



**FROM THE  
SMALLEST DETAILS...**

**ACRA**  
ACCOUNTING AND CORPORATE  
REGULATORY AUTHORITY

**ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012**



# ...TO THE LARGER PICTURE

At ACRA, we continue to fine-tune our policies and processes as the business landscape evolves. We leave no detail to chance, because we have the larger picture firmly in sight – our vision of making Singapore the trusted and best place to do business.



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## OUR VISION

Singapore:  
The trusted and best  
place for business

## OUR MISSION

To provide a responsive  
and trusted regulatory  
environment for  
businesses and public  
accountants

## OUR CORPORATE VALUES

We believe in upholding the following corporate values in our daily work. We are guided by ACRA's corporate values, known as 'I-ACRA':

- **Integrity** – we are honest, upright and impartial in everything we do as individuals and as an organisation
- **Alert & Agile** – we are vigilant and responsive to the needs of our stakeholders
- **Collaborative** – we work with our stakeholders to achieve common goals
- **Respect** – we value and respect our stakeholders
- **Add Value** – we make a positive difference for our stakeholders

# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



**At the point of writing this message, the global economic environment remains uncertain. Growth remains slow and uneven; confidence is fragile. Boardrooms and global capital markets continue to be rocked by news of high profile corporate failings. More than ever, businesses and investors will place their trust and confidence in regions where the corporate governance and regulatory frameworks are strong.**

Singapore is fortunate that we continue to be an attractive place for many companies to site their headquarters. Investors see us as a trusted international financial and business hub. We have earned this reputation because our regulatory frameworks are transparent, effective and efficient.

ACRA, as the national regulator of business entities and public accountants, has an integral role in ensuring that Singapore continues to have such a reputation.

## **Strengthening Singapore's Position as a Vibrant and Trusted Business Hub**

Legislative reform ensures that our regulations are kept up to date and are in tandem with changes in the business environment. Currently, we are in the process of reviewing the Companies Act, the Business Registration Act and the Accountants Act. Public consultations have been held to take in the views of investors, the business community and the general public. Given the complexity of some of the amendments, we have taken some time to do these reviews. I am pleased that proposed amendments to the various acts should be ready for tabling in Parliament by 2013.

ACRA also carries out rigorous regulatory oversight of the public accountancy profession to safeguard public interest. This provides the investing public with a strong basis for confidence in the quality of Singapore's audit reports and corporate financial information.

ACRA is also entrusted with the responsibility of strengthening the integrity of corporate financial reporting in Singapore. The Financial Reporting Surveillance Programme was launched in 2011 to monitor oversights in compliance in financial statements. It has made much progress. We plan to work with the business community in raising awareness of the value of quality financial reporting and filing a proper set of financial accounts.

In the area of corporate governance, ACRA takes the lead role in ensuring a high level of corporate compliance with statutory requirements. In 2011, we launched *ACRA & I: Being An Effective Director*, a handbook providing grounding for new and untrained directors. This new initiative is aimed at helping directors appreciate and discharge their responsibilities better.

ACRA also benchmarks its regulatory work against international regulatory practices and standards. We analysed international business ranking reports for insights into how we can further enhance Singapore's investor-friendliness and the ease of doing business here vis-à-vis other economies.

### Facilitating Business in Singapore

Singapore has consistently been viewed as an efficient and conducive place to do business. In 2012, we were ranked the easiest place to do business in the World Bank's *Doing Business 2012* report for the sixth consecutive year. In the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness 2011/12* report, Singapore was ranked the second most competitive nation in the world.

ACRA strongly believes in fostering this pro-enterprise environment through its business facilitator role. We are mindful that we need to strike the right balance in our policies. Even as we nurture a regulatory environment that is robust enough to safeguard public interest and promote confidence, we are also committed towards ensuring that it remains business-friendly whether in terms of starting enterprises, doing business or meeting regulatory obligations.

As the national corporate registry, ACRA handles over a million transactions done through BizFile – the online filing and information retrieval portal. Our registry holds financial and corporate information on over 400,000 registered business entities in Singapore. ACRA continues to ensure there is integrity in the system by regularly reviewing the information so that the register is kept up to date. In 2014, the business community can look forward to the new generation BizFile being commissioned, which will further facilitate the ease of doing business with better, faster services as well as more intuitive user interfaces for our customers.

### Facilitating the Development of the Accountancy Sector

ACRA also continues to provide strong support to the Pro-Tem Singapore Accountancy Council as it leads the transformation of Singapore into a leading global accountancy hub. In the past year, it has taken significant steps forward in developing the accountancy sector.

The Pro-Tem SAC launched the Singapore CFO Institute, an association for chief financial officers serving Singapore and the region. The Institute provides a networking and training platform for CFOs and enables us to continue to invest in their professional development. This in turn will elevate Singapore's appeal to businesses setting up their regional and global headquarters here and strengthen the country's positioning as a global-Asia accountancy hub.

The Pro-Tem SAC also held public consultations on the Singapore Qualification Programme – a new Singapore-branded post-graduate accountancy qualification that provides a pathway for individuals who aspire to be leading accountancy professionals. This programme will help build capacity and reinforce capabilities in our accountancy sector.

### In Appreciation

Finally, I would like to express our gratitude to Ms Chan Lai Fung, who served as Chairman of ACRA from 1 September 2010 to 31 March 2012. Under her stewardship, ACRA made great strides in the reform of the legislation under its purview and in implementing initiatives that continue to support Singapore's growth as an international business and financial centre.

My heartfelt thanks also go to members who have retired from the Board: Mr Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara, Mr Gerard Ee, Mr Kon Yin Tong, Mr Lam Yi Young, Mr Sitoh Yih Pin and Professor Pang Yang Hoong. Their contributions to the Board were invaluable and much appreciated. I would also like to welcome the new members to the ACRA Board: Mr Sajjad Akhtar, Professor Ho Yew Kee, Mr Lee Kim Shin, Mr Alan Rupert Nisbet, Mr Ong Wee Kiat Philip and Mr Yeoh Oon Jin.

ACRA continues to make good progress towards its vision of making Singapore the trusted and best place for business. I would like to express my gratitude to ACRA's key stakeholders and partners in the business and accounting communities for their continued support. In addition, my deep appreciation to all ACRA staff for your commitment to our mission and customers.

**Ms Lim Soo Hoon**  
Chairman

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE



Financial year 2011 was yet another eventful year for ACRA. Entrusted with the responsibility of providing a reliable and responsive regulatory environment for businesses and public accountants, we took another significant step forward in our review of key business legislation with the launch of public consultations on the proposed review to the Companies Act and the regulatory framework for foreign entities in Singapore.

New initiatives were also rolled out to boost corporate compliance awareness and raise corporate compliance standards. We have also begun work on the new generation BizFile, our online business filing, registration and information retrieval system. When completed in 2014, the new generation BizFile will further strengthen Singapore's standing as one of the world's easiest places to do business.

## Engaging Our Stakeholders

In all our efforts, we remain keenly aware that our regulatory frameworks and programmes must not only be effective from a regulatory standpoint but also relevant and responsive to the needs of the business community. To stay attuned to new trends and challenges in the local and global business landscapes, we work closely with our partners and regularly engage our stakeholders.

We adopt this approach in all key projects. Before embarking on our new generation BizFile project, views were sought from key stakeholders, including top filers, on how we could make the system even more user-friendly, effective and efficient. In a similar vein, we announced proposed enhancements to the eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) system for the filing of financial statements earlier this year only after extensive consultations with various stakeholder groups. By building our systems with users foremost in mind, we ensure that our regulatory environment remains pro-business in orientation.

We also established direct links to aspiring entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises through our public outreach events such as the ACRA@The Heartlands talks at the constituency levels and Essentials for Business seminars. These enable us to gather first-hand feedback on our legislation reviews, business facilitation efforts and compliance issues.

At the corporate management level, our breakfast seminars provide an informal platform for C-level executives from top companies to exchange views on corporate regulatory requirements as well as financial reporting and auditing standards.

At the regional and international levels, we work with like-minded corporate registers and audit regulators to ensure corporate registers continue to add value to the changing business environment and promote and protect public interest in audit quality. In May 2011, ACRA hosted the 7th Corporate Registers Forum Conference where over 160 delegates from 47 countries discussed ways to deliver better services through integration with other government agencies or across borders with the business registries of other jurisdictions. In January this year, we organised the inaugural Regional Audit Regulators Inspection Workshop in Singapore. Delegates from six ASEAN jurisdictions and Japan shared best practices and exchanged expertise on audit oversight and audit inspection.

We have also sought to include key stakeholders in deliberations on legislative amendments. Together with the Ministry of Finance, ACRA conducted three public seminars in 2011 to share key recommendations on the proposed reviews to the Companies Act, to enable the public to better understand the potential

implications of the recommendations and garner feedback. Discussions were also held with professional bodies on the review of the Business Registration Act, which governs sole proprietors and general partnerships. In addition, ACRA also issued two stakeholder consultation documents and held numerous focus group sessions to hear the industry's views on refining the Accountants Act so as to better promote audit quality, maintain confidence in audits and protect public interest. Based on the feedback received, a set of proposed amendments was drawn up and in May this year, we commenced with public consultations.

Our annual Public Accountants Conference also provides a unique platform for dialogue between ACRA, the accounting profession and its stakeholders. Discussions at the conference centre on the issues and challenges that confront the accounting profession and on how the sector can maintain high standards of professionalism and expertise.

And to further strengthen our links with our partners and stakeholders, we plan to launch an online newsletter in the new financial year. Specifically targeted at our professional stakeholders and partners from professional bodies, the newsletter will provide useful in-depth information tailored to their business needs and serve as a networking platform for sharing of best practices.

Working with our partners, ACRA identified a key need of company directors keen to raise their competencies through training. Earlier this year, together with professional bodies, including Singapore Institute of Directors, Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Singapore, and Singapore Association of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, we conducted a workshop for selected directors who had little or no knowledge of compliance matters to help them improve on their compliance records. The positive feedback from the workshop has spurred us to launch a Directors' Training Programme later this year and reach out to an even wider group and empower them to better fulfil their roles and obligations as directors.

### **Taking Stock and Going Forward**

2011 was also a time for us to take stock of stakeholder and customer expectations. We therefore commissioned a comprehensive Stakeholders Needs Analysis study. The participants of the study included business owners, our partners (professional bodies, government agencies, academicians and information service providers), and the local and foreign general public who are inclined to start businesses in Singapore.

We are heartened to note that our stakeholders generally hold positive perceptions of ACRA and have found us to be relevant and reliable. More importantly, the insights gained from the study will allow us to build on current strengths and improve in key areas. A taskforce has been set up to carry out improvement measures in key identified areas.

### **In Appreciation**

Finally, I would like to conclude by expressing my appreciation to our supportive stakeholders and partners. I would also like to thank all the respondents to the various public consultations that ACRA held in the past year, for their participation and enthusiastic feedback. To Ms Chan Lai Fung who was our Chairman from September 2010 until March this year, ACRA is deeply appreciative of your guidance and staunch support. We also welcome on board our new Chairman, Ms Lim Soo Hoon. To all the ACRA Board Members: thank you for your invaluable insights and contributions. Thank you also to all ACRA staff for your hard work and dedicated service.

With your continued support, I am confident that ACRA will climb to greater heights as we strive to achieve the vision of making Singapore the trusted and best place for business.

**Ms Juthika Ramanathan**  
**Chief Executive**

# ABOUT ACRA

The Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority, Singapore (ACRA) is the national regulator of businesses and public accountants in Singapore. It was formed on 1 April 2004, following the merger of the former Registry of Companies and Businesses (RCB) and the Public Accountants' Board (PAB).

As a regulator and facilitator, ACRA constantly strives to create a vibrant, trusted and secure environment for businesses, and to make Singapore truly the best place for doing business.

