

THE EMERGING STRONGER TASKFORCE OFFERS A GLIMPSE INTO A FUTURE ECONOMY THAT IS CONNECTED AND SUSTAINABLE

- *Six key shifts are reshaping the global economy.*
- *Starting with the Alliances for Action, the Emerging Stronger Taskforce will stretch our economic ambition in seven areas of opportunity for Singapore.*
- *This agile, collaborative approach will be the hallmark for Singapore's success in an increasingly competitive world.*

1. Singapore is facing one of the greatest challenges in our history. COVID-19 is challenging our society, economy, and infrastructure in unprecedented ways. While profound, these challenges are not insurmountable and we can emerge stronger by acting quickly and decisively, together.

2. This sense of urgency drives the Emerging Stronger Taskforce (EST). Set up in May 2020, the EST's starting premise is that there will be no return to the old normal, even after COVID-19 recedes. **Six key shifts, which have been exacerbated by COVID-19, are reshaping the global economy:**

- (i) A changing global order;
- (ii) A rebalance between 'efficiency' and 'resilience' in supply chains and production;
- (iii) Accelerating digital transformation and innovation;
- (iv) Changes in consumer preferences;
- (v) An increased focus on sustainability, both environmental and social; and
- (vi) Accelerating industry consolidation and churn.

Please refer to **Annex A** for more details on each key shift.

3. For Singapore to remain relevant and resilient in the changing global economy, the EST has been guided by two themes that must underpin Singapore's future economy:

- (i) **A Singapore that is Connected:** Singapore is a small economy and our success has been premised on our strong connection to the rest of the world. Singapore's place in the world is not pre-ordained, and we must aspire to be a Smart Nation that is connected to the world, creating and accessing new markets virtually, to create more opportunities for Singaporeans and our businesses.
- (ii) **A Singapore that is Sustainable:** Our growth must be achieved in a manner that is sustainable for the environment, the economy, and our

people. We must be inclusive, by empowering and enriching all stakeholders in Singapore, from small businesses to employees at risk of unemployment, and to civil society. We must continue to develop local talent and capabilities, while remaining open to foreign talent and partners who can add value to Singapore.

The EST believes that if we can do this, we can build a **Singapore with virtually unlimited possibilities** for Singaporeans and our businesses, as well as for talent and for like-minded partners, in Singapore and beyond.

4. Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies, Minister for Finance, and Chairman of the Future Economy Council (FEC), Mr Heng Swee Keat, said, “The Alliances for Action (AfAs) is a new approach to bring interested parties together to collaborate on new growth opportunities. The emphasis is on taking quick action to prototype solutions and to concurrently explore ways to scale viable solutions across our economy and beyond. In keeping with the spirit of Singapore Together, these efforts are led by industry leaders, working in close partnerships. We will continue to grow the momentum of our AfAs in the next phase of our Industry Transformation Maps. We must continue to deepen our adaptive capacity as we respond to the major shifts in the global economy, many of which have been accelerated by COVID-19. We must strive to emerge stronger from this crisis and develop an even more connected and resilient economy, so that we can create good jobs and opportunities for our people.”

Singapore Together Alliances for Action (AfAs)

5. With a strong bias to action, **the EST convened seven Singapore Together Alliances for Action (AfAs)** in June 2020, which are industry-led coalitions, working in close partnership with the Government, to act on key growth opportunities for Singapore, so that Singaporeans can benefit from stronger economic growth and better jobs. The AfAs have adopted a ‘startup’ approach, working quickly to develop and prototype ideas within a short period of time, while concurrently engaging government agencies and other stakeholders to stretch the medium- to long-term ambition in each of these opportunity areas. Over the past four months, the AfAs have collectively involved and engaged more than 330 industry stakeholders, including businesses, trade associations and chambers (TACs), and government agencies. For example, the AfA on Supply Chain Digitalisation has conducted around 30 workshops and engagements, involving more than 100 stakeholders.

