

#### IFIAR 2024 Member Profile - ACRA

1. Jurisdiction	1.1 Insert the name of the jurisdiction in English:
	Singapore
2. Member <sup>1</sup>	2.1 Insert the name of the Member, both in the local language and in English:
	Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA)
	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:
	55 Newton Road
	#03-02 Revenue House
	Singapore 307987
	<u>Tel</u> : (65) 6248 6028
	<u>URL</u> : <u>www.acra.gov.sg</u>
	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:
	The Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) is the national regulator of business entities, public accountants and corporate service providers in Singapore. ACRA was formed as a statutory board on 1 April 2004, following the merger of the former Registry of Companies and Businesses and the Public Accountants' Board. It is under the purview of the Ministry of Finance (MOF). On 1 April 2023, ACRA, the Singapore Accountancy Commission (SAC) and the Accounting Standards Council (ASC) merged as one entity, taking on the name ACRA. Following the merger, ACRA is also responsible for developing the accountancy sector and setting the accounting standards for companies, charities, cooperative societies, and societies in Singapore.
	ACRA seeks to promote a trusted and vibrant business environment in Singapore. With regard to the public accountancy sector, ACRA aims to:
	<ul> <li>Promote high regulatory compliance to raise the bar for quality audits and financial reporting</li> <li>Build strong public confidence in audit and financial reporting</li> </ul>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> 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 <u>both organizations</u> in the Member Profile.

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		Provide influential contributions to audit regulatory developments regionally and internationally
		2.4 Please indicate whether the Member has responsibility for the following tasks within the area of Audit Oversight:
		☑ Licensing □ Registration ☑ Audit and/or Ethics Standard Setting ☑ Permanent Education / Continues Training of Auditors
		<ul> <li>☑ Permanent Education / Continous Training of Auditors</li> <li>☑ Inspection</li> <li>☑ Enforcement</li> <li>☐ Other:</li> </ul>
3	Governing Body	3.1 Describe with an appropriate level of detail the current

## Composition and members

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.

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.

• ACRA Board Members (as of 31 December 2023):

#### 2 Audit Practitioners (denoted \*); 13 Non-Audit Practitioners

N o	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*	Chief Executive Officer, Deloitte Singapore



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 Tan Puay Boon	Chairman, Competition Appeal Board, Ministry of Trade and Industry
11	Mr Glen Francis	Strategic Advisor, Google Cloud
12	Ms Lock Yin Mei	Managing Director, Venture Law LLC
13	Mr Ramlee Bin Buang	Life & Executive Coach and Independent Director, Uyko Advisory
14	Mr Kok Ping Soon	Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Business Federation
15	Ms Yeo Wenshan	Senior Director (Housing), Ministry of National Development

A sub-committee of the Board 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 services<sup>2</sup>.

• PAOC Members (as at 31 December 2023)

#### 2 Audit Practitioners (denoted \*); 6 Non-Audit Practitioners

No.	Name	Designation
1	Mr Kevin Wong (Chairman)	Non-Executive Company Director

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "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.

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	2	Mr Paul Lee*	Managing Partner, RSM Chio Lim LLP
	3	Mr Ow Fook Chuen	Accountant-General,
		(Temporary Chairman)	Accountant-General's Department
	4	Ms Ameera Ashraf	Partner and Head of of Antitrust &
			Competition Practice, Wong
			Partnership LLP
	5	Mr Mohammad Shariq	Chief Executive Officer, Deloitte
		Sayeed Barmaky*	Singapore
	6	Ms Catherine Lee	Independent Director,
			Far East Hospitality Trust
	7	Mr Tan Puay Boon	Chairman, Competition Appeal Board,
			Ministry of Trade and Industry
	8	Mr Winston Ngan	Independent Non-Executive Director,
			HSBC Singapore Limited
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With effect from 1 July 2023, ACRA's inspection powers were expanded to include review of public accounting entities' compliance with quality control standards and anti-money laundering / countering the financing terrorism (AML/CFT) requirements. Given the sensitivity and confidentiality of firm-specific information, the PAOC without any members who are public accountants (referred to as PAOC (Firm Level) are the approving authority in deliberating and deciding on the outcomes for these reviews.