## ACRA's Functions

ACRA develops a responsive and trusted pro-enterprise environment through the following key functions:

- To administer the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority Act (Cap 2A), the Accountants Act (Cap 2), the Business Registration Act (Cap 32), the Companies Act (Cap 50), the Limited Liability Partnerships Act (Cap 163A) and the Limited Partnerships Act 2008 (Act 37 of 2008);
- To report and make recommendations to, and advise the Government on matters relating to the registration and regulation of business entities and public accountants;
- To establish and administer a repository of documents and information relating to business entities and public accountants and to provide access to the public to such documents and information;
- To represent the Government internationally in matters relating to the registration and regulation of business entities and public accountants;
- To promote public awareness about new business structures, compliance requirements, corporate governance practice and any matter under the purview of the Authority; and
- To promote, facilitate and assist in the development of the accountancy sector, including studying, reporting, making recommendations to and advising the Government on all matters relating to the development and promotion of the accountancy sector.

# COMMITTEES

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

### Chairman:

Mr Thean Lip Ping

### Members:

Mr Sajjad Akhtar  
Ms Chua Geok Wah  
Mr Alan Rupert Nisbet  
Mr Ong Yew Huat  
Mr Yap Chee Keong  
Mr Yeoh Oon Jin

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

### Chairman:

Mr Ong Yew Huat

### Members:

Professor Ho Yew Kee  
Mr Lawrence Kwan  
Mr Alan Rupert Nisbet  
Mr Ong Wee Kiat Philip

## HUMAN RESOURCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Chairman:

Ms Lim Soo Hoon

### Members:

Dr Andrew Khoo  
Mr Lee Kim Shin  
Ms Kristin Elizabeth Paulson  
Ms Juthika Ramanathan  
Mr Yap Chee Keong

# BOARD MEMBERS



FROM LEFT:

**Ms Lim Soo Hoon**  
Chairman

**Ms Juthika Ramanathan**  
Chief Executive



FROM LEFT:

**Mr Sajjad Akhtar**

**Ms Chua Geok Wah**



FROM LEFT:

**Professor Ho Yew Kee**

**Dr Andrew Khoo**



FROM LEFT:  
Mr Lawrence Kwan  
Mr Lee Kim Shin  
Mr Alan Rupert Nisbet



FROM LEFT:  
Mr Ong Wee Kiat  
Philip  
Mr Ong Yew Huat  
Ms Kristin  
Elizabeth Paulson



FROM LEFT:  
Mr Thean Lip Ping  
Mr Yap Chee Keong  
Mr Yeoh Oon Jin

# MANAGEMENT



FROM LEFT:

**Juthika Ramanathan**  
**Chief Executive**

**Julia Tay**  
**Assistant Chief Executive**  
Accountancy

**Toh Wee San**  
**Assistant Chief Executive**  
Legal and Regulatory Compliance



FROM LEFT:

**Bernice Quek**  
**Senior Director**  
Business Information and  
Technology Department

**Tay Bee Sin**  
**Director**  
Corporate Services Department

**Andy Sim**  
**Director**  
Legal Services Department



FROM LEFT:

**Shirylnn Loo**  
**Head**  
Accountancy Development Division

**Ho Shee Yan**  
**Head**  
Audit Division

**K Latha**  
**Head**  
Business Registry and  
Facilitation Division



FROM LEFT:

**Tan Tze Ee**  
**Head**  
Client Engagement Division

**Ang Siok Hui**  
**Head**  
Corporate Communications Division



FROM LEFT:

**William Lee**  
**Head**  
Enforcement Division

**Dave Lau**  
**Head**  
Finance Division

**Sia Su Chun**  
**Head**  
Financial Information Division



FROM LEFT:

**Tan Wei Ling**  
**Head**  
Financial Reporting  
Surveillance Division

**Tan Seow Pia**  
**Head**  
Governance Surveillance Division

**Loy Wei Sun**  
**Head**  
Information Resources Division



FROM LEFT:

**Elan Arunasalam**  
**Head**  
Information Technology  
Strategy Division

**Wee Puay Hwa**  
**Head**  
Management Services Division

**Kenneth Aik**  
**Head**  
Practice Monitoring Division



FROM LEFT:

**Sherry Quark**  
**Head**  
Professional Oversight Division

**David Turner**  
**Acting Head**  
Strategic and External  
Relations Division

# OUR DEPARTMENTS

## Business Information and Technology Department

The Business Information and Technology Department (BITD) sets strategic directions for the four divisions under its purview, namely the Information Resource Division, Information Technology Strategy Division, Financial Information Division and the eServices Division. It aligns the divisions' initiatives and facilitates synergy across other divisions within ACRA on matters related to IT systems and quality of information to meet the strategic outcome set by the organisation.

## Corporate Services Department

The Corporate Services Department (CSD) oversees the Human Resource Division, Management Services Division and matters on organisational excellence. It sets the strategic direction and alignment of divisions' objectives with ACRA's goals, and creates partnerships with line divisions to enable internal operational efficiency and attainment of common goals. It also facilitates organisational change and supports ACRA in creating a culture of excellence.

## Legal Services Department

The Legal Services Department (LSD) provides legal support to ACRA on a broad range of legal and policy work. LSD advises the ACRA Board, Public Accountants Oversight Committee, ACRA departments and divisions on the interpretation and application of the legislation that are under ACRA's purview, drafts and vets contracts and tender documents, advises on financial surveillance and enforcement issues against companies, directors and accountants. LSD officers also undertake policy review, law reform projects and perform statutory functions under the various ACRA legislation.

## Public Accountancy Sector Department

The Public Accountancy Sector Department (PASD) regulates and facilitates the development of Singapore's public accountancy sector. It is made up of the Practice Monitoring Division (PMD), the Professional Oversight Division (POD), and the Strategy and External Relations Division (SERD). It supports ACRA's role as the national regulator of public accountants and promotes high professional standards in the public accountancy sector. Its key responsibilities include registration of public accountants and public accounting entities; performing practice reviews of audits carried out by public accountants; upholding professional conduct of public accountants; developing strategy, regulations and policy to support ACRA's oversight of the public accountancy profession, as well as external engagement with other audit regulators.

# OUR DIVISIONS

## Accountancy Development Division

The Accountancy Development Division (ADD) facilitates the development of the accountancy sector through the work of the Pro-Tem Singapore Accountancy Council (Pro-Tem SAC), and its four sub-committees, namely:

- the Singapore Accountancy Qualification Programme Development Panel;
- the Accountancy Services Research Centre and Accountancy Sector Development Fund sub-committee;
- the Singapore Chief Financial Officers Advisory Council; and
- the Centres of Excellence sub-committee.

The Pro-Tem SAC serves to develop and nurture the accountancy sector in transforming Singapore into a leading global accountancy hub for the Asia Pacific region.

## Audit Division

The Audit Division (AD) reports to the Audit Committee (AC) and assists the ACRA Board by performing independent and objective audit reviews of the internal control system of ACRA.

The key roles of the division include providing the assurance and advisory that risks have been properly identified and managed through internal audit services. The division reviews the process and proposes relevant recommendations targeted to improve internal control mechanisms that add value to the organisation's operations. This aids ACRA in realising its full competencies.

## Business Registry and Facilitation Division

The Business Registry and Facilitation Division (BRFD) oversees the registration of business entities, i.e. sole proprietorships/partnerships, local companies, foreign branches, limited partnerships and limited liability partnerships in Singapore. BRFD also manages the registration of documents, notices and returns filed by business entities through its electronic filing system, BizFile. The division participates regularly in outreach events organised by ACRA and other agencies. These events serve as platforms for public education for the business community and aspiring entrepreneurs. BRFD also develops new initiatives to make it easier to start and do business in Singapore.

## Client Engagement Division

The Client Engagement Division (CED) delivers value to the business community by providing customers with a one-stop seamless platform to interact with ACRA. In response to changing customer needs and expectations, CED continuously reviews and introduces new service initiatives to enhance service delivery and the customer experience. The ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System (QMS) is centrally managed under CED. The division plans and implements the ISO 9001:2008 standards, promotes quality awareness, reviews existing processes, and conducts internal and external audits to ensure compliance with the QMS requirements.

## Corporate Communications Division

The Corporate Communications Division (CCD) develops and executes communications strategies and plans to promote ACRA's corporate profile and promulgate ACRA's key messages. CCD also coordinates ACRA's stakeholder engagement and public outreach efforts through various platforms to foster better understanding of the corporate regulatory framework and requirements and engender support for ACRA's role as a business regulator and facilitator.

# OUR DIVISIONS

## Enforcement Division

The Enforcement Division (ED) oversees compliance in the disclosure of corporate and financial information of businesses and aims to achieve voluntary compliance through public education initiatives and programmes. In furtherance of ACRA's goal to provide an effective regulatory environment that enables optimal compliance, ED will not hesitate to take swift and just enforcement action, where necessary. The division comprises three units to carry out its various functions – the Summons & Warrants Processing Unit, the Strategic Enforcement Unit and the Enforcement Policies & Strategy Unit.

## eServices Division

eServices Division (eServices) ensures proper IT project governance and consistency in end-to-end system testing for ACRA. The division acts as the bridge between the IT project managers and the various divisions in ACRA to ensure that new requirements do not conflict with existing information, and performs quality checks on IT systems before user acceptance. eServices also scans new developments in the IT market that may be useful as a service delivery channel for ACRA. From year 2012 to year 2014, its focus will be on the development and deployment of the new generation BizFile that is yet another endeavour by ACRA to deliver quality services.

## Finance Division

The Finance Division (FD) takes charge of all aspects of ACRA's budgetary decisions, accounting processes and financial reporting. Exercising financial prudence, FD ensures optimal allocation of monetary resources to meet ACRA's operational needs and organisational objectives.

## Financial Information Division

The Financial Information Division (FID) handles the eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) Financial Reporting and Standard Business Information Reporting (SBIR). FID is responsible for the submission of XBRL financial statements by companies to the Registrar, which includes establishing the taxonomy vis-a-vis the accounting standards and Companies Act, as well as the filing process and mechanism of XBRL financial statements. The SBIR is a whole-of-government project with the objective of enabling a pro-enterprise financial reporting environment for businesses in Singapore.

## Financial Reporting Surveillance Division

The Financial Reporting Surveillance Division (FRSD) oversees general compliance in corporate financial reporting, with the goal to achieve high quality corporate financial reporting in Singapore while establishing an effective regulatory environment that enables optimal compliance of the accounting standards. FRSD seeks to achieve this strategic goal via its administration of the Companies Act's applications and its Financial Reporting Surveillance Programme, whereby selected financial statements filed with ACRA are reviewed for potential non-compliances with applicable accounting standards. FRSD also performs regular reviews of policies and exemptions granted to companies with the aim of achieving a good balance between compliance and the need to be pro-business.

## Governance Surveillance Division

The Governance Surveillance Division (GSD) oversees compliance and governance matters of registered business entities and investigates into alleged breaches of the various laws under ACRA's purview, so as to achieve a responsive and trusted regulatory environment. The officers handle all forms of complaints including governance-related matters and breaches under the legislation administered by ACRA and works closely with other government agencies to ensure that appropriate enforcement steps are taken against the offenders.

## Human Resource Division

The Human Resource Division (HRD) works towards building ACRA's reputation as the trusted and best choice for talents. Its mission is to provide an environment that fosters trust and respect, where people are empowered to create value and grow their careers. HRD comprises two units – Talent Attraction & Development (TAD) and Talent Management (TM). The core functions of TAD include manpower planning, recruitment and selection, and training and development. The focus of TM is to facilitate talent retention through performance management, compensation and benefits management, and staff communications.

