u>PAOC</u></p> <p>The Accountants Act provides that at least one member of the PAOC shall be a public accountant.</p> <hr/> <p>3.3 Is there a restriction or recusal process that is applicable to members of the governing body of the Member who are current or former auditors/practitioners?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Does this include a “cooling-off” period for former auditors?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes to either of the above, please describe:</p> <p>PAOC members who are audit practitioners or former audit practitioners are recused from meetings / agenda items in which they are deemed to have an interest in (e.g. deliberation of audit inspections of their own / previous firms).</p>
<p>4. Independence safeguards</p>	<p>4.1 Please describe the national independence requirements for the governing body and its members, and legal or regulatory requirements/provisions in place that safeguard their independence from the audit profession.</p> <p>As a general principle, ACRA Board and PAOC members are required to declare all interests such as directorships and external committee appointments upon their appointment by ACRA and also from time to time (arising from changes in appointments). They will also be recused from meetings / agenda items which they are deemed to potentially be in a situation of conflict of interests.</p> <p>Are employees of the Member covered by the same or separate set of independence requirements?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Same set of requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Different set of requirements</p>

	<p>If there are separate independence requirements for employees, please describe:</p> <p>Upon appointment by ACRA, officers are required to declare their interests which includes but not limited to declaration of interests in investment, indebtedness/non-indebtedness, relationships, etc). Officers are also responsible to submit annual declaration of such interests.</p> <p>All officers also have to comply with ACRA’s Code of Conduct which includes internal disclosure policies for officers to raise concerns relating to conflict-of-interest situations.</p> <hr/> <p>4.2 Are there any additional safeguards in place that provide for the Member’s overall independence from the audit profession? E.g. through the appointment process, specific Board actions, etc.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please describe:</p> <p>For the ACRA Board and PAOC, independence is safeguarded by ensuring that the majority of the members comprises non-practitioners. Further, the Chairman of the PAOC is independent from the profession and is not a public accountant. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the PAOC shall have a casting vote.</p>
<p>5. Funding Arrangements</p>	<p>5.1 Describe the main funding arrangements of the Member, including the setting and approval of the budget:</p> <p>ACRA is a statutory body established by Act of Parliament. The composition of funds and property of ACRA is set out in the ACRA Act. In practice, ACRA is self-funding. Its main sources of income are from statutory fees payable under the Acts administered by ACRA (e.g. company, business, public accountant and corporate service provider registration and related fees) and fees from provision of information services related to such entities.</p> <p>On the setting and approval of budget, ACRA’s finance department will first seek inputs from the various departments. Following which, the finance department will seek ACRA Board’s approval for the overall budget. Once approved, ACRA’s parent ministry (the Singapore Ministry of Finance) will be informed of this budget, which will be gazetted as a public announcement.</p> <hr/> <p>5.2 Is the funding free from undue influence by the profession?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Please describe with an appropriate level of detail the safeguards in place to prevent undue influence by the profession:</p>

	<p>ACRA receives fees from the registration of public accountants and public accounting entities, renewal of public accountants' license and audit inspections. These, however, do not form a significant portion of ACRA's funding. Hence, ACRA's funding is not reliant on and cannot be reasonably influenced by the audit profession.</p>
<p>6. Audit Market</p>	<p>6.1 Provide the number of audit firms subject to inspections. Include an indication of the number of public interest audits (PIEs) and other audits that fall under the Member's oversight or mandate.</p> <p>Number of registered public accounting entities and public accountants (as at 31 March 2022)</p> <p>We categorise our inspections into two segments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Firms that audit listed entities: 17 public accounting entities (390 public accountants) ii) Firms that audit non-listed entities: 692 public accounting entities (805 public accountants) <p>6.2 Please describe the sizes (in terms of revenue / number of listed entity clients / number of partners and audit staff / etc. – whichever measure is commonly used and available in your jurisdiction) and market shares of each of the largest audit firms in the Member's jurisdiction.</p> <p>The Big-4 audit firms collectively audit approximately 52% of the 697 entities listed on the Singapore Exchange as at 31 March 2022, (representing about 77% of the total market capitalisation), and the remaining listed entities were audited by the other audit practices.</p>
<p>7. Inspection System</p>	<p>7.1 Does the Member have the responsibility for recurring inspections of audit firms undertaking audits of public interest entities (PIEs)?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>7.2 Is this responsibility undertaken directly or through oversight of inspection conducted by another organization?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directly <input type="checkbox"/> Through Oversight</p> <p>If directly, please describe the responsibility, including the follow-up and reporting process, and the regulatory measures available to be taken as a result of inspections (if described in Question 11 Enforcement, please reference that section for details on such measures).</p>