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:

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

The members appointed are to include:



	<ul> <li>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 (ISCA); and</li> <li>b) one non-practicing accountant to be selected by Minister from a list of at least 2 non-practicing accountants nominated by ISCA.</li> <li>PAOC</li> <li>The Accountants Act provides that the PAOC may be appointed from amongst ACRA board or non-board members and that at least one member of the PAOC shall be a public accountant.</li> <li>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?</li> </ul>	
	☑ Yes □ No	
	Does this include a "cooling-off" period for former auditors?	
	□ Yes ☑ No	
	If yes to either of the above, please describe:	
	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).	
4. Independence safeguards	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.	
	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.	
	Are employees of the Member covered by the same or separate set of independence requirements?	
	☐ Same set of requirements ☐ Different set of requirements	
	If there are separate independence requirements for employees, please describe:	



	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.
	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.
	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.
	☑ Yes □ No
	If yes, please describe:
	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.
5. Funding Arrangements	5.1 Describe the main funding arrangements of the Member, including the setting and approval of the budget:
	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.
	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.
	5.2 Is the funding free from undue influence by the profession?
	☑ Yes □ No
	Please describe with an appropriate level of detail the safeguards in place to prevent undue influence by the profession:
	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.
6.	Audit Market	<ul> <li>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.</li> <li>Number of registered public accounting entities and public accountants (as at 31 March 2023)</li> <li>We categorise our inspections into two segments: <ol> <li>i) Firms that audit listed entities: 17 public accounting entities (408 public accountants)</li> <li>ii) Firms that audit non-listed entities: 703 public accounting entities (802 public accountants)</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
		The Big-4 audit firms collectively audit approximately 49% of the 642 entities listed on the Singapore Exchange as at 31 March 2023, (representing about 78% of the total market capitalisation), and the remaining listed entities were audited by the other audit practices.
7.	Inspection System	7.1 Does the Member have the responsibility for recurring inspections of audit firms undertaking audits of public interest entities (PIEs)?  ☑ Yes □ No  7.2 Is this responsibility undertaken directly or through oversight of inspection conducted by another organization?  ☑ Directly □ Through Oversight  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).  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's audit inspection activities relating to public accountants and accounting entities are as follows:

#### (i) Engagement Inspection

An engagement inspection is a review of an audit engagement to assess whether the work performed by the public accountant complies with the professional standards.

#### (ii) Quality Control Inspection

A quality control inspection is a review of the system of quality management established by an accounting entity in compliance with the Singapore Standard on Quality Management (SSQM) 1 and SSQM2, both of which were effective from 15 December 2022.

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 regulatory programme involves ACRA inspectors carrying out both engagement and quality control inspections in the listed companies' segment. ISCA carries out the review of the audits and quality control inspections in the non-listed companies' segment under ACRA's oversight.

The audit inspection selection process relies largely on identification and assessment of risk factors relevant to the audit firms/ public accountants / audit engagements. This is crucial as it ensures that ACRA's inspections are targeted towards areas where the risks and their potential impact of audit quality and reliability of financial statements are the greatest.

For example, the risk profiling of public accountants considers a range of risk factors such as prior inspection results (i.e. engagement and/or quality control), public accountant's workload (measured via the number of clients audited, audit fees, the concentration of PIEs in the public accountant's portfolio and inputs from the Central Triaging & Intelligence team .

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 FRSs) 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 re-	viewers are used very occasionally
	and are not a core staffing approach.	,
	☑ Employees of the Member	☑ Professional body
	☐ Third Parties	☐ Other
	Please explain below:	
	ACRA inspects public accountants in accompanies and other public interest ent	<u> </u>
	Public accountants that do not audit reviewers employed by ISCA and appoin	
8. Licensing	8.1 If the Member has the responsibility whether this responsibility is undertaken of Licensing conducted by another or	en directly or through oversight
	☑ Directly ☐ Through	Oversight
	If directly, please describe the respor with an appropriate level of detail.	nsibility, including any changes,
	If through oversight, please indic organization and its composition. A powers of the other organization and p role of the Member in these procedure	Also, give a description of the procedure applied, as well as the
	All public accountants and public accoupublic accountancy services (regardless public interest entities) are required to re	whether it is to perform audit on
	To register as a public accountant, prescribed requirements relating to quand membership of ISCA.	
	<ul> <li>The general requirements for the setting in Singapore include:</li> <li>a) One of the primary objects of the accountancy services.</li> <li>b) The business of the partnership/corpsupply of public accountancy in Singand management of one or more paccountants ordinarily resident in Singaccountants (if the partners/directors, then one of the public accountant).</li> </ul>	entity must be to provide public poration insofar as it relates to the gapore must be under the control partners/directors who are public papore.  Eners/directors must be public preship/corporation has two