### Information Resource Division

The Information Resource Division (IRD) protects the integrity and undertakes the preservation of the data on registered businesses and public accountants in Singapore. The division facilitates business development by constantly reviewing information needs and providing value-added services.

IRD seeks to meet the information needs of the business community, of which information service providers and governmental agencies form an integral part. The division also carries out mining and analysis of ACRA's transactional data and customers' feedback, which enables ACRA to fine-tune its policies and framework to provide a business-friendly environment.

### Information Technology Strategy Division

The Information Technology Strategy Division (ITSD) strategises and actualises value-creating ICT solutions in alignment with ACRA's corporate and operational objectives. ITSD's key responsibilities include ICT governance, application systems and technical services management and maintenance. It capitalises on IT as a strategic tool for continuous improvement and agency's overall business transformation.

### Management Services Division

The Management Services Division (MSD) provides architecture support to the organisation, manages ACRA's records, tangible assets and facilities, thereby creating favourable situations for ACRA to execute its activities and attain strategic outcomes. MSD comprises two units, namely the Records & Registry Unit (RR) and the Assets & Facilities Unit (AF). The core function of RR is to provide timely and accurate services for processing and managing records. As for AF, it provides general logistical support to the other divisions in the areas of facilities and amenities management, procurement management, asset management as well as security management.

### Practice Monitoring Division

The Practice Monitoring Division (PMD) supports ACRA in its strategic objective of promoting high quality audit and corporate financial reporting through the administration of the Practice Monitoring Programme under Part V of the Accountants Act, Cap. 2, which includes performing practice reviews of audits carried out by public accountants in Singapore. In addition to being active in engagement with various stakeholders, PMD supports ACRA's regulatory efforts in monitoring events and trends in the local and international marketplace and carries out other regulatory activities on the work and independence of public accountants when required.

### Professional Oversight Division

The Professional Oversight Division (POD) oversees the registration of public accountants and accounting entities as well as key aspects of regulation, enforcement and development of the profession. Its functions include conducting compliance checks on public accountants to ensure adherence to regulatory requirements, reviewing complaints made against public accountants and accounting entities, developing practice bulletins for the guidance of public accountants and to supplement prescribed professional standards.

### Strategic and External Relations Division

The Strategy and External Relations Division (SERD) helps ACRA to have good regulations for its auditor oversight and to cooperate with stakeholders who share ACRA's goal of raising audit quality and maintaining a trusted business environment.

This involves developing strategy, regulations and policy, including research and consulting with stakeholders on proposals. To promote messages like the importance of high quality audit and to call people to action, SERD has dialogues and publishes articles, speeches and joint research projects. The division also helps ACRA cooperate with other audit regulators.

SERD also supports the Public Accountants Oversight Committee, which administers the Accountants Act.



FROM  
LOCAL  
INSIGHTS



# TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

We keep our ears to the ground and our eyes on global developments by actively engaging our local stakeholders and international counterparts. This enables us to calibrate our responses to new demands, trends and challenges and thus help further Singapore's growth as a global business and accountancy hub.

# FROM LOCAL INSIGHTS TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

## LOCAL INSIGHTS

ACRA aims to nurture a responsive and trusted regulatory environment for businesses and public accountants. Essential to achieving this mission is the continuous strengthening of the integrity of our regulatory framework. We do this through constant review and refinement of our legislation and policies and through corporate regulatory actions. With an ever-changing business environment, ACRA must stay attuned to key new developments. We therefore regularly engage the business community and monitor both the local and global business landscapes to widen and deepen our own insights.

### Active Engagement with Stakeholders

ACRA regularly reviews and refines business and accountancy legislation to ensure that they are on par with global best practices. Public consultations and focus group discussions enable ACRA to garner feedback and insights from its stakeholders on legislation reform proposals, and the opportunity to clarify and address any needs and concerns.

The Steering Committee for the review of the Companies Act held a public consultation in June 2011 to seek public feedback on recommendations put up by the committee. Following the commencement of the public consultation, ACRA's Legal Services Department jointly held three public seminars with the Ministry of Finance in August 2011, to provide a platform for stakeholders to voice any queries they may have regarding the recommendations.

ACRA also seeks the views of our stakeholders when embarking on reviews of key policies or developing major initiatives. The Strategic and External Relations Division issued two consultation papers as well as held eight focus group discussions involving public accountants, audit firms, professional accountancy bodies, aspiring public accountants, universities and audit committee members, in drawing up the proposed amendments in the Accountants Act. In the preparation for the revamp

of the eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) filing system, the Financial Information Division conducted focus group discussions involving more than 80 organisations to seek inputs on how to better facilitate the filing processes for businesses and improve the quality of XBRL financial statements.

A six-monthly dialogue session was held on 29 March 2012, part of ACRA's engagement regime to connect with stakeholders and update them on the development of ongoing projects and upcoming initiatives. Representatives from 14 professional bodies were informed of the progress of ACRA's law reform initiatives and efforts to promote compliance. The views of the partners and professional bodies on the blueprint for the development of the new generation Bizfile and a Trusted Information System were also sought.

Separately, ACRA also engaged specific industry partners in dialogues to hear their views on various issues. A dialogue session was held in February 2012 to engage key stakeholders in the accountancy sector, including the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, CPA Australia, Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Singapore. The engagement afforded ACRA insights into some of the issues faced by the industry, and provided the opportunity to explore further collaborations with the professional bodies on facilitating and enhancing the public accountancy profession in Singapore.

### Sharing Insights and Common Goals

Apart from forging close links with our stakeholders and partners, ACRA also seeks to be an engaged partner of the business community. Gathering insights into the challenges and issues faced by businesses enables us to develop new initiatives to help companies conduct their business and meet regulatory obligations with ease. We are also mindful of the need to keep the communication links open and continue to engage the corporate sector as new regulatory initiatives are rolled out.

- **Breakfast Seminars for C-Level Executives**

In 2011, a breakfast seminar series for C-level executives was initiated. The series kicked off on 5 April 2011 followed by seminars held on 3 June and 16 November. It provided the opportunity for ACRA to discuss with over 400 top business leaders key issues and developments related to corporate audits and corporate governance. This included harnessing the value of audits and the key role business leaders play in the financial reporting value chain.

- **Public Accountants Conference**

ACRA's annual flagship event, the Public Accountants Conference, was held on 26 July 2011. Over 700 accounting professionals and other stakeholders convened to share insights into issues such as the importance of high quality audit.

The conference theme was "Accounting – Transitioning from Value Protection to Value Creation". It threw the spotlight on the value-creation role that accounting and auditing services have in addition to their traditional value-protection role. The conference also highlighted that opportunities abound if the profession moves up the value chain.

ACRA shared the findings of the joint ACRA-ACCA survey on small- and medium-sized public accounting practices (SMPs) at the conference. The findings pointed to the need for SMPs to either build up their capacity in order to conduct good-quality audits or to venture into other niche, value-adding services. At the conference, ACRA also launched its fifth annual Practice Monitoring Programme (PMP) public report, which covered the observations from ACRA's PMP reviews from April 2010 to March 2011.

- **Corporate Compliance Conference**

On 24 October 2011, ACRA co-organised the inaugural Corporate Compliance Conference with the Singapore Association of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators. It was an opportunity for more than 100 company directors, CEOs and corporate secretaries to discuss with regulators, academia and compliance professionals some of the key compliance and governance issues that have surfaced amidst a rapidly changing business landscape.

- **XBRL National Conference**

On 11 May 2012, ACRA organised the inaugural XBRL National Conference, attended by over 350 local and foreign participants. With the theme "XBRL: Sharing and Collaboration", the conference served as a platform for Singapore's local business community to gain a better understanding of the latest updates in XBRL business reporting requirements from the experiences of the local and international XBRL communities. The proposals of the enhanced XBRL filing requirements and system were also unveiled at the conference, providing a heads-up for the public consultation exercise held on 14 May 2012 to seek feedback on the proposed enhancements.



*Ms Juthika Ramanathan, Chief Executive, ACRA, speaking at the inaugural XBRL National Conference.*



*Accounting professionals and other stakeholders sharing insights at the Public Accountants Conference.*

# FROM LOCAL INSIGHTS TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

## Developing Singapore into Asia's Leading Global Accountancy Centre

The sustainable growth of Singapore's accountancy sector is key to Singapore's development as a Global-Asia business and financial hub. In tandem with this is Singapore's transformation as a leading accountancy hub for Asia-Pacific. ACRA's Accountancy Development Division was set up to assist the Pro-Tem Singapore Accountancy Council (Pro-Tem SAC) towards the achievement of this vision.

One of the strategic tasks of the Pro-Tem SAC is to elevate the professional capabilities of accountants. The first initiative towards this goal is the development of a new Singapore post-university practice-focused accountancy qualification programme known as the Singapore Qualification Programme (SQP). The Pro-Tem SAC has appointed an SQP Development Panel, whose members are academics, practitioners and other stakeholders, to ensure the robustness of the programme.

The Pro-Tem SAC also launched the Singapore CFO (Chief Financial Officer) Institute in September 2011, to provide a platform for CFOs and aspiring CFOs serving the Singapore and Asia Pacific markets to connect and network.

The Singapore CFO Institute also organised the inaugural CFO Connect – a networking event connecting top business leaders and CFOs to share industry insights and promote thought leadership on issues close to the hearts of CFOs. The event held on 19 September 2011 was attended by more than 80 CFOs and senior executives.



CFO Connect is a platform where top business leaders and CFOs share industry insights and network with one another.

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

For the sixth year running, Singapore has been ranked as the easiest place among 183 economies to do business by the World Bank's *Doing Business 2012* report. Various public agencies, including ACRA, have played a part in making Singapore the easiest place to do business. ACRA, in particular, contributed towards one of the indicators, "Starting a Business", which Singapore held steady at the 4th position.

### Benchmarking Against the World's Best

To strengthen Singapore's status as a leading financial and business hub that is able to compete globally, ACRA's Business Registry and Facilitation Division (BRFD) conducts benchmarking studies, guided by the ACRA Benchmarking Framework, to identify the best practices of business registration and facilitation from around the world. Last year, BRFD completed studies on New Zealand, Nigeria and Georgia, and also analysed international reports such as the World Bank's *Doing Business 2012* report, the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness 2011/12* report and the International Institute for Management Development's *World Competitiveness Yearbook* for ways to improve the ease of starting and doing business in Singapore.

### Contributing to the International Scene

ACRA continues to contribute significantly to the global scene through its memberships in international forums. By engaging the international community at these platforms, ACRA raises Singapore's visibility as a trusted business environment, and at the same time gains perspectives into the regulatory and facilitation trends of different jurisdictions. Such global insights enable ACRA to fine-tune the development of effective regulatory strategies for Singapore.

- **Corporate Registers Forum**

The Corporate Registers Forum (CRF) offers a platform for corporate registers from around the world to exchange ideas and best practices and discuss their challenges. Since its membership in CRF began in 2003, ACRA has gained from the different perspectives shared by international corporate registers. Last year, ACRA had the honour of hosting CRF's 7th Annual Conference – "Crossing Boundaries, Building Relationships" in Singapore. From 9 to 12 May 2011, more than 160 delegates from over 40 countries came together to explore how they could deliver better services and meet the needs of their stakeholders through integration with other government agencies and even across borders with registries of other jurisdictions.

- **XBRL Asia Roundtable**

ACRA hosted the 3rd XBRL Asia Roundtable in Singapore on 10 May 2012. The XBRL Asia Roundtable is an annual event where XBRL project leaders and regulators from countries in the Asia Oceania region gather to share developments and best practices in XBRL implementation. The Asia Roundtable in Singapore was attended by delegates from countries including Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea and Malaysia.

