



THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

**HIJACKING OF AIRCRAFT AND
PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AND
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS ACT 1978**

2020 REVISED EDITION

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Hijacking of Aircraft and Protection of Aircraft and International Airports Act 1978

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An Act to give effect to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft signed at The Hague on 16 December 1970, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation signed at Montreal on 23 September 1971 and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation signed at Montreal on 24 February 1988, and for purposes connected therewith.

[8 April 1978]

Short title

1. This Act is the Hijacking of Aircraft and Protection of Aircraft and International Airports Act 1978.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“act of violence” means —

- (a) an act done in Singapore which constitutes the offence of murder, attempted murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, voluntarily causing grievous hurt, voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means, or an offence under —
 - (i) section 4 of the Arms Offences Act 1973;
 - (ii) section 3 or 4 of the Corrosive and Explosive Substances and Offensive Weapons Act 1958;
 - (iii) section 3 or 4 of the Explosive Substances Act 1924; or
 - (iv) section 3 of the Kidnapping Act 1961; and
- (b) an act done outside Singapore which, if done in Singapore, would constitute an offence mentioned in paragraph (a);

“aerodrome” has the meaning given by the Air Navigation Act 1966;

“landing” includes alighting on water;

“military service” includes naval and air force service;

“unlawfully”, in relation to the commission of an act —

- (a) in Singapore, means an offence that is (apart from this Act) constituted under any written law in force in Singapore; and
- (b) outside Singapore, means the commission of the act that would (apart from this Act) have been an offence under any written law in force in Singapore had it been committed in Singapore.

(2) For the purposes of this Act —

- (a) the period during which an aircraft is in flight is deemed to include any period from the moment when all its external doors are closed following embarkation until the moment when any such door is opened for disembarkation, and, in the case of a forced landing, any period until the competent authorities take over responsibility for the aircraft and for persons and property on board; and
- (b) an aircraft is taken to be in service during the whole of the period which begins with the pre-flight preparation of the aircraft for a flight and ends 24 hours after the aircraft lands having completed that flight, and also at any time (not falling within that period) while, in accordance with paragraph (a), the aircraft is in flight.

Hijacking

3.—(1) Subject to subsection (2), a person on board an aircraft in flight who unlawfully, by the use of force or by threats of any kind, seizes the aircraft or exercises control of it commits the offence of hijacking, whatever his or her nationality or citizenship, whatever the State in which the aircraft is registered and whether the aircraft is in Singapore or elsewhere.

(2) If the aircraft is used in military, customs or police service, subsection (1) does not apply unless —

- (a) the person seizing or exercising control of the aircraft is a citizen of Singapore;
- (b) his or her act is committed in or over Singapore; or
- (c) the aircraft is used in the military, customs or police service of the Republic of Singapore.

(3) A person who commits the offence of hijacking shall be guilty of an offence.

Violence against passengers or crew

4. Any act of violence against the passengers or crew of an aircraft in flight done by a person in connection with the offence of hijacking committed or attempted by him or her on board that aircraft is deemed to have been committed in Singapore and constitutes an offence punishable under the law in force in Singapore applicable thereto, wherever the act of violence was committed, whatever the State of registration of the aircraft and whatever the nationality or citizenship of the offender.

Destroying, damaging or endangering safety of aircraft

5.—(1) Subject to subsection (5), a person who unlawfully and intentionally —

(a) destroys an aircraft in service or so damages the aircraft as to render it incapable of flight or as to be likely to endanger its safety in flight; or

(b) commits on board an aircraft in flight any act of violence which is likely to endanger the safety of the aircraft,

shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Subject to subsection (5), a person who unlawfully and intentionally places or causes to be placed on an aircraft in service any device or substance which is likely to destroy the aircraft or is likely so to damage it as to render it incapable of flight or as to be likely to endanger its safety in flight shall be guilty of an offence.

(3) Nothing in subsection (2) is to be construed as limiting the circumstances in which the commission of any act —

(a) may constitute an offence under subsection (1); or

(b) may constitute attempting or conspiring to commit or abetting the commission of the offence.

(4) Except as provided by subsection (5), subsections (1) and (2) apply whether any act mentioned in those subsections is committed in Singapore or elsewhere, whatever the nationality or citizenship of the person committing the act or whatever the State in which the aircraft is registered.

(5) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to any act committed in relation to an aircraft used in military, customs or police service unless —

- (a) the act is committed in or over Singapore; or
- (b) where the act is committed outside Singapore, the person committing the act is a citizen of Singapore.

Other acts endangering or likely to endanger safety of aircraft

6.—(1) Subject to subsections (5) and (6), a person who unlawfully and intentionally destroys or damages any property to which this section applies or interferes with the operation of that property, where the destruction, damage or interference is likely to endanger the safety of aircraft in flight, shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Subsection (1) applies to any property used for the provision of air navigation facilities including any land, building or ship so used, and including any apparatus or equipment so used, whether it is on board an aircraft or elsewhere.

(3) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), a person who intentionally communicates any information which is false, misleading or deceptive in a material particular, where the communication of the information endangers the safety of an aircraft in flight or is likely to endanger the safety of an aircraft in flight, shall be guilty of an offence.

(4) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (3) to prove that —

- (a) he or she believed, and had reasonable grounds for believing, that the information was true; or
- (b) when he or she communicated the information, he or she was lawfully employed to perform duties which consisted of or included the communication of information and that he or she communicated the information in good faith in the performance of those duties.

(5) Subsections (1) and (3) do not apply to the commission of any act unless either the act is committed in Singapore, or, where the act is committed outside Singapore —

- (a) the person committing the act is a citizen of Singapore;
- (b) the commission of the act endangers or is likely to endanger the safety in flight of a civil aircraft registered in Singapore or chartered by demise to a lessee whose principal place of business, or (if the lessee has no place of business) whose permanent residence is in Singapore;
- (c) the act is committed on board a civil aircraft which is so registered or so chartered; or
- (d) the act is committed on board a civil aircraft which lands in Singapore with the person who committed the act still on board.

(6) Subsection (1) does not apply to any act committed outside Singapore and so committed in relation to property which is situated outside Singapore and is not used for the provision of air navigation facilities in connection with international air navigation, unless the person committing the act is a citizen of Singapore.

(7) In this section, “civil aircraft” means any aircraft other than an aircraft used in military, customs or police service.

Endangering safety at aerodromes

7.—(1) A person who by means of any device, substance or weapon intentionally commits at an aerodrome serving international civil aviation any act of violence which —

- (a) causes or is likely to cause death or serious personal injury;
and
- (b) endangers or is likely to endanger the safe operation of the aerodrome or the safety of persons at the aerodrome,

shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Subject to subsection (4), a person who by means of any device, substance or weapon unlawfully and intentionally —

(a) destroys or seriously damages —

- (i) property used for the provision of any facilities at an aerodrome serving international civil aviation (including any apparatus or equipment so used); or
- (ii) any aircraft which is at such an aerodrome but is not in service; or

(b) disrupts the services of such an aerodrome,

in such a way as to endanger or be likely to endanger the safe operation of the aerodrome or the safety of persons at the aerodrome, shall be guilty of an offence.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (4), subsections (1) and (2) apply whether any act mentioned in those subsections is committed in Singapore or elsewhere and whatever the nationality of the person committing the act.

(4) Subsection (2)(a)(ii) does not apply to any act committed in relation to an aircraft used in military, customs or police service unless —

- (a) the act is committed in Singapore; or
- (b) where the act is committed outside Singapore, the person committing the act is a citizen of Singapore.

Abetting the commission of acts outside Singapore

8. Any person in Singapore who abets the commission elsewhere of any act which —

- (a) would, but for section 3(2), be the offence of hijacking;
- (b) would, but for subsection (4) of section 5, be an offence under that section;
- (c) would, but for subsection (5) or (6) of section 6, be an offence under that section; or
- (d) would, but for subsection (4) of section 7, be an offence under that section,

shall be guilty of an offence.

Penalty

9. Any person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable on conviction to be punished with imprisonment for life.

Consent for prosecution

10.—(1) No prosecution shall be instituted under this Act without the written consent of the Public Prosecutor.