If through oversight of another organization, please describe with an appropriate level of detail the other organization, its relation to the Member, its role, and the arrangements for oversight by the Member:

ACRA inspects public accountants in accounting entities that audit listed companies and other public interest entities (PIEs). It reviews the firm's quality control policies against the Singapore Standard on Quality Control 1 and recommends improvements where appropriate.

Public accountants that do not audit PIEs are inspected by practice reviewers employed by ISCA and appointed by the PAOC.

7.3 Please describe with an appropriate level of detail the requirements and practices regarding the frequency of inspections:

ACRA adopts a risk-based inspection approach that is calibrated to the complexity of the audits and level of public interest involved.

The audit inspection selection process relies largely on identification and assessment of risk factors relevant to the public accountant / audit engagement. This is crucial as it ensures that ACRA's inspections are targeted towards areas where the potential risks and impact of audit failure are greatest.

The risk profiling of public accountants considers a range of risk factors such as prior inspection results, the number of clients audited, audit fee and size considerations, as well as the concentration of PIEs in the public accountant's portfolio.

To add rigour to the selection process, elements of unpredictability and thematic areas of focus (e.g. inspections focused on the crypto audits or application of new FRs) will also be considered.

7.4 Does the Member have its own inspection staff, use reviewers from the professional body or sub-contract to third parties, independent contractors, etc. for the conduct of inspections? Please tick the boxes that apply: (multiple responses allowed) Note that there is no need to tick a box if non-employee reviewers are used very occasionally and are not a core staffing approach.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees of the Member | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional body |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Third Parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please explain below:

ACRA inspects public accountants in accounting entities that audit listed companies and other public interest entities (PIEs).

	<p>Public accountants that do not audit PIEs are inspected by practice reviewers employed by ISCA and appointed by the PAOC.</p>
<p>8. Licensing</p>	<p>8.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>Licensing</u>, please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through oversight of Licensing conducted by another organization?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directly <input type="checkbox"/> Through Oversight</p> <p>If directly, please describe the responsibility, including any changes, with an appropriate level of detail.</p> <p>If through oversight, please indicate the name of the other organization and its composition. Also, give a description of the powers of the other organization and procedure applied, as well as the role of the Member in these procedures.</p> <p>All public accountants and public accounting entities seeking to provide public accountancy services (regardless whether it is to perform audit on public interest entities) are required to register with ACRA.</p> <p>To register as a public accountant, an applicant has to satisfy prescribed requirements relating to qualifications, practical experience, continuing professional education and membership of ISCA.</p> <p>The general requirements for the setting up of public accounting entities in Singapore include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) One of the primary objects of the entity must be to provide public accountancy services. b) The business of the partnership/corporation insofar as it relates to the supply of public accountancy in Singapore must be under the control and management of one or more partners/directors who are ordinarily resident in Singapore. c) At least two-thirds of the partners/directors must be public accountants (if the partnership/corporation has two partners/directors, then one of those partners/directors must be a public accountant). <p>ACRA PAOC approves the applications for registration of public accountants and public accounting entities. The structure and composition of ACRA’s PAOC is as provided in Section 3 above.</p>
<p>9. Registration</p>	<p>9.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>Registration</u>, please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through oversight of Registration conducted by another organization?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directly <input type="checkbox"/> Through Oversight</p>