- **International Auditor Regulatory Institute**

ACRA participated in the fifth annual International Auditor Regulatory Institute organised by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board from 31 October to 2 November 2011 in Washington DC, United States. Seventy-seven representatives of auditor oversight bodies and government agencies from 36 countries met at the institute to exchange views on issues that have an impact on auditor oversight.



*XBRL project leaders and regulators gather at the XBRL Asia Roundtable to share developments and best practices in XBRL implementation.*

- **International Forum of Independent Audit Regulators**

ACRA is a founding member of the International Forum of Independent Audit Regulators (IFIAR), which provides a valuable platform for independent audit regulators to share knowledge of the audit market environment and practical experience of independent audit regulatory activities, as well as promote collaboration in regulatory activity.

In 2011, ACRA completed its two-year term as a member of the IFIAR Advisory Council. ACRA continues to be actively involved in IFIAR activities, serving as a member in three out of five IFIAR Working Groups, namely the Standards Coordination Working Group, the Global Public Policy Committee Working Group and the International Cooperation Working Group. ACRA continues to participate in IFIAR's plenary meetings and workshops.

# FROM LOCAL INSIGHTS TO GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES



*Ms Juthika Ramanathan, Chief Executive, ACRA, shared Singapore's perspectives at an international seminar on "The Essence of Independent Audit Oversight System", at the tenth IFIAR plenary meeting in Bangkok.*

ACRA attended the ninth and tenth IFIAR plenary meetings on 11 to 13 April 2011 and 26 to 28 September 2011 in Berlin and Bangkok respectively. In Berlin, ACRA, together with other IFIAR members, affirmed a set of Core Principles for Independent Audit Regulators, which aim to promote IFIAR's common goal of serving public interest and enhancing investor protection by improving audit quality globally.

During the Bangkok meeting, Ms Juthika Ramanathan, Chief Executive, ACRA, was invited to speak at an international seminar on "The Essence of Independent Audit Oversight System", organised by the Securities and Exchange Commission, Thailand. She shared with the audience ACRA's experience of putting in place a robust independent audit oversight system and the importance of working with relevant stakeholders to uphold the quality of audit in Singapore.

- **ASEAN Audit Regulators Group**

The promotion and further development of independent auditor oversight in Asia, and increased IFIAR membership of Asian countries, will help to boost investor confidence in audited financial information across the region.



*Delegates from ASEAN and Japan shared their experiences and practices of audit regulation and promotion of audit quality at the Regional Audit Regulators Inspection Workshop.*

With this objective in mind, in 2011, ACRA, together with two fellow ASEAN audit regulators, Malaysia's Audit Oversight Board and Thailand's Securities and Exchange Commission, formed the ASEAN Audit Regulators Group (AARG), an informal grouping to promote audit quality through collaboration and sharing between ASEAN audit regulators. AARG also aims to help other developing ASEAN economies that are looking to institute independent audit regulation.

At its 2011 and 2012 meetings in Bangkok, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, AARG reached out to the other ASEAN regulators with an interest in audit quality and engaged with the regional leaderships of the Big-4 audit firms to discuss specific regional issues that affect audit quality in ASEAN.

AARG's cooperation led to the inaugural Regional Audit Regulators Inspection Workshop, hosted by ACRA from 11 to 13 January 2012. Regulators from the region shared experiences and best practices in regulating audit and promoting audit quality. In addition to the AARG members, delegates from the Securities and Exchange Commission of Cambodia, Indonesia's Ministry of Finance, the Securities and Exchange Commission Office of Lao PDR, Central Bank of Myanmar, as well as Japan's Certified Public Accountants and Auditing Oversight Board, attended the workshop.

### Visits by Foreign Delegates

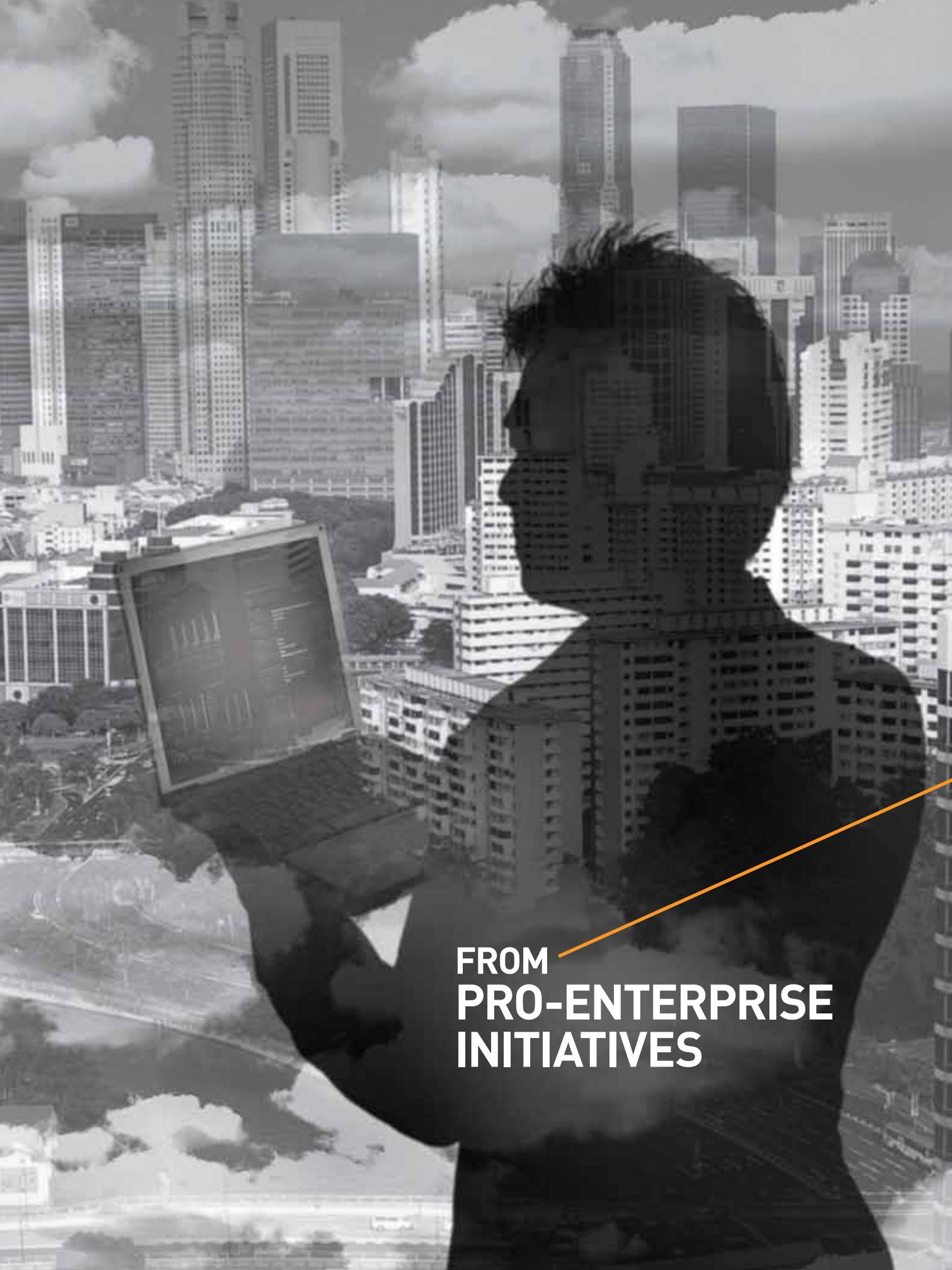
In the year in review, ACRA welcomed and hosted visits by delegates from around the world. These visits provided opportunities for the exchange of best practices in corporate registry as well as business regulation and facilitation.

ACRA received delegates from the following regions and organisations:

- Registrar's General Department, Ghana, 13 May 2011
- Samoa International Finance Authority, 16 to 25 May 2011
- Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India, 23 May and 6 June 2011
- Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Telecommunications, SME Centre and World Bank, Lebanon, 13 June 2011
- Company Registration Office, Karachi, Pakistan, 7 September 2011
- Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi, 26 September 2011
- Civil Service Commission of Kuwait, 7 February 2012
- Royal Embassy of Cambodia, 23 March 2012
- Kenya Judicial Service Commission, 27 March 2012



*ACRA welcomed a visit by delegates from the Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi.*



FROM  
PRO-ENTERPRISE  
INITIATIVES



# TO ROBUST FRAMEWORKS

Singapore's reputation as a trusted international financial and business centre is built on the foundation of a robust regulatory framework and internationally recognised accounting and auditing standards. ACRA regularly reviews the regulatory framework whilst proactively adopting a pro-enterprise outlook to ensure that Singapore's business environment stays globally competitive and conducive for businesses to continue growing. Our efforts to promote a high standard of financial reporting and audit quality also ensure that market confidence in Singapore's corporate financial information remains high.

# FROM PRO-ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES TO ROBUST FRAMEWORKS

## PRO-ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES

Our business environment is recognised internationally for being supportive of business growth. Businesses in Singapore enjoy the conveniences of an efficient market economy, high quality infrastructure and an educated workforce. Entrepreneurs are also able to start an enterprise easily and conduct their business with ease.

ACRA, along with other government agencies, has a key role to play in ensuring Singapore remains as one of the most attractive locations globally to do business. Indeed, even as ACRA ensures that our regulatory framework remains robust, we also adopt a pro-enterprise outlook in our work whether in terms of developing policies and programmes, or rolling out new services.

### Adding Value for Business Registrants

ACRA's online filing and information retrieval portal, BizFile, has received numerous accolades for facilitating business creation by offering a quick and hassle-free business registration process. BizFile also serves as a one-stop business facilitation portal offering a myriad of more than 300 e-services and value-added services at the point of business registration. Each year, an average of 57,000 newly registered businesses benefit from the suite of services, including domain name reservation with the Singapore Network Information Centre, Goods and Services Tax registration with the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, subscription to the EnterpriseOne newsletter and the activation of accounts with Singapore Customs.

ACRA continues to identify ways to help new business registrants save time and costs and get a head start on their business. Recognising that financial management matters, such as the setting up of a corporate bank account, are often essential components in starting up a new business, ACRA launched a pilot scheme in February 2011 to enable new business owners to apply online for a bank account with DBS Bank immediately after successful registration. ACRA continues to expand the choice of banking partners, with OCBC Bank coming on board a few months later.

Yet another value-added service introduced for new businesses is the option to link to a listing of opportunities available on the government procurement portal GeBIZ. New business owners can now subscribe to receive daily email alerts on government tenders and quotations. The updates can be customised so that only tenders meeting the businesses' needs are sent.

### Supporting Enterprise Creation

As a regulator and facilitator of businesses, ACRA is committed towards creating awareness amongst aspiring entrepreneurs and start-ups about the business environment, their business roles and responsibilities and their legal obligations.

In August 2011, ACRA launched the third edition of *Regulatory and Business Guide For Start-Ups* to equip new entrepreneurs with useful business tools and essential information on regulatory requirements. That same month, ACRA also co-organised the 5th Start-Up Enterprise Conference with DP Bureau, Action Community for Entrepreneurs, and Singapore Association of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators. Held on 22 August 2011, the conference brought together seasoned business leaders and industry experts to share insights into how entrepreneurs could start-up and grow their businesses in a sustainable manner.

ACRA also continued to reach out directly to budding heartland entrepreneurs through its public education and public outreach project, ACRA@The Heartlands. First introduced in 2007, ACRA works in partnership with other government agencies to conduct talks for heartlanders and would-be entrepreneurs to provide them with essential information on starting and doing business in Singapore. In 2011, ACRA partnered the Housing and Development Board (HDB) to organise two public talks for HDB residents keen to learn more about starting a business in their flats. The events were held on 20 August 2011 and 17 March 2012 and attracted a total of more than 800 would-be entrepreneurs.

