

## Fact Sheet

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### **Singapore and ASEAN Members Win International Award for its Data Initiatives**

*In helping ASEAN businesses maximise the opportunities in the Digital Economy, Singapore was awarded top prize in the International and Regional Cooperation category at the World Summit on the Information Society Prizes 2022*

Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) today announced that Singapore and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members have won the top award for the project “ASEAN Data Management Framework (DMF)<sup>1</sup> and Model Contractual Clauses (MCCs)<sup>2</sup> for Cross Border Data Flows” at the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes Ceremony<sup>3</sup> held in Geneva, Switzerland.

The ASEAN DMF and MCCs were selected for the top prize in the “*International and Regional Cooperation Category*”, after judges reviewed over 1,000 nominations across 18 categories. The WSIS Prizes recognises projects that contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, with the International and Regional Cooperation Category recognising projects that strengthens the implementation and revitalisation of global partnership for sustainable development.

Assistant Chief Executive of International Group, IMDA, Ms Foo Chi Hsia says, “Data is the new capital and is the core building block of the Digital Economy. Better and safer use of data will enable enterprises to scale up their businesses, both domestically and internationally. To lay the groundwork for the next bound of development for ASEAN’s Digital Economy, IMDA and Singapore have taken the lead to work with ASEAN member states to shape rules and establish standards to strengthen digital connectivity. This recognition by WSIS is a strong encouragement for stronger cooperation to build a cohesive ASEAN digital community, which we believe will provide more opportunities, both within ASEAN and with external partners.”

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<sup>1</sup> The ASEAN DMF is a guide to help businesses implement data management systems and includes guidelines for data governance structures and data protection.

<sup>2</sup> The MCCs are contractual terms and conditions that may be included in binding legal agreements between businesses when transferring personal data to each other across different jurisdictions and borders.

<sup>3</sup> The WSIS Prizes Ceremony is part of the annual WSIS Forum, co-organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

## About the ASEAN DMF and MCCs

To help ASEAN businesses transact and collaborate in the Digital Economy with ease and confidence (necessary for digital services, e-commerce, other online activities), Singapore and ASEAN Member States have identified common priorities and made accessible, practical tools and frameworks such as the ASEAN DMF and MCCs. These toolkits were developed in consultation with ASEAN businesses and approved by the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting in January 2021. The initiative was led by Singapore as Chair of the ASEAN Working Group on Digital Data Governance.

The ASEAN DMF and MCCs help businesses manage and transfer data across ASEAN countries, allowing them to meet data protection standards across borders and different jurisdictions. On top of providing baseline data protection practices and management, templatised MCCs also enable cost savings when businesses can cut down on resources for contract negotiation. Used together, the DMF and MCCs help ASEAN businesses build mutual accountability and trust with their business partners, employees and consumers.

## Singapore's Robust Network of Digital Cooperation Initiatives in the Asia Pacific Region and Beyond

As the Global-Asia node for technology and innovation, Singapore has partnered more like-minded countries in digital cooperation initiatives in the digital sphere, increasing the geological footprint of Singapore's collaborations.

Singapore's Minister for Communications and Information Mrs Josephine Teo signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) on digital cooperation with Brunei's Minister of Transport and Infocommunications Abdul Mutalib Yusof. The signing took place during Minister Mutalib's visit to Singapore on 30 May 2022, ahead of his participation in Asia Tech x Singapore organised by IMDA.

The pact reaffirmed the strong relationship between Singapore and Brunei, replacing the previous MOU that was signed in 2018. With a refreshed scope of cooperation incorporating areas that support both countries' digital transformation, this new MOU paves the way for deeper cooperation on digital connectivity, personal data protection, emerging technologies, digital government, and cybersecurity.

**Annex A:** Quotes by companies on ASEAN DMF and MCCs

**Annex B:** Infographic of ASEAN DMF and MCCs

**Annex C:** Picture of Singapore Minister for Communications and Information Mrs Josephine Teo signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Brunei’s Minister of Transport and Infocommunications Abdul Mutalib Yusof

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### **About Infocomm Media Development Authority**

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) leads Singapore’s digital transformation by developing a vibrant digital economy and an inclusive digital society. As Architects of Singapore’s Digital Future, we foster growth in Infocomm Technology and Media sectors in concert with progressive regulations, harnessing frontier technologies, and developing local talent and digital infrastructure ecosystems to establish Singapore as a digital metropolis.

For more news and information, visit [www.imda.gov.sg](http://www.imda.gov.sg) or follow IMDA on Facebook (IMDAsg) and Twitter (@IMDAsg).