	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.
9. Registration	9.1 If the Member has the responsibility for Registration, please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through oversight of Registration conducted by another organization?
	☐ Directly ☐ Through Oversight
	If directly, please describe the responsibility, including any changes, with an appropriate level of detail.
	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 procedure applied, as well as the role of the Member in these procedures.
	NIL
10. Audits and/or Ethics Standard Setting	10.1 If the Member has the responsibility for Audit and/or Ethics Standard Setting, please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through oversight of Audit and/or Ethics Standard Setting conducted by another organization?
	☐ Directly (Ethics) ☑ Through Oversight (Audit and Ethics)
	If directly, please describe the responsibility, including any changes, with an appropriate level of detail.
	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.
	The PAOC prescribes the standards, i.e., Singapore Standards on Auditing (SSA) and International Standards on Auditing (ISA) (only for audits of Singapore-incorporated companies listed overseas, or foreign-incorp companies listed in SG) by order in the gazette. The SSAs are substantially the same as ISA, with modifications made in some cases (e.g., to conform to local legislative requirements). ACRA will work closely with ISCA's Auditing and Assurance Standards Committee (ISCA AASC) in the review of the international auditing standards for adoption in Singapore and table its recommendations to the PAOC for approval. The PAOC maintains oversight of ISCA AASC and its terms of reference.



	The PAOC prescribes the code of professional conduct and ethics for public accountants, accounting corporations, accounting firms and accounting LLPs by order in the gazette. ACRA will work closely with ISCA's Ethics Committee (ISCA EC) in the review of the international ethical standards for adoption in Singapore and tables its recommendations to the PAOC for approval. The PAOC maintains oversight of ISCA EC and its terms of reference.	
11. Permanent Education / Continuous Training of Auditors	11.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>Permanent Education / Continuous Training of Auditors</u> , please indicate whether this responsibility is undertaken directly or through oversight of Permanent Education / Continuous Training of Auditors conducted by another organization?	
	☑ Directly ☐ Through Oversight	
	If directly, please describe the responsibility, including any changes, with an appropriate level of detail.	
	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.	
	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 <a href="here">here</a> .	
12. Enforcement	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)?	
	☑ Directly ☐ Through Referral	
	If directly, please describe the responsibility and procedures applied (including investigations, disciplinary actions or sanctions), as well as the reporting process for disciplinary action.	
	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.	



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. ACRA has also commenced its regulatory quality control inspections of accounting entities, which like the Practice Monitoring Programme (PMP) is risk focused. The PAOC (Firm level) is the deciding authority on the outcome of the quality control inspections for both listed and non-listed segments.

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 Committee or Disciplinary Committee, the PAOC may impose orders against the individual auditor and/or the accounting entity.

## 13. Other Responsibilities in Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation

13.1 If the Member has the responsibility for <u>other tasks within the area</u> <u>of Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation</u>, please describe with an appropriate level of detail:

NIL

# 14. Main Other Responsibilities of the Member <u>outside</u> the area of Audit Oversight or Audit Regulation

14.1 Please describe with an appropriate level of detail, the responsibility of the Member for tasks outside the area of audit oversight or audit regulation such as supervision of financial reporting or securities regulation:

Besides audit regulation, ACRA is the national regulator of businesses, companies and corporate service providers in Singapore. ACRA is also responsible for developing the accountancy sector and setting the accounting standards for companies, charities, co-operative societies, and societies 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):

- Business Names Registration Act;
- Companies Act;
- Limited Liability Partnerships Act;
- Limited Partnerships Act; and
- Variable Capital Companies Act

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. 15. Member Update for 15.1 Are there any major news, activities, events or updates (on audit public information (if matters, the Member's organization, the governing legislation or the authority/responsibilities) that you wish to keep the public informed of any) since completing last year's Member Profile? ☑ Yes □ No If yes, please describe these changes with an appropriate level of detail: Merged entity With effect from 1 April 2023, the ACRA, the SAC and the ASC has successfully merged as one entity under the name of ACRA. Following the merger, ACRA is also responsible for developing the accountancy sector and setting the accounting standards for companies, charities, co-operative societies, and societies in Singapore. Amendments to the Accountants Act Several amendments were made to the Accountants Act (AA) with effect from 1 July 2023 to enhance ACRA's audit regulatory regime. Key amendments include (i) introduction of quality control inspections on accounting entities for compliance with quality control standards; (ii) specify ACRA's powers to conduct inspections on compliance with AML/CFT requirements by public accounting entities and public accountants; (iii) introduction of a tiered assessment framework for both the PMP and quality control inspections; and (iv) provision of powers for the PAOC to require a public accountant who has obtained a "Not Satisfactory" inspection outcome to disclose the inspection findings to the audit client of the inspected engagement.