### Improving XBRL Financial Reporting Accuracy

ACRA's early adoption of eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) for the filing of financial statements has made a positive difference to the business landscape in Singapore, by enabling the flow of value-enhancing financial information to the business community. Through XBRL, investors and financial analysts now have access to swifter and more detailed business analytics that tap the diverse corporate and financial information that companies have filed with ACRA.

Data accuracy is critical for consumers and users of company financial information, especially when the data is used for analysis and decision-making. To ensure the correctness, accuracy and completeness of XBRL submissions, the Financial Information Division (FID) developed a three-pronged framework of prevention, detection and correction. Through public awareness seminars and educational outreach to professional bodies and corporate secretaries, the division is able to raise awareness on the types of errors identified from its review of XBRL financial statements to help preparers and filers recognise and prevent these errors. FID also facilitates corrections through notifications of errors in past XBRL filings to filers and directors, bringing about improvements in data accuracy.

### Reducing the Regulatory Burden on Businesses

To harmonise and streamline the reporting of business data to various government agencies, ACRA, together with the Ministry of Finance, is leading the multi-agency Standard Business Information Reporting (SBIR) project.

Done in partnership with the Monetary Authority of Singapore, Department of Statistics, Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, Singapore Exchange and Infocomm Development Authority, SBIR examines what businesses are currently reporting to various government agencies, the types of data being reported, and the timelines for reporting. The aim is to minimise duplication of filings and explore opportunities to harmonise data definition for consistency and comparability.

In April 2011, a consultancy study was conducted to assess the types of data that could be shared and streamlined across the whole of government. The project team is now focusing on the financial statements that businesses submit to agencies, to assess the viability of further simplifying business-to-government reporting.

# FROM PRO-ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES TO ROBUST FRAMEWORKS

## ROBUST FRAMEWORKS

As the national regulator of businesses and public accountants, ACRA administers various legislation, including the Accountants Act, Business Registration Act, Companies Act, the Limited Liability Partnerships Act and the Limited Partnerships Act.

To ensure that Singapore's business environment remains highly attractive and amongst the most trusted in the world, ACRA regularly reviews and refines business and accountancy legislation to ensure that they are on par with global best practices. Regulatory reforms also help enable enterprises and public accounting entities to continue to flourish under robust yet pro-enterprise frameworks. The Companies Act, Business Registration Act and Accountants Act are currently undergoing comprehensive reviews.

- **Companies Act**

A Steering Committee was established in October 2007 by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to carry out a fundamental review of the Companies Act, with a view to ensure that Singapore continues to have an efficient and transparent corporate regulatory framework that supports its growth as a global hub for businesses and investors. The Steering Committee completed its review and in April 2011 submitted its report with 217 recommendations to MOF. In June 2011, MOF and ACRA's Legal Services Department launched a joint public consultation on the recommendations.

The Steering Committee recommended that the provisions relating to the regulation of foreign entities be placed in separate legislation, so that the Companies Act is streamlined to consist of only core company law. In this regard, a separate public consultation containing 40 recommendations to the regulatory framework for foreign entities was concurrently launched.

As part of the consultation exercise to engage the public and the stakeholders, three public consultations were held in August 2011. Consultations were closed in September 2011 and the feedback received has been evaluated. The law reform proposals are currently being finalised, after which Amendment Bills will be drafted in collaboration with the Attorney-General's Chambers. When the Bills are ready, another round of public consultation will be held.

- **Simplifying the Process of Deed Execution**

ACRA is also looking into proposed changes to reform the law on the formalities relating to the execution of documents. The proposed changes will simplify the process of deed execution while preserving a level of adequate security – a company or limited liability partnership will no longer need to have a common seal to execute documents as deeds but will instead have the option of executing a document by affixing a common seal or with the signatures of certain officers. A public consultation on the proposed amendments to the Companies Act and the Limited Liability Partnerships Act to effect this was held. The feedback received is currently under review.

- **Business Registration Act**

The Business Registration Act, which has provided the basic framework to govern sole proprietorships and partnerships in Singapore since 1974, is undergoing a holistic review to ensure its relevance in the present-day business environment. A set of policies, based on the feedback garnered from a public consultation in October 2010 on the scope of regulation, has been proposed. A public consultation will be launched in the second half of 2012 to seek public feedback on these policy proposals.

- **Accountants Act**

ACRA regulates public accountancy through the Accountants Act, to give the market a stronger basis for confidence in audited financial information as part of a trusted business environment. Maintaining this confidence requires rigorous, independent regulation of audit firms and auditors. The last significant update of the Accountants Act was in 2004, and the Accountants Act is now undergoing another comprehensive review. The proposed amendments aim to promote audit quality, maintain confidence in audits and protect public interest. In 2011, the Strategic and External Relations Division issued two stakeholder consultation documents and held eight focus group sessions to garner feedback on the proposed recommendations. Fifty written submissions were received, and the feedback from this process resulted in proposals that were issued for public consultation in June 2012.

### **Promoting Corporate Governance**

The Corporate Governance Council (CGC), which comprises members from the business community and stakeholder groups, was established in the first quarter of 2010 under the joint oversight of the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), Singapore Exchange Limited and ACRA. ACRA supports the council as part of its joint secretariat. Following its public consultation on the proposed revisions to the Code of Corporate Governance, the CGC submitted its recommendations to MAS. MAS accepted the recommendations of the CGC (with two modifications) and in May 2012, the CGC released the revised Code and the Risk Governance Guidance for Listed Boards.

### **Enhancing Corporate Compliance Awareness and Competence**

Trust and transparency are essential for the wheels of business to turn smoothly. Hence, the integrity of corporate officers and of the information they provide to investors cannot be overstated. One of ACRA's key priorities is to promote a culture of voluntary compliance among businesses and thus strengthen Singapore's reputation as a trusted and best place for business.

Following the review of ACRA's enforcement strategy in 2009, a suite of initiatives were implemented. This included the Colour-Coded Compliance Rating System and Certificate of Compliance. The compliance rate of filing Annual Returns has since improved from 78% in 2009 to 86% in 2011. In 2011/12, the Enforcement Division (ED) continued to carry out initiatives and programmes that encourage businesses to comply voluntarily and help improve the competencies of company directors.

- **Financial Year End Notice**

The Financial Year End Notice initiative was fully implemented by July 2011. Notices are sent to alert companies immediately after the closing of their financial year, so that they can begin to prepare financial statements early for the timely holding of their Annual General Meetings. This is particularly useful for small companies, which require less time to prepare their financial reports. The early reminder helps them avoid the peak periods for the filing of their Annual Returns.

- **Directors' Handbook**

To enhance the awareness of company directors on their statutory responsibilities, ED launched an informative guidebook titled *ACRA & I: Being An Effective Director*, on 28 July 2011. This guide is specifically tailored to help directors better understand and comply with their statutory responsibilities. The guidebook is available for purchase at ACRA and selected bookstores. The electronic version can be downloaded from the ACRA website for free.

# FROM PRO-ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES TO ROBUST FRAMEWORKS

## • Directors' Training Programme

Noting that one of the key causes of non-compliance on statutory requirements was directors' lack of awareness or adequate proficiency on corporate compliance matters, ED, together with professional bodies – Singapore Institute of Directors, Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Singapore Association of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators – initiated a training programme for directors. Aimed at creating awareness on compliance matters amongst directors from small- and medium-sized enterprises, a pilot run was held in January 2012. Spurred by the positive feedback from this pilot run, ACRA is currently developing a comprehensive training programme with our partners to benefit more directors.

## Maintaining a Trusted Corporate Financial Reporting and Auditing Regime

ACRA's regulatory framework covers the full financial reporting chain and has provided assurance and market confidence in Singapore's financial and business information. To sustain this confidence, a trusted corporate financial reporting and auditing regime that enhances audit quality and promotes high quality corporate financial reporting is essential.

ACRA adopts rigorous regulatory oversight of the public accounting profession so as to safeguard public interest and boost market confidence in the quality of corporate financial information in Singapore. The Practice Monitoring Division (PMD) conducts cyclical inspections of audit practice through its Practice Monitoring Programme (PMP). The auditor oversight activity is critical to identifying risks to audit quality and for the profession to address these risks, to assure the integrity of audit reports issued to shareholders of the companies.

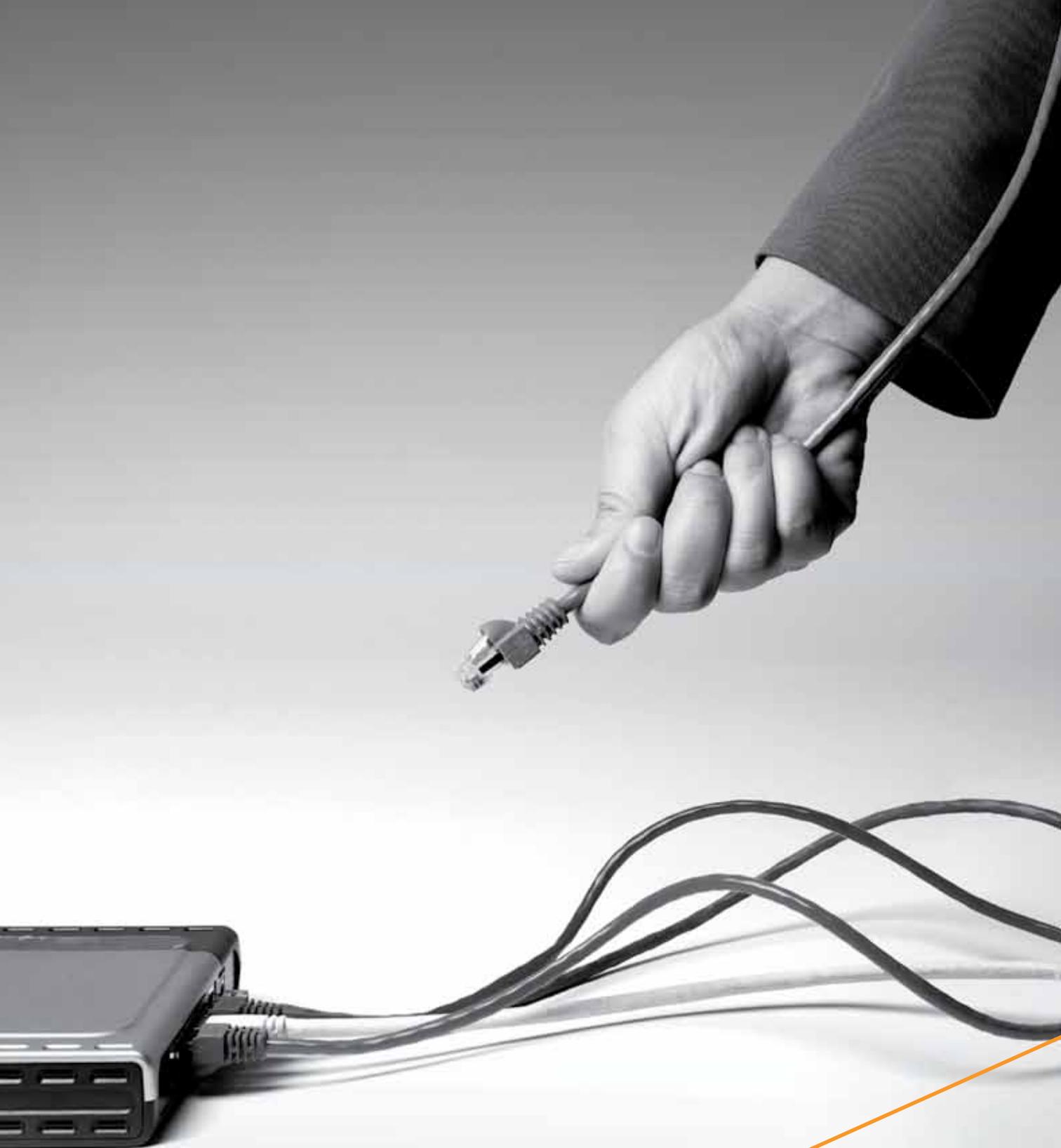
With findings and observations from the programme, PMD publishes an annual PMP Public Report to highlight key gaps, so that the profession can take remedial actions to improve audit quality. The findings are also shared at ACRA's annual Public Accountants Conference. This flagship event serves as a national platform for discourse among Singapore's public accountants and government agencies to promote the development of a strong professional environment for the accountancy sector.