(2) Even though a consent has not been given in relation to the offence in accordance with subsection (1) —

- (a) a person may be arrested for an offence under this Act;
- (b) a warrant for the arrest of any person in respect of any offence under this Act may be issued and executed;
- (c) a person may be charged with an offence under this Act; and
- (d) a person charged with any offence under this Act may be remanded in custody or granted bail,

but no further steps in the proceedings in relation to the offence are to be taken until the consent of the Public Prosecutor has been obtained.

Extradition

11.—(1) The offences under this Act and attempts to commit the offences are deemed to be included in the list of extradition crimes described in the First Schedule to the Extradition Act 1968.

(2) Where no extradition treaty is in force between Singapore and a State which is a party to the Convention —

- (a) a notification in the *Gazette* under section 4 of the Extradition Act 1968 may be made applying that Act as if the Convention were an extradition treaty between Singapore and that State; and
- (b) the Extradition Act 1968 so applied has effect as if the only extradition crimes within the meaning of that Act were offences under this Act and attempts to commit those offences.

(3) Subsection (2) is without prejudice to any other notification made under section 4 of the Extradition Act 1968.

[26/2003]

(4) For the purposes of the Extradition Act 1968, any act, wherever committed, which —

(a) is an offence under this Act or an attempt to commit such an offence, or would be such an offence or attempt but for section 3(2), 5(5) or 6(5) or (6); and

(b) is an offence against the law of any State in the case of which the Extradition Act 1968 has been applied by a notification in the *Gazette* made under section 4 of that Act,

is deemed to be an offence within the jurisdiction of that State.

(5) In this section, “Convention” means the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft signed at The Hague on 16 December 1970 or the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation signed at Montreal on 23 September 1971 or the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation signed at Montreal on 24 February 1988.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY
HIJACKING OF AIRCRAFT AND
PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AND
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS ACT 1978

This Legislative History is a service provided by the Law Revision Commission on a best-efforts basis. It is not part of the Act.

1. Act 9 of 1978 — Hijacking and Protection of Aircraft Act, 1978

Bill	:	4/1978
First Reading	:	31 January 1978
Second and Third Readings	:	17 February 1978
Commencement	:	8 April 1978

2. 1985 Revised Edition — Hijacking and Protection of Aircraft Act (Chapter 124)

Operation	:	30 March 1987
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3. Act 32 of 1996 — Hijacking and Protection of Aircraft (Amendment) Act 1996

Bill	:	20/1996
First Reading	:	12 July 1996
Second and Third Readings	:	27 August 1996
Commencement	:	1 November 1996

Note: The Hijacking and Protection of Aircraft Act was renamed as the Hijacking of Aircraft and Protection of Aircraft and International Airports Act by this Act.

4. 1997 Revised Edition — Hijacking of Aircraft and Protection of Aircraft and International Airports Act (Chapter 124)

Operation	:	20 December 1997
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5. Act 26 of 2003 — Maritime Offences Act 2003
(Amendments made by section 12 of the above Act)

Bill	:	23/2003
First Reading	:	16 October 2003
Second and Third Readings	:	10 November 2003
Commencement	:	3 May 2004 (section 12)

Abbreviations

C.P.	Council Paper
G.N. No. S (N.S.)	Government Notification Number Singapore (New Series)
G.N. No.	Government Notification Number
G.N. No. S	Government Notification Number Singapore
G.N. Sp. No. S	Government Notification Special Number Singapore
L.A.	Legislative Assembly
L.N.	Legal Notification (Federal/Malaysian Subsidiary Legislation)
M. Act	Malayan Act/Malaysia Act
M. Ordinance	Malayan Ordinance
Parl.	Parliament
S.S.G.G. (E) No.	Straits Settlements Government Gazette (Extraordinary) Number
S.S.G.G. No.	Straits Settlements Government Gazette Number

COMPARATIVE TABLE
HIJACKING OF AIRCRAFT AND
PROTECTION OF AIRCRAFT AND
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS ACT 1978

This Act has undergone renumbering in the 2020 Revised Edition. This Comparative Table is provided to help readers locate the corresponding provisions in the last Revised Edition.

2020 Ed.	1997 Ed.
11—(3)	11—(2A)
(4)	(3)
(5)	(4)