

PRESS RELEASE

PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

INVITATION FOR WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS ON THE CROSS-BORDER RAILWAYS BILL

The general public is invited to submit written representations on the Cross-Border Railways Bill for the consideration of the Select Committee on the Bill.

The Select Committee is chaired by the Speaker of Parliament and comprises the following members:

1. Miss Cheng Li Hui
2. Mr Low Thia Kiang
3. Associate Professor Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim
4. Mr Ng Chee Meng
5. Mr Sitoh Yih Pin
6. Mr Vikram Nair
7. Mr Melvin Yong Yik Chye

The Bill seeks to provide for the planning and operation of the upcoming cross-border railway projects, namely the Kuala Lumpur – Singapore High Speed Rail in Singapore and the Johor Bahru – Singapore Rapid Transit System Link in Singapore. It also establishes a regulatory framework focusing on the safety and security of cross-border railway operations.

The Bill is available on the Parliament of Singapore website at <https://www.parliament.gov.sg/parliamentary-business/bills-introduced>

Representors should:

- (a) sign their representations and give their names, NRIC numbers, contact numbers and email/postal addresses;
- (b) make reference to specific clauses in the Bill, wherever possible; and
- (c) state whether they would be prepared, if invited, to appear before the Select Committee to give oral evidence supporting or supplementing their written representations.

Representations not bearing any names, NRIC numbers, contact numbers and email addresses of the representors will not be considered by the Select Committee.

Representations may be submitted in Malay, Chinese, Tamil or English. They should be addressed to the **Clerk of Parliament, Parliament House, 1 Parliament Place, Singapore 178880** or emailed to parl@parl.gov.sg.

It is an offence for any person (including a representor) to publish any evidence given, or any documents presented to the Select Committee, or extracts from such documents (including representations made) before the Select Committee has presented its report to Parliament.

The closing date for submission of representations is **24 November 2017**.

FAQs on Hybrid Bills and Select Committees on Bills are provided in Annex A.

Office of the Clerk of Parliament
Singapore, 9 November 2017

FAQs ON HYBRID BILLS AND SELECT COMMITTEES ON BILLS

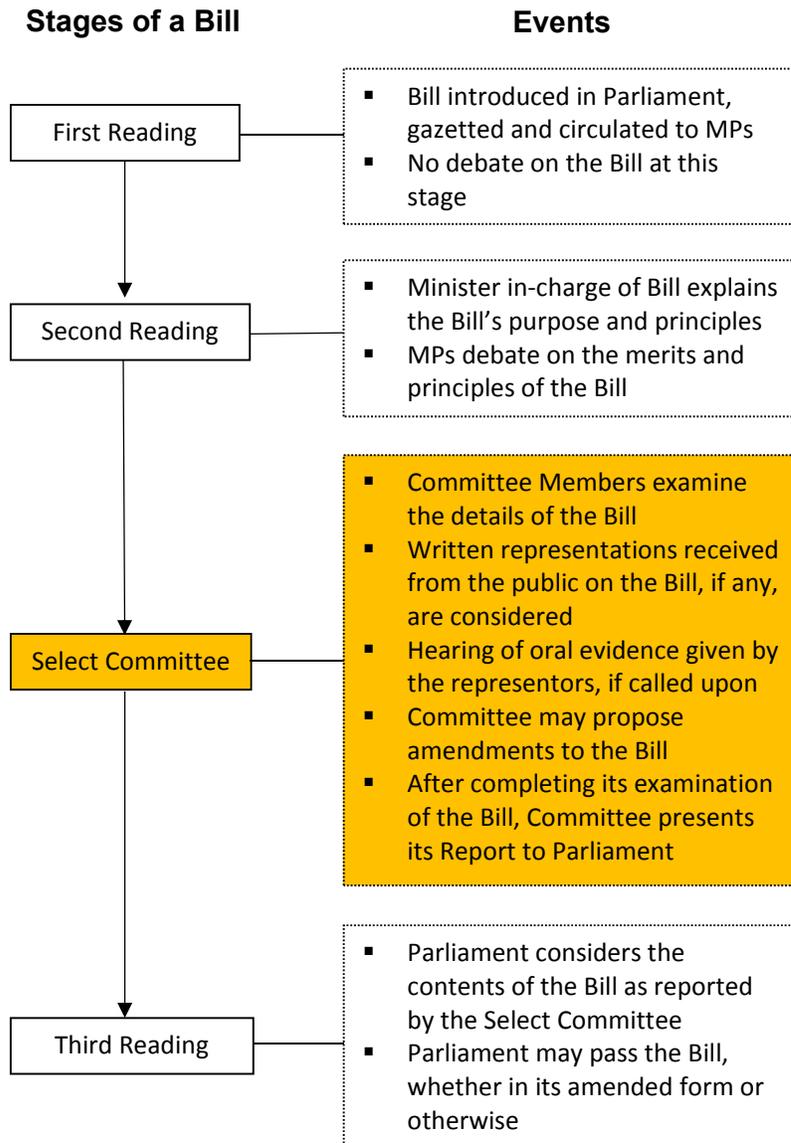
1. Why is the Cross-Border Railways Bill a Hybrid Bill?