To further strengthen the integrity of corporate financial reporting in Singapore, the Financial Reporting Surveillance Division (FRSD) launched a Financial Reporting Surveillance programme in July 2011, to ensure that financial statements filed with ACRA comply with the applicable accounting standards. In addition, in line with ACRA's role as a facilitator of businesses, FRSD had also issued an inaugural Financial Reporting Practice Guidance (FRPG) in January 2012 to remind directors of their financial reporting duties under the Companies Act and to highlight certain areas which are pertinent to the current economic environment.

Augmenting efforts to promote high quality audit, the Professional Oversight Division (POD) developed and issued two Audit Practice Bulletins to provide guidance to all audit firms on maintaining and improving audit quality. The first bulletin focused on the engagement quality control review process in a firm's controls over audit quality. This is a key process as it serves as a safeguard to ensure that audit risks have been appropriately addressed and that the audit opinions issued are correct and sufficiently supported. The bulletin provided pointers to audit firms on how they should assign and involve their engagement quality control reviewer (EQCR) in an engagement and how the role of EQCR can be strengthened by enhancing its accountability.

With changing economic conditions heightening the risks of financial reporting being susceptible to fraudulent reporting, POD's second bulletin highlighted key areas that auditors and audit firms should note when performing audits in difficult or uncertain conditions. This included communication with clients, fraud considerations, and impairment of non-financial assets and financial statement disclosures.

To enhance awareness of appropriate and acceptable professional conduct for the public accountancy profession, POD also published a discussion on the past disciplinary cases against public accountants and public accounting entities, and the actions taken by ACRA to uphold professional conduct. The article sets out the issues related to professional conduct, such as fee disputes and refusal to release audited financial statements, and discusses the decisions and rulings of cases.



FROM  
CURRENT  
NEEDS



# TO FUTURE DEMANDS

Even as ACRA strives to be responsive to the existing needs of our stakeholders and customers, steps are taken to continuously plan ahead and anticipate tomorrow's demands. We aim to keep pace with the evolving needs of the business community, whether it is simplifying processes, keeping business costs low, or improving on technological innovations.

# FROM CURRENT NEEDS TO FUTURE DEMANDS

## CURRENT NEEDS

The business landscape is increasingly volatile and the pace of change is faster and only set to increase. Businesses need to be agile and responsive to changes. In tandem, ACRA must keep pace and be prepared to realign our strategies and processes when necessary, to ensure we continue to deliver faster and efficient services to the business community. Regular and constant engagement with our stakeholders and partners ensures that we understand the evolving needs of the business community.

### Understanding Stakeholders' Needs

In 2011, ACRA undertook an extensive study to assess our stakeholders' awareness, perceptions and attitudes towards ACRA's products and services. The Stakeholder Needs Analysis study targeted three main groups – customers, partners and the general public – and focused on areas such as regulations and policies, key processes, customer service and partner engagement.

Overall, stakeholders found ACRA relevant and responsive to their needs. ACRA scored well with an overall customer satisfaction rating of 75%. More importantly, the study helped to identify five key areas where ACRA could further improve and better meet our stakeholders' needs. A cross-divisional task force has been set up to enable improvements in these key areas, which include customer engagement, ACRA's interaction with its partners, and ACRA's responsiveness to feedback.

### Enhancing Customers' Experience

ACRA interacts with its customers across various touchpoints. Steps are taken by the Client Engagement Division (CED) to ensure a consistent and positive experience across these platforms. The AskACRA interactive web service is one of the key channels through which ACRA engages its customers and addresses their queries. In 2011, the AskACRA system was upgraded with an enhanced and more user-friendly interface. Users can now refer to top 10 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in every category and retrieve required information more quickly and easily. The improved system also features an enhanced dashboard where ACRA officers can track the progress of cases more easily and thus better manage customers' queries. This has in turn translated into swifter responses and improved customer experience.

A new service standard was also introduced in 2011 which ensures that the waiting time at ACRA's customer service counters is kept at an optimum level. The existing Q-matic system, which manages customer flow, was upgraded so that officers have instantaneous updates on how long customers have waited, and it empowers the team to deploy additional resources where necessary. Customers are also kept informed of their expected waiting time. The system's SMS notification feature for handphones enables customers to be notified via SMS on the queue status remotely so that they can time their visits accordingly.

### Meeting the Need for Quality Business Information

The financial and business information filed with ACRA is one important source of information which companies as well as government agencies utilise for research and business decision-making purposes. In 2011, ACRA received some 1.9 million requests for business information. Ensuring high quality accurate data is therefore a key priority for ACRA. To this end, the Information Resource Division (IRD) launched an initiative for the profiling and cleansing of core data for companies, businesses and Limited Liability Partnerships, which was completed in October 2011.

ACRA also understands that businesses today need instant and up-to-date information to help them make balanced and informed decisions quickly. This could range from background checks on the entities they are doing business with, to understanding the basic profile and financial performance of their companies with respect to their competitors.

With this in mind, IRD launched a new product in 2012 known as Corporate Compliance Financial Profile (CCFP). The CCFP provides comprehensive business information on any company that has registered with ACRA and lodged its Annual Return with XBRL financials. Leveraging the CCFP, users can gauge the business and financial health of a company at a quick glance. Its key features include updated information on the business profile, compliance rating and the financial profile based on the latest three years of comparative data, including financial ratios, as well as audit and directors' opinion.

### Providing Ready Access to Information

The proliferation of smartphones and mobile applications offers new communications platforms for ACRA to reach out to our stakeholders. To this end, two new initiatives were launched to better meet the needs of our customers who are getting increasingly mobile.

In April 2011, ACRA launched the 'ACRA On The Go' iPhone application to provide iPhone users with free and ready access to ACRA's registry as well as other useful information. The application offers mobile versions of three services unique to ACRA: 'Directory Search', a simplified version of ACRA's 'Directory Search on Registered Business Entities'; 'AGM Calculator', which allows offline calculation of the last possible date for a company's next Annual General Meeting; and 'mFAQ', a mobile version of ACRA's online enquiry service, 'Ask ACRA'.

Tapping social media platforms, ACRA launched its Twitter account in January 2012 to share news and updates on new initiatives as well as interesting business statistics. This has also enabled ACRA to better engage its stakeholders, extend its reach and raise awareness of its initiatives.

### Business Information on Geospatial Platform

From March 2012, the public can now search spatially for information on companies and businesses registered with ACRA through a new information service called BizQuery. BizQuery, located on OneMap, the integrated map system for government agencies to deliver location-based services and information, is linked to ACRA's iShop information portal. The service allows OneMap users to perform a search on business entities in their surrounding locality and be redirected to the iShop portal for the purchase of related information products. The location-based entity search service complements ACRA's existing Business Directory Search Service and offers yet another new service to customers.

### Improving Internal Work Processes for Better Services

The Governance Surveillance Division (GSD) implemented the Regulatory Investigation E-System (RITES) in June 2011 to enhance ACRA's enforcements and investigations capabilities. RITES, an online system integrated with existing database systems, enables officers to better manage cases in an efficient way through its electronic case management, task assignment and scheduling functions. The second phase for RITES was rolled out on 7 February 2012 to include the enforcement module and e-forms. The enforcement module enables officers to create summons and process appeals for reduction in penalties more efficiently while the e-forms allow public to lodge complaints against business entities and schedule appointments with ACRA officers online. The added modules will improve the turnaround time for prosecution and appeal cases and provide a new avenue for the public and businesses to lodge complaints or contact ACRA.

## FROM CURRENT NEEDS TO FUTURE DEMANDS

In 2011, the Management Services Division (MSD), together with the Information Technology Strategy Division (ITSD), rolled out two new systems to reduce administrative hassles and enable greater operational efficiency. The Resource Booking System, launched in May 2011, provides an effective management of meeting room facilities and equipment, allowing staff to conveniently search and book these resources online. Similarly, the E-Requisition System was introduced in December 2011 to streamline the requisition process of office items, thus saving time, reducing wastage of resources and improving efficiency in inventory tracking.

MSD and ITSD also worked with CED to launch the Visitor Management System (VMS) in March 2012. The VMS provides an improved ability to track visitors and at the same time, enhances the visitor sign-in process as visitor information can now be recorded more accurately and more consistently. The visitor information database also allows reports of visitor activity to be quickly created, which can be useful during emergencies and evacuations.

### FUTURE DEMANDS

Even as ACRA keeps a finger on the pulse of its stakeholders and customers needs, it also seeks to anticipate future requirements and initiate long-term strategies and plans that will meet these future needs and demands.

#### New Generation BizFile

Almost a decade ago, ACRA became one of the first regulatory agencies in the world to offer all its services online. BizFile, ACRA's one-stop online filing and information retrieval system, was launched in January 2003. Since then, it has garnered a slew of local and international awards as a groundbreaking example of how regulatory reform, systems re-engineering and leveraging information technology can reduce regulatory burden and costs, increase efficiency and cut red tape.

To ensure that the system remains cutting edge in meeting customers' needs and efficiently handles the ever-increasing registration- and filing-related transactions, the Business Registration and Facilitation Division and e-Services Division began preparations in 2011 for the development of the new generation BizFile. This includes actively engaging key stakeholders to understand their needs and garner their feedback on the current Bizfile system and processes.

A Trusted Information System (TIS) will be developed along with the new generation BizFile. The TIS ensures the quality of business information with technical tools for disaster recovery, business intelligence, analytics and content quality assurance. It will also enable information sharing and generate dynamic analytical reports.

Targeted to be commissioned in the second half of 2014, the new generation BizFile and TIS aim to improve user experience when transacting with ACRA. There will also be support for new platforms such as mobile and portable devices, improved quality of business information and more support for the sharing of information.

### Enhancing the XBRL System

The eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) system for financial reporting was first introduced in 2007 to pave the way for a pro-enterprise financial reporting environment for businesses in Singapore. Currently, close to 60,000 corporate financial statements are filed with ACRA in XBRL format annually.

In response to feedback and changes in technology and the international landscape, the Financial Information Division has started work on enhancing the XBRL system. The aim is to further facilitate the filing process for businesses and expand the taxonomy of the XBRL filing system to improve the quality of XBRL financial statements. Amongst the proposed enhancements is the development of a new preparation tool to enable businesses to prepare and manage their XBRL financial statements offline.

In preparation for the enhancements, ACRA conducted focus group discussions with over 80 organisations involved in the financial reporting supply chains in early 2012. ACRA continues to seek public feedback. In mid-2012, a public consultation exercise was launched to seek feedback on the proposed enhancements. The proposed enhancements to the XBRL filing system are targeted to be implemented in late 2013.



**FROM**  
**CONTINUOUS**  
**IMPROVEMENT**

The image shows a blurred person in a dark suit and light-colored shirt walking past a wall. On the wall, the ACRA logo is prominently displayed. The logo consists of the letters 'ACRA' in large, dark, three-dimensional block letters. Below 'ACRA', the words 'ACCOUNTING AND CORPORATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY' are written in smaller, dark, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a light-colored wall with horizontal lines, possibly from a window blind or a decorative panel. The overall scene is captured with a motion blur effect, suggesting a busy, active environment.

ACRA  
ACCOUNTING AND CORPORATE  
REGULATORY AUTHORITY

# TO ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Continuous improvement, at both the individual and organisational levels, lies at the foundation of ACRA's excellence. We invest in our people and provide them with opportunities to persistently pursue innovation, better customer service and greater operational efficiency, in our journey towards organisational excellence.

# FROM CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TO ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

At ACRA, we encourage a culture that embraces change and continuous improvement. In line with this, officers are provided opportunities for self-development and work-related training. ACRA also invests in infrastructure and framework improvements to ensure that we continue to manage risks while seizing opportunities, and develop initiatives that foster a responsive and trusted regulatory environment for businesses and public accountants.

### Improving Risk Management

The Audit Division enhanced ACRA's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) oversight framework, which now includes high-level descriptions of the various roles in the risk governance structure, as well as a revised risk-severity matrix that simplifies the assessment of impact and likelihood factors. The framework also sets out a three-year audit plan, which schedules mitigating actions according to the level of risk and ensures that ACRA's risks are constantly monitored and managed. Internal auditors also followed up with a review to determine the effectiveness of the ERM practices.

### Enhancing ACRA's Talent Management Framework

A competent, talented and satisfied workforce is key in enabling ACRA to fulfil its mission and achieve strategic outcomes. The Human Resource Division embarked on the next strategic step in its plans to realign and improve ACRA's HR structure and policies. Hays Group, a global management consultant, was appointed to conduct a comprehensive review of ACRA's remuneration and talent management infrastructure for management executives. This new framework will enable ACRA to continue to attract, retain and adequately challenge our talent. The new scheme and enhanced practices were implemented in June 2012.

### Strategic Technology Upgrades

Even as ACRA embarks on developing the new generation BizFile to meet the changing needs of the business community, eBizcore – the backend system supporting BizFile – was further enhanced to improve operating efficiency and risk mitigation. The eBizcore Technology Refresh project was rolled out by Information Technology Strategy Division in September 2011 to update the capability of the eBizcore system, including system availability, performance and IT. This ensures that BizFile continues to provide uninterrupted delivery of online services to the business community in the interim.

## ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Guided by our framework for organisational excellence, ACRA's efforts and achievements have enabled us to move closer to our vision of making Singapore the best place for business. The dedication and commitment of our staff form the bedrock for these achievements, with the awards and accolades serving as the hallmarks of our journey towards organisational excellence.

### Singapore Quality Class Star

ACRA received the Singapore Quality Class (SQC) Star, a recognition given to organisations that demonstrate high levels of performance in the business excellence journey. Organisations must have attained at least 550 points in the renewal health check to achieve the SQC Star accreditation.

### People Developer Award

ACRA engages and values its people and challenges them to higher performance. Attesting to this is the People Developer recertification that was clinched last year. The award is also a significant milestone in ACRA's organisational excellence journey.

### ISO 9001:2008 Continuing Assessment

ACRA continues to maintain an effective and relevant Quality Management System (QMS) that fulfils the requirements of ISO 9001:2008 standards. The QMS clearly defines ACRA's policies and procedures necessary to support our commitment to quality excellence and customer satisfaction. Processes have been reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain relevant and in tandem with the changes in the business environment and customer expectations. In the year in review, ACRA achieved the continuation of ISO 9001:2008 certification.

### National Innovation and Quality Circles Awards

ACRA was lauded at the National Innovation and Quality Circles Awards (IQC) 2011 with three bronze awards for creating productive workflows to better meet the needs of ACRA customers. An announcement message facility, which enables customers at iShop@ACRA – ACRA's online business information portal – to be informed of any service disruption almost immediately and thus minimising any potential inconvenience, also clinched the Ministry of Finance Innovator Award. To enhance customer experience, the integrated system of Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and SMS notification system was used to keep customers updated on initiatives, policies and system downtime. ACRA's one-stop business facilitation at BizFile, with 300-plus e-services and value-added services, was also recognised for making starting a business in Singapore a hassle-free process.

### Ministry of Finance Best Project 2011

ACRA clinched the Ministry of Finance Best Project award for four years in a row. The latest achievement was for the production of *ACRA & I: Being an Effective Director*, a handy guide aimed at raising company directors' competencies and helping them better understand their responsibilities.

### Best Practice 2011 (Regulation)

Winner of the Best Practice 2011 (Regulation) Award, BizFinx (Business Financials in XBRL) is an initiative launched by ACRA to unlock the value of XBRL financial statements that companies have filed with ACRA, to bring about better governance and decision-making by market players. Under BizFinx, two online financial analysis and benchmarking tools were introduced to provide the business community with access to interactive, comparative financial analysis information to help them make better business decisions.

### Service Excellence Awards

Twenty-three ACRA officers were honoured with the Excellent Service Award (EXSA) while Ms Rusiah Yusof was honoured with the PS21 Star Award for delivering consistently top-notch customer service. The ACRA Shining Star Award was also awarded to recognise three ACRA officers who have provided exemplary service to their internal customers – a total of one Shining Star Award and two runner-up awards were handed out.



*Ms Rusiah Yusof (left) was recognised with the PS21 Star Award for delivering consistently excellent customer service.*

# FROM CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TO ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## Public Sector Infocomm Security Awareness Survey

The Public Sector Infocomm Security Awareness Survey, conducted by the Infocomm Development Authority, indicated that ACRA officers have a heightened sense of Information Security awareness. ACRA staff scored a rating of 90.32%, above the average rating of the entire public sector at 85.43%. The survey aimed to determine the level of awareness of ICT security threats and protection among public sector end-users.

## Work Improvement Teams

At the annual ACRA productivity event on 2 March 2012, the ExCEL committee celebrated and recognised the best Work Improvement Teams (WITs) projects and officers who had the best staff suggestions. These were selected from 19 WITs projects and 222 staff suggestions submitted throughout the year.

## Community Involvement and Staff Welfare

ACRA is proud of its tradition of helping the underprivileged. From organising fundraising activities to reaching out to the disadvantaged, ACRA staff rally together to be part of a meaningful cause and to make a difference to the community.

- **ACRA Fiesta**

ACRA continued its support for the President's Challenge to raise funds for some 28 social services beneficiaries. ACRA Fiesta, a charity sale cum performance, was held and received enthusiastic support from ACRA staff, who donated a total of \$1,400. In addition to beneficiaries of the President's Challenge, the charity sale also supported social enterprises benefitting abused women and landmine victims.

- **Bringing Cheer to ACRA's Adopted Charity**

ACRA organises a visit to its adopted charity, the Geylang East Home for the Aged, every Chinese New Year. The visits provide ACRA staff with the opportunity to interact with the residents and spread some festive cheer with their performances. Prior to the visit this year, ACRA also partnered the Singapore Polytechnic's lion dance troupe to raise funds for the Home. A total of \$1,888 – from "red packets" collected by the students – was donated.



*Caring for ACRA's adopted charity: Sharing a conversation with the residents of Geylang East Home for the Aged.*

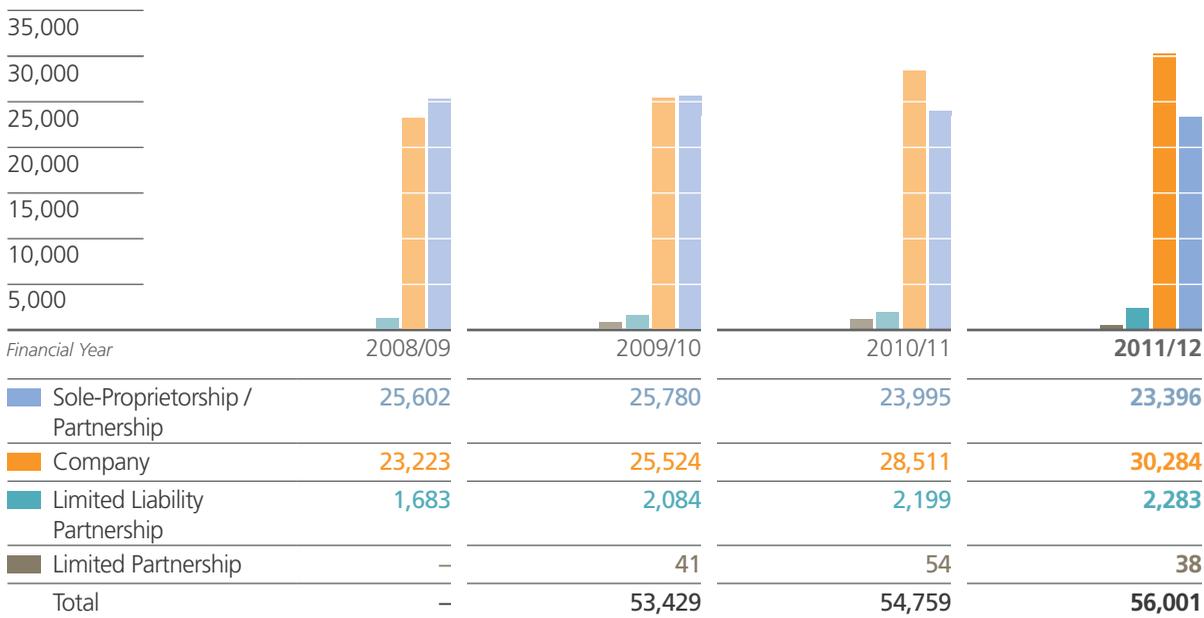
- **ACRA's Big Day Out**

ACRA's Big Day Out is an annual event eagerly anticipated by ACRA staff, as the event allows staff bonding outside of the workplace as well as a chance for their guests and family members to meet their colleagues and their families. Held at the Science Centre Singapore on 17 September 2011, the ACRA team was joined by beneficiaries from Beyond Social Services, a charitable organisation that helps disadvantaged families. Both ACRA staff and our invited guests had a fun and interactive learning experience, culminating in a movie screening at the IMAX Theatre and a scrumptious buffet thereafter.

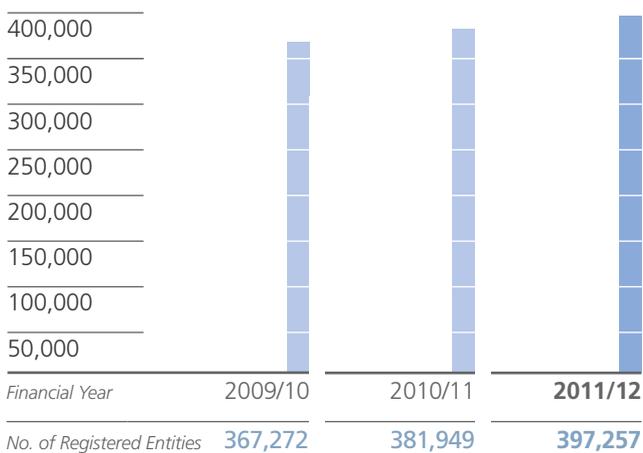
# KEY STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

## New Entities Registered/Incorporated

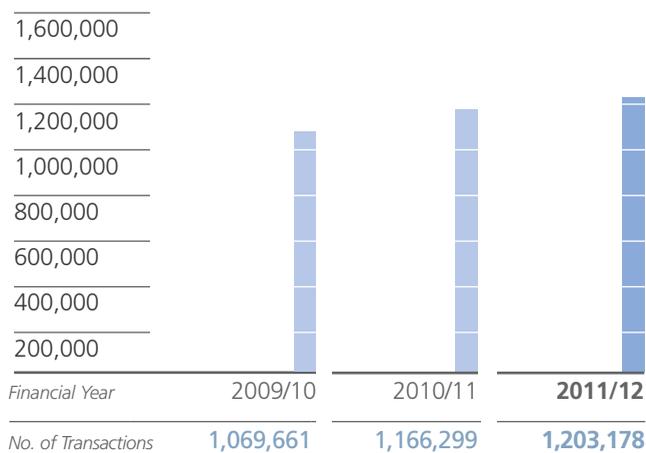
56,001 new business entities were formed in 2011/12. As of 31 March 2012, there were 397,257 business entities and 958 public accountants in the Register.