6. The seven AfAs are:

- (i) **Securing our Economic Future through Supply Chain Digitalisation**
Connectivity with the world has always been Singapore’s raison d’être. However, Singapore’s status as a hub is being challenged due to global shifts in supply chains and the impact of COVID-19. It is not preordained that Singapore will be able to maintain our relevance to the world.

The AfA thus seeks to secure Singapore's competitive advantage by enhancing supply chain agility, transparency, intelligence, and platform interoperability, through a concerted push towards digitalisation to the core and the establishment of a Common Data Infrastructure (CDI). This will improve trade financing integrity and the productivity of logistics-dependent players; enhance regional market access through improved e-marketplace integration; and facilitate freight exchanges and financing for SMEs and traders.

A CDI-powered supply chain will give Singapore the opportunity to advance our position as a digital trade and fulfilment hub, and strengthen our resilience in national supply chains. If successful, partners from around the world will trade with Singapore, through Singapore, from Singapore, and 'on' Singapore.

- (ii) **Building Singapore as a Little Green Dot through Sustainability**
Sustainability is not just a lifestyle, mindset, or trend – it will be an area that will create significant economic opportunities in coming years. Singapore is well positioned to be a global hub in the Sustainability ecosystem, even as we seek to make our own contribution to the goal of the Paris Climate Agreement to limit global warming to below 1.5°C.¹

The AfA focuses on positioning Singapore as a hub for carbon-related services and nature-based solutions, leveraging the tremendous biodiversity in our region. Specifically, the AfA is focusing on three concepts of (i) a technology-enabled verification system for high quality nature-based solutions (carbon verification), (ii) a marketplace and exchange for high quality carbon credits (carbon market), and (iii) a green standard and one-stop solution for companies to measure, mitigate, and offset their carbon footprint (carbon-conscious society).

Building a carbon hub in Singapore will generate economic value and job creation, and further enhance Singapore's role in commodities trading. The AfA believes that there is an opportunity to transform Singapore from a Little Red Dot to a Little Green Dot – Singapore as a hub for sustainability, serving our own commitments and beyond.

- (iii) **Digitalising Built Environment to Build Tomorrow's Cities**
The pandemic has dealt a severe blow to the Built Environment (BE) sector, especially due to COVID-19 clusters in the dormitories and worksites, which brought construction to a standstill for many months. However, it has also galvanised stakeholders to collectively transform the sector, through digitalisation and more advanced building technologies.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Building on the early efforts of the Industry Transformation Maps (ITMs), the AfA is leading an effort to ‘turbo-charge’ the adoption of digitalisation in the sector, by establishing a set of Common Data Standards that will allow different digital platforms to be connected to form a Federated Common Data Environment. Commitment from ‘power users’ will be secured to drive this digitalisation agenda, through the formation of a Coalition for BE Digitalisation. This will enhance productivity by integrating work processes and connecting different industry stakeholders throughout the building life cycle.

The AfA aims to bring 300 companies on board the Coalition within a year, and 1,000 companies by 2025. Through these efforts, the AfA aspires that Singapore’s BE sector will emerge from the pandemic as a global, leading example – thereby creating a BE future that is sustainable, productive, and uplifting for Singapore and Singaporeans.

(iv) **Bringing Singapore to the World through Smart Commerce**

COVID-19 has accelerated structural shifts in the Retail sector, such as the increasing popularity of e-commerce and a greater demand for personalisation and engagement. While it has now become even more pressing for retailers to transform, digitalisation will also help to extend their ‘digital catchment’ and access more customers beyond Singapore.

The AfA is therefore leading an effort to create Online-Offline (O2O) partnerships to create e-commerce opportunities, and to export Singapore brands through an incubation programme for Singapore brands. For example, the AfA recently launched the CapitaLand x Shopee 11.11 campaign, which is an innovative integration of online and offline shopper engagement to drive sales, increase traffic, and enhance engagement for six CapitaLand malls through gamification.