	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directly <input type="checkbox"/> Through Oversight</p> <p>If directly, please describe the responsibility, including any changes, with an appropriate level of detail.</p> <p>If through oversight, please indicate the name of the other organization and its composition (i.e. whether practitioners from the audit profession are involved in decision-making). Also, give a description of the powers of the other organization and procedures applied, as well as the role of the Member in these procedures.</p> <p>All public accountants must undertake continuing professional education (CPE) in accordance with the CPE syllabus approved by the PAOC for purposes of registration as a public accountant and annual renewal of certificates of registration. These CPE requirements are set out in the Third Schedule (on renewal) and paragraph 4 of the Second Schedule (on registration) to the Accountants (Public Accountants) Rules. The latest CPE syllabus and requirements (effective for applications for registration submitted on or after 1 January 2023 and the renewal of certificate of registration for 2023) are set out here.</p>
12. Enforcement	<p>12.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>Enforcement</u>, please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through referral to other organization(s)?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directly <input type="checkbox"/> Through Referral</p> <p>If directly, please describe the responsibility and procedures applied (including investigations, disciplinary actions or sanctions), as well as the reporting process for disciplinary action.</p> <p>If through referral, please indicate the name of the other organization and its composition (i.e. whether practitioners from the audit profession are involved in decision-making). Also, give a description of the enforcement powers of the other organization and procedures applied, as well as the role of the Member in these procedures.</p> <p>Under ACRA’s audit inspection programme, ACRA inspects audits performed by individual public accountants to check if they have complied with the auditing standards. The PAOC may impose orders and sanctions against individual public accountants for failure to comply with the auditing standards.</p> <p>Aside from audit inspections, ACRA has a complaints and disciplinary process to deal with complaints about the conduct of public accountants and accounting entities. Where a case has been made following ACRA’s review of the complaint, the PAOC directs the case to the Complaints Committee and/or Disciplinary Committee for an inquiry. Based on outcome of the enquiry and recommendations by the Complaints</p>

	<p>Committee or Disciplinary Committee, the PAOC may impose orders against the individual auditor and/or the accounting entity.</p>
<p>13. Other Responsibilities in Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation</p>	<p>13.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>other tasks within the area of Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation</u>, please describe with an appropriate level of detail:</p> <p>NIL</p>
<p>14. Main Other Responsibilities of the Member <u>outside</u> the area of Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation</p>	<p>14.1 Please describe with an appropriate level of detail, the responsibility of the Member for <u>tasks outside the area of audit oversight or audit regulation</u> such as supervision of financial reporting or securities regulation:</p> <p>Besides audit regulation, ACRA is the national regulator of businesses, companies and corporate service providers in Singapore. Generally, ACRA's functions are set out in section 6 of the ACRA Act. These include the administering the following Acts (aside from the Accountants Act):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Names Registration Act; • Companies Act; • Limited Liability Partnerships Act; • Limited Partnerships Act; and • Variable Capital Companies Act <p>In relation to financial reporting, ACRA enforces director's compliance to lay at annual general meetings financial statements that comply with the prescribed accounting standards in Singapore. To fulfil this role, ACRA administers the Financial Reporting Surveillance Programme under which ACRA reviews selected financial statements of mainly listed companies for compliance with the prescribed accounting standards in Singapore.</p>
<p>15. Member Update for public information (if any)</p>	<p>15.1 Are there any major news, activities, events or updates (on audit matters, the Member's organization, the governing legislation or the authority/responsibilities) that you wish to keep the public informed of since completing last year's Member Profile?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please describe these changes with an appropriate level of detail:</p> <p><u>Accountants (Amendment) Bill</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to the Accountants Act have been passed in parliament in October 2022 and are expected to take effect in 2023. • The key amendments are summarized below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Introduction of inspections on public accounting entities for compliance with quality control standards ("QC inspections"). This amendment allows ACRA to conduct statutory QC inspections

on public accounting entities to ensure compliance with professional standards and the applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and to mandate remediation of lapses and impose sanctions on public accounting entities for significant lapses discovered during QC inspections.

b) **Introduction of a tiered assessment framework for PMP and QC inspections and the corresponding orders that may be imposed.**

The new tiered assessment framework is intended to provide greater distinction within the grading system to drive improvements in public accountants' and public accounting entities' compliance with professional standards.

c) **Provision of powers for the PAOC to require a public accountant who has obtained a "Not Satisfactory" inspection outcome to disclose their audit inspection findings to the audit client of the inspected engagement.**

This will provide greater transparency of public accountants' inspection findings and to enhance the ability of the audit committees to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their auditor. The sharing of inspection findings is also intended to focus the auditor and the audited entity's discussions on measures that are taken to remediate the finding. ACRA will impose such orders on audits of public interest entities.

Accountancy Functions (Consolidation) Bill

- In Jul 2021, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) announced that it will merge the accountancy-related units in ACRA, the Singapore Accountancy Commission, and the Accounting Standards Council into a strengthened accountancy function under one entity ("Merged Entity").
- The Merged Entity will retain the name Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA).
- The merger will be effective from 1 April 2023.