## Number of Registered Entities



## BizFile Transaction Volume



Average annual growth rate of the number of registered entities

# 3.5%

Close to 300 forms are available online through BizFile. Over a million transactions were done each year since 2005/06 and there has been a general upward trend in the volume.

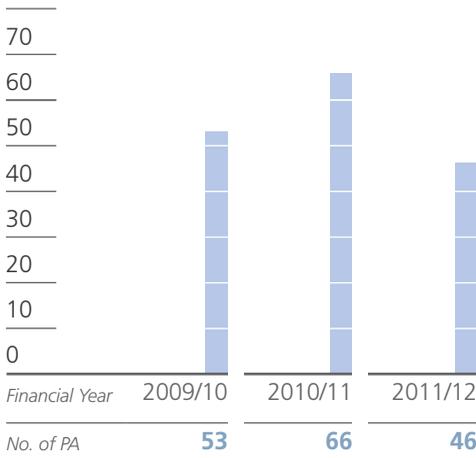
# KEY STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

## Common BizFile Transactions (2011/12)

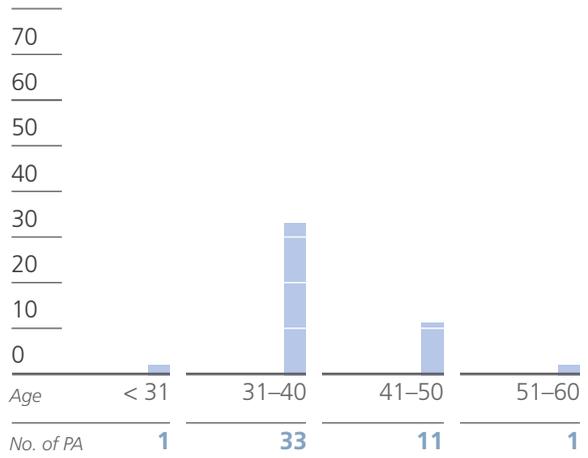
In 2011/12, there were 1,203,178 online transactions. The most common transactions for the top 4 BizFile categories were Information Purchase, Local Company, Sole-Proprietorship & Partnership, and Limited Liability Partnership.

	Number of Transactions
<b>Information Purchase</b>	
Business Profile (Company)	245,473
Business Profile (Business)	69,877
Extracts	57,988
People Profile	11,813
Non Electronic Extract	11,243
<b>Local Company</b>	
Company Name Application	37,298
Company Incorporation	31,024
Change of Particulars of Officers	94,264
Change of Registered Office Address	33,884
Annual Returns	162,277
<b>Sole-Proprietorship &amp; Partnership</b>	
Business Name Application	23,840
Business Registration	23,402
Business Renewal	126,053
Change to Business	30,976
Cessation of Business	1,906
<b>Limited Liability Partnership</b>	
LLP Name Application	2,056
LLP Registration	2,102
Change of Particulars of Managers/Partners	1,280
Change of Registered Office Address	918
Annual Declarations	3,900

## Registration of Public Accountants (PA)



## New Public Accountants (PA) Age Profile



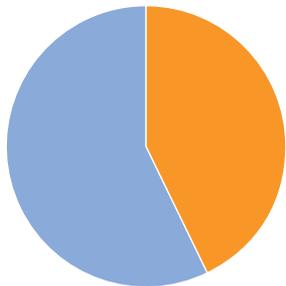
Total number of Public Accountants registered at 31 March 2012

**958**

Total no. of new registered Public Accountants from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012

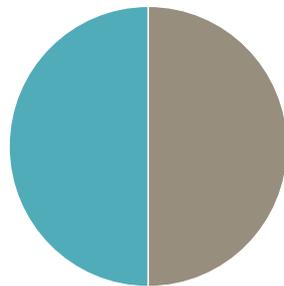
**46**

## New Public Accountants Qualification Profile



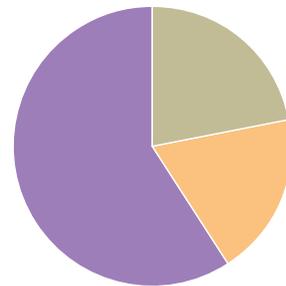
Local	43%	20
Foreign	57%	26

## New Public Accountants Gender Profile



Female	50%	23
Male	50%	23

## Intended Practice of New Public Accountants



Big	22%	10
Medium-sized	19%	9
Small	59%	27

## Number of Accounting Entities\*

**7**

Big accounting entities\*\*

**611**

Small accounting entities\*\*\*\*

**7**

Medium-sized accounting entities\*\*\*

**625**

Total

\* Number based on Public Accountants renewal declaration (as at 31 March 2011)

\*\* Audited 30 or more listed corporations

\*\*\* Audited 5 or more listed corporations but less than 30

\*\*\*\* Audited less than 5 listed corporations

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## FINANCIAL RESULTS

### Income

For the financial year ended 31 March 2012, income grew moderately by S\$1.2 million or 2% to S\$55.4 million (2010/11: S\$54.2 million).

Company Registration and related fees grew at a rate of 4% or S\$0.8 million to S\$19.5 million (2010/11: S\$18.7 million), arising mainly from the increase in number of company incorporations.

Late filing fines and prosecution penalties were reduced by S\$0.3 million or 2% to S\$17.1 million (2010/11: S\$17.4 million). The reduction was attributable to the Authority's various initiatives to achieve voluntary compliance which include the implementation of compliance rating/Certificate of Compliance and Financial Year-End Reminder.

Information Service fees inched up S\$0.2 million or 2% to S\$10.8 million (2010/11: S\$10.6 million) while Business Registration and related fees inched down to S\$5.2 million (2010/11: S\$5.3 million).

Public Accountant Registration and related fees increased S\$0.1 million or 7% to S\$1.6 million (2010/11: S\$1.5 million).

### Expenditure

For the financial year ended 31 March 2012, operating expenditure increased by S\$1.1 million or 3% to S\$35.6 million (2010/11: S\$34.5 million).

Staff cost increased by S\$0.1 million or 1% to S\$15.9 million (2010/11: S\$15.8 million).

Services comprised IT operating costs for Bizfile system, XBRL financial reporting system, ACRA Helpdesk as well as professional and consultancy fees. The increase of S\$0.2 million or 2% to S\$8.7 million (2010/11: S\$8.5 million) was mainly attributable to consultancy services commissioned by the Authority on stakeholders' needs and review of the Authority's remuneration framework.

### Operating Surplus

Operating surplus for 2011/12 was S\$19.80 million as compared to S\$19.75 million in the previous financial year.

Net surplus after contribution to Government Consolidated Funds increased from S\$16.39 million in the previous financial year to S\$16.44 million.

### Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure for the year was S\$6.1 million (2010/11: S\$3.5 million). Of this, S\$5.9 million was incurred on internally-developed IT applications for the operations of the Authority while another S\$0.2 million was for acquisition of office equipments and computer systems.

As at 31 March 2012, the capital contracted for but not yet recorded as expenditure in the financial statements amounted to S\$4.7 million (2010/11: S\$5.7 million). These were mainly for the enhancement of the current XBRL financial reporting system.

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

Year ended 31 March 2012	S\$ million
Income	55.4
Staff Costs	(15.9)
Services	(8.7)
Other Costs	(11.0)
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>(35.6)</b>
Surplus	19.8
Less: Contribution to Government Consolidated Fund	(3.4)
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>16.4</b>

## FINANCIAL POSITION

### Assets

Total assets increased by S\$15.4 million or 11% to S\$149.4 million (2010/11: S\$134.0 million) as at 31 March 2012.

Cash and cash equivalents increased by S\$12.1 million or 10% to S\$136.5 million (2010/11: S\$124.4 million). These were mainly deposits placed with Accountant-General's Department of the Ministry of Finance under Whole-of-Government Centralised Liquidity Management (CLM) and Statutory Board Approved Funds Scheme.

### Liabilities

Current liabilities were S\$0.7 million or 5% higher at S\$13.5 million (2010/11: S\$12.8 million). These consisted mainly of trade and other payables (S\$7.7 million) and provision for contribution to Government Consolidated Fund (S\$3.4 million). As at 31 March 2012, the pension provision reduced to S\$0.7 million (2010/11: S\$0.9 million).

### Cashflow

Overall net cash flow reduced to S\$12.1 million from S\$16.3 million in the previous financial year. This was attributable to S\$19.6 million generated from operating activities and offset by an outflow of S\$7.5 million from investing and financing activities.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY

As at 31 March 2012	S\$ million
Fixed and Intangible Assets	11.3
Development Projects-In-Progress	0.2
Current Assets	137.9
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>149.4</b>
Less:	
Current Liabilities	(13.5)
Non-current Liabilities	(0.7)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>135.2</b>
Share Capital	8.6
Accumulated Surplus	126.6
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>	<b>135.2</b>

# THANK YOU

ACRA would like to thank the following organisations for their invaluable support:

Accountant-General's Department  
Accounting Standards Council  
Association of Banks of Singapore  
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants  
Association of International Accountants, Singapore  
Association of Small and Medium Enterprises  
Attorney-General's Chambers  
Auditor-General's Office  
Audit Oversight Board, Malaysia  
Board of Architects  
Central Provident Fund Board  
Certis CISCO  
Chartered Institute of Management Accountants  
Commercial Affairs Department  
Corporate Governance Council  
Corporate Registers Forum  
Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau  
Council for Estate Agencies  
CPA Australia  
Credit Management Consultancy (Asia) Pte Ltd  
CrimsonLogic Pte Ltd  
DBS Bank Ltd  
Deloitte & Touche – XBRL  
Department of Statistics  
DP Bureau Pte Ltd  
DP Information Network Pte Ltd  
Dun & Bradstreet (Singapore) Pte Ltd  
Economic Development Board  
Ecquaria Technologies Pte Ltd  
European Corporate Registers Forum (ECRF)  
Housing and Development Board  
Immigration and Checkpoints Authority  
Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore  
Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore  
Insolvency and Public Trustee's Office  
Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Singapore  
Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales  
Institute of Company Accountants, Singapore  
Institute of Internal Auditors Singapore  
Intellectual Property Office of Singapore  
International Association of Corporate Administrators  
International Enterprise Singapore  
International Federation of Accountants  
Investment Management Association of Singapore  
Law Society of Singapore  
Mahindra Satyam  
Majlis Ugama Islam of Singapore  
Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports  
Ministry of Defence  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Finance  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Manpower  
Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Monetary Authority of Singapore  
Nanyang Technological University  
National University of Singapore  
NCS Pte Ltd  
Network for Electronic Transfers (Singapore) Pte Ltd  
Ngee Ann Polytechnic  
OCBC Bank  
People's Association  
Registrar of Societies  
Securities and Exchange Commission of Thailand  
Securities Investors Association of Singapore  
Singapore Association of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators  
Singapore Business Federation  
Singapore Customs  
Singapore Exchange  
Singapore Human Resources Institute  
Singapore Institute of Directors  
Singapore International Chamber of Commerce  
Singapore Land Authority  
Singapore Management University  
Singapore National Employers Federation  
Singapore Network Information Centre Pte Ltd  
Singapore Police Force (Licensing Division)  
Singapore Police Force (Warrant Enforcement Unit)  
Singapore Prisons  
Singapore Tourism Board  
Singapore Venture Capital & Private Equity Association  
Smart Regulations Committee  
Smartwares Pte Ltd  
SPRING Singapore  
Subordinate Courts  
The World Bank  
United Overseas Bank Ltd  
Vital.org  
XBRL International







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