### **For media clarifications, please contact:**

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## Annex A: Quotes by companies on ASEAN DMF and MCCs

“Ensuring the privacy and protection of our users’ data, both within Carousell and with our partners, is of utmost importance to us. The ASEAN Digital Data Governance initiatives have made it easier for us to ensure compliance across different data protection regulations within our six markets in Southeast Asia. For instance, it is generally easier to discuss and align on the provisions with the Model Contractual Clauses and cuts down on time spent on negotiation. It has also helped us to ensure that our partners have similar standards and values towards trust, transparency and accountability measures as well as share the same robust data protection standards required across all regions.”

*Ms Serena Darcel Chin, Group Head of Legal, Carousell Group*

“A healthy and growing regional digital economy requires continuous effort to maintain consumer trust in its integrity and security. But doing so cannot be so complex or expensive as to be inaccessible to all but the most sophisticated multinationals. The ASEAN DMF and MCCs hits both objectives, in a standardised way that we can all appreciate and support.”

*Mr Lam Chee Kin (林子建), Group Head of Legal and Compliance, DBS*

"Grab applauds efforts to coordinate and harmonise data regulatory policies across the Southeast Asia region in order to build a trusted environment for digital activity to be conducted, and Model Contractual Clauses are a good example to get started on this journey. They ensure that data transfers can be carried out between ASEAN member states in a consistent manner and also help to promote trust among citizens in the ASEAN digital ecosystem."

*Grab spokesperson*

“GUUD strongly believes that the DMF and MCCs will become a key resource and framework that businesses in ASEAN will tap on as they start to build up their data management systems, and these guidelines will also help companies, especially SMEs, to be able to enjoy the benefits of cross-border data-based transactions while ensuring that their sensitive/ personal data remains safe. GUUD advocates the vision for paperless cross border trade data exchanges, for compliance, logistics and trade finance purposes. We believe that both DMF and MCCs will enable GUUD to deliver this vision more effectively.”



*Mr Desmond Tay, 郑群鹏, Chief Executive Officer, GUUD Pte Ltd*

“As businesses go through digital transformation, increasing volumes of personal data are being transferred between organisations and even shared across borders. A main challenge on this journey is the ability to demonstrate accountability towards protecting the personal data in the businesses’ possession. The ASEAN MCC is an amazing resource that business can tap on to demonstrate such accountability. As data protection consultants in Singapore, we recommend our clients adopt the ASEAN MCC when documenting parties’ obligations to manage and protect personal data that they receive and transfer internally and across borders. If complied with, clients can rest assure that the transfer of personal data is done in a manner that complies with the ASEAN member states’ legal and regulatory requirements.”

*Ms Renee Tan 陈思瑜, Manager, TRS Forensics Pte Ltd*

Annex B: Infographic and video of ASEAN DMF and MCCs

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/714393034/77bf6b3d72>

## How Can Businesses Manage and Transfer Data Across Borders Safely and With Confidence

Using the ASEAN Data Management Framework (DMF) and Model Contract Clauses (MCCs)

### WHAT IS THE ASEAN<sup>A</sup> DMF?

- Guide for businesses (e.g. SMEs) to put in place a data management system
- Includes guidelines for data governance structures and data protection safeguards
- A risk-based accountability framework that can be used by any businesses

<sup>A</sup>Association of Southeast Asian Nations

### WHO WILL FIND THIS USEFUL?

- Businesses that collect, process and store data
- Businesses that aim to reduce lengthy contractual negotiations for cross border personal data transfers

### WHY?

- Good data management and cross border contractual practices will ensure businesses remain relevant in the digital economy in ASEAN
- Many ASEAN data protection laws require organisations transferring data overseas to ensure the destination has a comparable level of protection

- For instance, a business operating in Singapore will have to ensure that there is a comparable standard of protection to the Singapore Personal Data Protection Act when the data is transferred to Thailand
- The Model Contractual Clauses is a mechanism recognised by ASEAN for data transfers across borders

### WHAT ARE MCCs?


- Contractual terms and conditions that may be included in binding legal agreements between businesses when transferring personal data to each other across borders
- These are base-line clauses and can be modified or enhanced per business needs

### BENEFITS


- Baseline personal data protection practices and management
- Decreased cost of compliance: by using templatised MCCs, businesses can cut down or do away with additional resources for negotiations on contracts
- Brand of trust, transparency, and accountability with business partners, employees and consumers

Businesses can download the ASEAN Data Management Framework and Model Contractual Clauses from the ASEAN website and utilise it in their business practices.

To find out more, please visit:



DMF



MCCs

[www.imda.gov.sg](http://www.imda.gov.sg)  
[f](#) [t](#) [v](#) /IMDAsg  
[#IMDA #IMDigitalArchitect](#)

**Annex C:** Picture of Singapore Minister for Communications and Information Mrs Josephine Teo signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Brunei's Minister of Transport and Infocommunications Abdul Mutalib Yusof



Note: Please credit the image(s) to Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI).