

THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

NATIONAL LIBRARY ACT

(CHAPTER 197)

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31 of 1957

Amended by
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National Library Act

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An Act to constitute a National Library; to provide for the management and control of the National Library and for purposes connected therewith.

[1st April 1958]

1. This Act may be cited as the National Library Act. Short title.
2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires — Interpretation.
 - “Board” means the National Library Board constituted under section 8;
 - “Director” means the Director of the National Library appointed under section 3;
 - “library building” means any building forming part of or used by the National Library and any building leased or let, temporarily or otherwise, by the Government or any person, for the purposes of the National Library and any vehicle used in any mobile library forming part of the National Library;
 - “library material” means any form of written or graphic record, including manuscripts, typescripts, books,

newspapers, periodicals, music, photographs, maps, prints, drawings and other graphic art forms, films, film strips, gramophone records, tape recordings and other recordings on paper, film or other material and reproductions thereof;

“National Library” means the National Library referred to in section 4.

Appointment
of Director
and other
officers.

3.—(1) The President may appoint a Director of the National Library, who shall be responsible for the management and control of the various functions of the National Library and of the library buildings, properties and grounds in and from which those functions are carried on.

(2) The President may also appoint such other officers as he may think fit for the purposes of this Act and any rules made thereunder.

1955 Ed.
Cap. 312.

(3) All officers of the Raffles Library appointed for the purposes of the Raffles Societies Ordinance shall on the commencement of this Act be deemed to be transferred to and be officers of the National Library for the purposes of this Act and the rules made thereunder.

Cap. 224.

(4) The Director and all other officers appointed under this section shall be deemed to be public servants for the purposes of the Penal Code.

(5) The President may by notification in the *Gazette* authorise any officer appointed under this section to exercise within the library buildings and grounds all the powers of a police officer.

Constitution
of National
Library.

4.—(1) There shall be constituted a National Library which shall consist of —

- (a) the Raffles Library established under the Raffles Societies Ordinance; and
- (b) any form of library or library service, including mobile libraries, which may be instituted and which is intended to be operated by funds provided in whole or in part from the Consolidated Fund.

(2) All books, papers and manuscripts and other property in the Raffles Library shall on the commencement of this Act be deemed to be transferred to the National Library.

(3) The National Library shall be the only authority providing a library service for the general public from funds provided in whole or in part from the Consolidated Fund and any library which is operated from funds provided in whole or in part from the Consolidated Fund shall operate as a library under the National Library and be under the management and control of the Director.

5. The functions of the National Library shall be — Functions of
National
Library.
- (a) to promote and encourage the use of library material and information therefrom by the establishment of lending and reference libraries and mobile library services;
 - (b) to acquire library material generally, and, in particular, to acquire a comprehensive collection of library material, both current and retrospective, relating to Singapore;
 - (c) to collect and receive all books required to be deposited in the National Library under the provisions of the Printers and Publishers Act Cap. 246. and to preserve such books;
 - (d) to make library material available for reference and for loan subject to proper safeguards against loss or damage;
 - (e) to provide reference, bibliographic and interlibrary loan services to Government departments and to Parliament;
 - (f) to advise on and co-ordinate the resources and services of Government department libraries and other libraries with those of the National Library;
 - (g) to obtain and provide central information on the resources and services of libraries in Singapore;
 - (h) to participate in national planning for all types of library service in Singapore, and to conduct research to determine library needs and possibilities;
 - (i) to compile a current national bibliography and retrospective national bibliographies;
 - (j) to compile and maintain a union catalogue of libraries of all kinds;

- (k) to act as the organising agency for the national and international lending of library material;
- (l) to act as the organising agency for the national and international exchange of library material; and
- (m) to initiate and promote co-operation between the National Library and other libraries in the discharge of the above functions.

Acceptance
of gifts of
property.

6. The Minister may accept, hold and administer any gift of property, whether movable or immovable, for any purpose appropriate to the functions of the National Library.

No charges to
be made.

7. No charges shall be made for the use of any library material in the National Library.

Formation of
Board.

8. In order to advise the Minister on the operation of the National Library, a Board shall be constituted under the name of the National Library Board of Singapore. The constitution and procedure of the Board shall be provided for by rules made under this Act.

Functions of
Board.

9. The functions of the Board are to consider and make recommendations on all matters relating to —

- (a) the provision, regulation, extension and use of static and mobile library services to the public and to Government departments;
- (b) the provision and operation of schemes for the exchange and lending of library material between libraries;
- (c) the compilation of bibliographical information;
- (d) the financing of library services and activities;
- (e) the training of librarians and other staff in library work; and
- (f) all other functions of the National Library.

Rules.

10.—(1) The Minister may make rules to provide for the constitution and procedure of the Board.

(2) The Minister may also make such rules as he may think fit for the proper discharge of the functions of the National Library and for the management and control of libraries constituting the National Library and of library

buildings and, in particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, such rules may provide for —

- (a) regulating the use of those libraries and library buildings and of their contents, fittings and furniture, and for protecting them from injury, destruction or misuse;
- (b) requiring from any persons using the libraries a guarantee or security against the loss of, or injury to, any library material belonging to the libraries;
- (c) enabling the officers or servants of the National Library to exclude or remove from the libraries or the library buildings and grounds persons committing any offence under this Act or the rules made thereunder;
- (d) the preservation of order and the prevention of nuisances in the library buildings and grounds;
- (e) fixing the days and times of admission to the libraries;
- (f) the admission of vehicles to the grounds of the libraries and the regulation of traffic therein;
- (g) prescribing that any act or omission in contravention of the provisions of any rules made under this Act shall be an offence and imposing penalties for those offences, which penalties shall not exceed a fine of \$1,000; and
- (h) prescribing the amounts of fines that may be levied by the Director for the late return of borrowed library material and for the waiving or refund of the fines.

(3) All rules made under this Act shall be published in the *Gazette* and shall be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication.

11. Any police officer or any officer appointed for the purposes of this Act or any rules made thereunder and generally or specially authorised to do so may within the precincts of any library building arrest any person found committing any offence under this Act or any rules made thereunder or whom he may reasonably believe to have committed such an offence and shall take the person with all Arrest.

convenient speed to a police station there to be dealt with according to law.

Change of
name.

12. Wherever in any written law the expression “Raffles National Library” occurs it shall be read and construed as the National Library.