These efforts could serve as the stepping stones towards expanding the market for retailers from Singapore’s domestic population of about five million, to one billion consumers around the world.

(v) **Breaking the Productivity Frontier through Robotics Solutions**

Achieving strong breakthroughs in productivity and addressing Singapore’s manpower challenges are key priorities in Singapore’s economic transformation agenda. This imperative for transformation has become even more pressing due to COVID-19.

Recognising the potential for the deployment of robotics and automation to raise productivity, and transform existing jobs and create new ones, the AfA is leading pilots to develop and to test the commercialisation and scaling-up of pioneering robotics solutions in autonomous public land transport and cleaning. For example, the AfA is working to launch two

Minimum Viable Product (MVP) deployments of autonomous shuttles by the end of this year.

Through these pilots, the AfA aspires for Singapore companies to become global champions in robotics solutions – to be recognised as a leading global operator and provider of end-to-end systems for autonomous public land transport, and a leading global provider for robotic cleaning service.

(vi) **Reconnecting with the World through Safe and Innovative Visitor Experiences**

Travel restrictions imposed by countries have hit the Tourism sector, quietening our skies and streets. With mass tourism unlikely to return to pre-COVID-19 levels soon, there is a need to find innovative solutions that will allow progressive resumption of activities in the sector.

The AfA is working with industry stakeholders to pilot ideas in the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector, through MVPs in re-designing safe business events, designing safe leisure itineraries, and digital tools to enable a safe and seamless journey for participants. The AfA has developed a prototype for large-scale safe tradeshows and exhibitions involving local and foreign participants. This includes prototyping the use of innovative methods of COVID-19 testing and tracing, which could pave the way for scaling up of such events. The prototype was first tested at the Singapore International Energy Week in October and will continue to be refined at upcoming tradeshows, such as TravelRevive in November.

Through these MVPs, the AfA seeks to take steps towards re-establishing Singapore's status as Asia-Pacific's leading MICE destination, and maintaining Singapore's position as one of the world's top 10 cities by international visitors and international passenger traffic.

(vii) **Reaching the World's Learners through EduTech**

COVID-19 has accelerated the global adoption of EduTech, from home-based learning to online professional education and training. With estimates projecting the EduTech sector to grow to about US\$400B in 2025², Singapore has the opportunity to take our education and human capital global, and establish Singapore as a global talent hub.

The AfA has kickstarted MVPs that will explore specific ideas that enable learners to better understand their learning needs, and curate the right programmes with relevant standards and certifications. For example, the AfA is supporting a venture concept based on an Agility Growth Index (AGI), which is an analytics platform that measures the learning ability

² EdTechX Global Report by Cairneagle Associates and IBIS Capital.

of individual employees to recommend solutions for improving learning ability and building better teams. The AGI will help organisations throughout the world develop talent, improve communication, and achieve business goals more effectively.

Through these efforts, the AfA aspires to position Singapore as a global centre of excellence for education, with a workforce that is progressive and competitive.

7. Further updates on each of the AfAs will be shared progressively. Group CEO of PSA International and Co-Chair of the EST, Mr Tan Chong Meng, said, “Although the seven AfAs cover different sectors, a common theme running through them is the use of digital technologies to strengthen our companies and sectors, enhance our competitiveness and expand Singapore’s markets and reach. Digitalisation will allow us to transcend our size, geography, and limitations. Our businesses will have unlimited possibilities in the rest of the world. Our ambition is to be Virtually Unlimited Singapore, and to achieve that with inclusivity, and with leadership in sustainability.”