A Bill is a Hybrid Bill when it meets certain requirements under the Standing Orders of Parliament. This is when the Bill appears to affect prejudicially individual rights or interests. When classified as a Hybrid Bill, the Bill will be committed to a Select Committee for which written representations by the public or affected parties will be considered by the Committee.

The Cross-Border Railways (CBR) Bill deals with requirements on the commercial structures of the CBR and how private entities must contract with one another in CBR operations. For this reason, the Bill contains provisions that may affect prejudicially individual rights and interests and has been classified as a Hybrid Bill.

A recent example of a Hybrid Bill passed in Parliament in April 2017 was The Kwong-Wai-Shiu Free Hospital (Transfer of Undertaking and Dissolution) Bill. The Bill was concerned with the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the existing Hospital to a successor company and the dissolution of the existing Hospital.

2. What is the Select Committee process on a Bill in Parliament?



3. What does a Select Committee on a Bill do and what happens after the Select Committee process?

A Select Committee on a Bill scrutinises the details of the Bill. It will consider written representations on the Bill received from the public. Where needed, the Committee may call on the representors to provide oral evidence to supplement their written representations. Subsequently, the Committee may propose amendments to the Bill. After the Committee has completed its deliberations and enquiries on the Bill, it will present a report to Parliament.

Following the presentation of the Committee's report to Parliament, the Third Reading of the Bill will take place. A Bill is considered to be passed in Parliament after it has undergone three readings in Parliament.

4. Who are the members of a Select Committee on a Bill?

A Select Committee on a Bill is usually chaired by the Speaker of Parliament and comprises 7 MPs. Generally, the members are nominated by the House through a motion moved in Parliament.

5. When does a Bill go through a Select Committee?

Not every Bill goes through a Select Committee. After Bills have completed the Second Reading stage, they will be considered by a Committee of the whole Parliament during which MPs can go through each clause of the Bill in Committee and propose amendments in Committee. However, some Bills are referred to a Select Committee on a Bill comprising a small group of MPs.

Government Bills are committed to a Select Committee when the Government judges that a Select Committee will allow a smaller group comprising MPs to further examine the details of implementation for complex issues, or seek views from experts and other focus groups on matters related to the Bill. Examples of Bills that have gone through Select Committee include the Building Maintenance and Management Bill in 2004, Advance Medical Directive Bill in 1996 and the Goods and Services Tax Bill in 1993.

Apart from Bills being scrutinised by the Committee of the whole Parliament and Select Committees on Bills, they are also subject to scrutiny via public consultation exercises. Government agencies routinely conduct public consultation exercises with the public to facilitate and incorporate inputs from members of the public and relevant stakeholders before new legislation is introduced in the House. This process includes close engagement with the MPs through the Government Parliamentary Committees who provide valuable suggestions to improve proposed legislation. The extent of consultation varies depending on the issues involved.

The public consultation exercises, Second and Third Readings of Bills in the House, Committee of the whole Parliament and Select Committees on Bills have allowed views from members of the public and MPs to be considered, and legislation passed in a timely and responsive manner to meet the needs of our society.
