

**EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY OF PM WONG'S SPEECH AT  
LAUNCH OF SMART NATION 2.0 ON 1 OCT 2024**

**MEDIA FACTSHEET: 1 OF 5**

**New Agency for Online Safety and Assurance**

1. The Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI) and the Ministry of Law (MinLaw) have been studying measures to enhance online safety and provide stronger assurance to victims of online harms. We intend to introduce new legislation to allow victims of online harms such as cyber bullying and intimate image abuse to seek civil remedies from their perpetrators. A new agency will also be set up to support victims to seek timely relief from specified online harms and promote responsible behaviour online.
2. In 2023, a survey by SG Her Empowerment (SHE)<sup>1</sup> found that 38% of respondents had personally experienced some form of online harm. Of all the respondents who experienced harmful online content or conduct, 26% encountered sexual harassment or cyberbullying. Many of victims want the swift removal of harmful online material affecting them. Victims, experts, and community organisations that we have consulted have called for more effective ways of seeking recourse and putting a stop to the continued presence of the harmful online materials.
3. Time is of the essence as online harm can easily go viral, amplifying the effect on victims. A 2024 survey by MDDI found that among those who reported harmful content on designated social media services, 8 in 10<sup>2</sup> experienced issues with the reporting process. There is therefore a need to improve the timeliness and effectiveness of relief to victims. Perpetrators should also be held accountable for the harms suffered by victims.
4. Singapore will be among the first in the world to establish a dedicated government agency to support victims of online harms and enhance online safety. In Australia, the eSafety Commissioner investigates cyberbullying of children, adult cyber abuse, image-based abuse (sharing, or threatening to share, intimate images without the consent of the person

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<sup>1</sup> Study on Online Harms in Singapore 2023, SHE Empowerment.

[https://api2.she.org.sg/uploads/SHE\\_Report\\_on\\_Online\\_Harms\\_Study\\_Final.pdf](https://api2.she.org.sg/uploads/SHE_Report_on_Online_Harms_Study_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> 78% to 86% for Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X and YouTube. Insufficient sample size for HardwareZone.

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shown), and the propagation of illegal and restricted content<sup>3</sup>. Victims of online harms can submit a report to the eSafety Commissioner, who will act on the report if it meets the threshold for action.

5. Likewise, in Singapore, victims of specified online harms will be able to submit an application to the new agency to seek redress. The new agency will act on behalf of victims to direct perpetrators and online service providers such as social media services to put a stop to the online harm quickly. This provides added assurance on top of existing regulatory levers and court-based processes available today and enhance online safety for Singapore users.
6. The new agency will focus on the most serious and prevalent online harms affecting victims in Singapore. Examples of such harm include cyberbullying and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.
7. To complement the efforts of the agency in supporting victims of online harms, we will continue our public education efforts, including raising awareness about the risks of online harms, what the public can do to prevent and protect themselves against such harms, as well as the avenues of recourse available to victims under the proposed legislation.
8. We will share more details in the coming months.

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<sup>3</sup> Illegal and restricted online content ranges from seriously harmful material such as images and videos showing the sexual abuse of children or acts of terrorism, through to content which should not be accessed by children, such as simulated sexual activity, detailed nudity or high impact violence.