New, Agile Approach to Public-Private Collaboration

8. Another common theme that has emerged from across the AfAs is the effectiveness of the AfA approach. The AfAs exemplify Singapore Together – the shift towards a partnership model of governance. By aligning on a common goal and working in tandem to act quickly, the AfAs have been able to adopt an agile, collaborative approach that has enabled success, despite the challenging operating environment. Both industry and government have welcomed this new mode of collaboration, which has been particularly effective in (i) rallying industry around complex problems and forging alignment on the solutions, such as in the AfAs on Supply Chain Digitalisation and Digitalising BE; (ii) delivering concrete initiatives within short timelines, such as in the AfAs on Facilitating Smart Commerce, Enabling Safe & Innovative Visitor Experiences, and EduTech; and (iii) achieving public-private alignment on the roadmap for scaling-up, which may involve changes to industry practices, business models, capability building, and regulatory support, such as in the AfAs on Sustainability and Robotics.

9. Minister for National Development, Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration, and Co-Chair of the EST, Mr Desmond Lee, said, “The EST members, industry stakeholders, and government agencies have embraced the collaborative approach of the AfAs. This new and agile approach to public-private collaboration has allowed us to align our goals, experiment and change course quickly, and act together. The EST believes that in a more competitive world, this collaborative Singapore Together spirit of our government, businesses, and workers will be Singapore’s hallmark and competitive advantage. We are keen to institutionalise this approach as a lasting legacy of the EST.”

10. In addition to the seven AfAs, **a new AfA on MedTech is also in the process of being formed**. This new AfA will explore an opportunity around in-vitro diagnostics

for disease preparedness, containment, and control. This builds on Singapore's early successes in rapid testing, rapid contact tracing, and isolation in the fight against COVID-19. **The EST is also looking at the possibility of forming an AfA or deep-diving into how Singapore can form win-win partnerships with Southeast Asian partners**, so that we can collectively emerge stronger from the challenges that we face.

11. In exploring such new ideas, the EST will benefit from new perspectives. In line with the agile approach of the EST, **six new members have been appointed to the EST**. They will bring new and diverse contributions to the work of the EST, especially in areas of opportunity that the AfAs are pursuing, such as sustainability and MedTech. Please refer to **Annex B** for the updated composition of the EST.

12. Ms Jessie Yeo, Executive Secretary, Singapore Port Workers Union and Human Resource Director, NTUC, said, "The work of the EST is important as it will have a direct impact on our workers and the skills that they will need, to thrive in the future economy. I look forward to building on the work of the EST and the AfAs to strengthen this perspective on jobs and skills."

Emerging Stronger, Together

13. The EST alone cannot build a Singapore that enables virtually unlimited possibilities. The EST needs the support and ideas of Singaporeans, and has thus been consulting widely. The EST has engaged more than 250 participants through three Emerging Stronger Conversations for the Economy and other engagements. In addition, various knowledge partners have come forth to offer their help, such as BCG Digital Ventures, McKinsey, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), and ThinkPlace, to gather insights on how to position the Singapore economy to emerge stronger. The EST has also been working closely with the FEC and the FEC Sub-Committees, to align its work with Singapore's broader economic transformation efforts.

14. The EST welcomes all partners to journey together. More information is available on the newly-launched EST website: www.emergingstronger.sg.

15. Singapore has overcome countless challenges in our 55-year history, thanks to the ingenuity and resilience of our people. While COVID-19 has created a crisis like no other, the EST is confident that we have what it takes to emerge stronger together.

Ministry of Trade and Industry

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ANNEX A: Six key shifts that are reshaping the global economy
ANNEX B: Composition of the Emerging Stronger Taskforce(EST)

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SIX KEY SHIFTS THAT ARE RESHAPING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

1. Changing global order. There is emerging consensus that the direction of change for geopolitics and international will accelerate due to COVID-19. Intra-regional trade flows are likely to grow even further, including in Asia. This will change and create new trade flows, with greater focus on R&D, services, data, and innovation.
2. Rebalance between 'efficiency' and 'resilience' in supply chains and production. COVID-19 has revealed that pursuit of supply chain efficiency in the past has left companies and countries without buffers to absorb disruptions at a global scale. Supply chains have started to solve for more than just efficiency, with a shift towards greater resilience, which may be manifested in simpler and shorter supply chains, location of production bases closer to end consumer markets, and stockpiling of essential production inputs.
3. Accelerating digital transformation and innovation. COVID-19 has compelled consumers and businesses to leap barriers in digitalisation by accelerating the adoption of Industry 4.0 and digital platforms. As more shift towards the virtualisation of their business models and recognise the benefits of such changes, this will alter the way business is conducted. The pandemic has also catalysed innovation that are needed to overcome the challenges of COVID-19, and these could themselves become new growth areas.
4. Changes in consumer preferences. Consumer behaviours have changed due to COVID-19 and have not returned to pre-pandemic norms. Demand for e-commerce, e-services, and digital channels will increase, and there will be a growing emphasis on quality in goods and services that affect individual health and wellness. In the near term, there will also be dampened demand for travel, especially to destinations perceived to be unsafe.
5. Increased focus on sustainability. COVID-19 has accelerated the focus on sustainability, in terms of the environment, economy, and society. Environmental, social, and governmental corporate agendas will expand as the case for better returns and resilience to economic shocks achieve greater clarity. There will be new business opportunities in the green economy, especially due to growing needs for sustainable development. Economic growth must also be sustainable and inclusive, with growth that uplifts all Singaporeans.
6. Accelerating industry consolidation and churn. COVID-19 will lead to significant corporate stresses, and companies will have to rethink capital allocation and liquidity. Large private companies will reinforce their market dominance, and those with available capital can acquire distressed assets, leading to industry consolidation. There may also be more caution in investments due to higher debts and greater uncertainty.

ANNEX B

COMPOSITION OF THE EMERGING STRONGER TASKFORCE (EST)

S/N	NAME	DESIGNATION
1.	Desmond Lee [Co-Chair]	Minister for National Development <i>and</i> Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration
2.	Tan Chong Meng [Co-Chair]	Group CEO, PSA International
3.	Amos Leong*	President and CEO, Univac Group
4.	Andrew Kwan*	Founder & Group Managing Director, Commonwealth Capital
5.	Azlinda Anwar*	Director, Grants & IP Administration <i>and</i> Coordinating Director, Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory
6.	Caesar Sengupta	VP, Payments and Next Billion Users, Google
7.	Dilys Boey	Assistant CEO, Enterprise Singapore <i>[Formerly Partner, ASEAN People Advisory Services Leader, EY]</i>
8.	Edmund Koh	President, UBS Asia Pacific of UBS Group and UBS AG and Member of the UBS Group Executive Board
9.	Fidah Alsagoff*	Joint Head, Enterprise Development Group <i>and</i> Head, Life Sciences, Temasek International
10.	Gan Seow Kee	Chairman and MD, ExxonMobil Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd.
11.	Jessie Yeo*	Executive Secretary, Singapore Port Workers Union <i>and</i> Human Resource Director, NTUC
12.	Koh Lian Pin*	Professor of Conservation Science, Technology and Policy <i>and</i> Director, Centre for Nature-based Climate Solutions, National University of Singapore
13.	Kwee Wei-Lin	President, Singapore Hotel Association (SHA) <i>and</i> Head of Hotels, Pontiac Land Group
14.	Lee Chee Koon	Group CEO, CapitaLand
15.	Lee Seow Hiang	CEO, Changi Airport Group
16.	Lim Ming Yan	Chairman, Singapore Business Federation (SBF)
17.	Loo Choon Yong	Executive Chairman and Co-Founder, Raffles Medical Group
18.	Peter Ho	CEO, HOPE Technik
19.	Piyush Gupta	CEO, DBS Group
20.	Sunny Verghese	Co-Founder and Group CEO, Olam International Limited
21.	Tan Chin Hwee	CEO-Asia Pacific, Trafigura
22.	Vincent Chong	President and CEO, ST Engineering
23.	Ye Gang	Co-Founder and Group COO, Seagroup

* denotes new members