

SIAC Releases New Arbitration Rules

The rules will come into effect on 1 January 2025, aiming to enhance the overall efficiency and integrity of SIAC's arbitration proceedings.

On 9 December 2024, the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) released its new [SIAC Rules for 2025](#) (SIAC Rules 2025), which will come into effect on 1 January 2025.

As the first major revision since SIAC's last update to its rules in 2016, the SIAC Rules 2025 are intended to modernise SIAC's arbitral procedures and align them with other major arbitral institutions, including the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC) which implemented its 2024 Administered Arbitration Rules earlier in 2024 (see our previous [Client Alert](#)). This is with a view to enhancing the overall efficiency, integrity, and transparency of the proceedings conducted under the SIAC Rules.

A summary of the key features of the SIAC Rules 2025 published by SIAC is available [here](#).

In this Client Alert, we highlight the key changes under the SIAC Rules 2025 that are likely to be relevant to commercial parties, and their implications for arbitrations conducted in accordance with the SIAC Rules.

Introduction of Streamlined Procedure and Related Amendments to Expedited Procedure

The SIAC Rules 2025 introduces a new Streamlined Procedure (Rule 13 and Schedule 2) to facilitate the resolution of low-value disputes in a more expeditious and cost-effective manner.

The Streamlined Procedure applies if one of the following conditions is satisfied:

- The amount in dispute is below SGD 1 million (approximately US\$0.74 million), unless the President of SIAC determines upon application of a party that the Streamlined Procedure shall not apply
- The parties so agree at any time prior to the constitution of the tribunal

Under the Streamlined Procedure, the tribunal shall render its award within three months from its constitution, and the tribunal's fees and SIAC administrative fees are capped at 50% of the maximum limits under SIAC's Schedule of Fees.

In light of the introduction of the Streamlined Procedure, the SIAC Rules 2025 introduce new amendments to the conditions for invoking the existing Expedited Procedure (Rule 14 and Schedule 3), which requires an award to be made within six months of the constitution of the tribunal:

- The monetary threshold of the Expedited Procedure is lifted from the original SGD 6 million to any amount between SGD 1 million and SGD 10 million (approximately US\$0.74 million to US\$7.4 million)
- Alternatively, the Expedited Procedure may also apply if the amount in dispute is below SGD 1 million (approximately US\$0.74 million) and the President of SIAC has determined that the Streamlined Procedure shall not apply; or if the circumstances of the case otherwise warrant the application of the Expedited Procedure

Introduction of Preliminary Determination Procedure

A new Preliminary Determination procedure takes effect under the SIAC Rules 2025 (Rule 46). The new procedure enables the tribunal to make a final and binding determination of any issue in an arbitration at a preliminary stage if:

- the parties so agree;
- the applicant is able to demonstrate that the determination of the issue on a preliminary basis is likely to contribute to savings of time and costs and a more efficient and expeditious resolution of the dispute; or
- the circumstances of the case otherwise warrant the determination of the issue on a preliminary basis.

Once invoked, the tribunal must render its decision, ruling, order, or award on the issue in question within 90 days from the date of application.

The Preliminary Determination procedure is designed to allow issues that could impact the overall conduct of the case to be assessed early in the process, thereby enhancing the tribunal's and the parties' ability to increase the efficiency of the proceedings.

A similar procedure, known as the Early Determination Procedure, is also available under the 2024 HKIAC Rules.

New Requirement to Disclose Third-Party Funding Details

In 2017, SIAC published a [Practice Note](#) on third-party funding, which empowers the tribunal to order disclosure relating to third-party funding. However, for the first time, SIAC has now codified the requirement for parties to disclose any third-party funding agreement, the identity, and the contact details of the third-party funder (Rule 38).

Under the SIAC Rules 2025, the tribunal may also order disclosure in respect of details of the third-party funder's interest in the outcome of the proceedings, and whether the third-party funder has committed to undertake an adverse costs liability.

This change stands in contrast to the HKIAC position (Article 44 of the 2024 HKIAC Rules), under which parties are only required to disclose the existence of the funding agreement and the identity of the third-party funder.

Enhanced Procedure for Appointment of Emergency Arbitrator and Introduction of Protective Preliminary Order Applications

The SIAC Rules 2025 further improve the parties' ability to promptly seek urgent interim or conservatory measures (Rule 12 and Schedule 1).

Under the SIAC Rules 2025, an Emergency Arbitrator may be appointed prior to the filing of a Notice of Arbitration, as opposed to the current mechanism, which provides that a party can only request the appointment of an Emergency Arbitration concurrent with or following the filing of a Notice of Arbitration.

Additionally, parties now have the option to seek protective preliminary orders that direct a party not to undermine the purpose of the requested emergency interim or conservatory measure, even before notifying any counterparties about the application for appointing an Emergency Arbitrator. The Emergency Arbitrator must decide on the request for a protective preliminary order within 24 hours of their appointment.

Introduction of Coordinated Proceedings

If the same tribunal is constituted in two or more arbitrations, and a common question of law or fact arises out of or in connection with all of these arbitrations, the new Coordinated Proceedings procedure (Rule 17) allows a party to apply to the tribunal for the arbitrations to be coordinated in one of the following manners:

- The arbitrations be conducted concurrently or sequentially
- The arbitrations be heard together with aligned procedures
- Any of the arbitrations be suspended pending a determination in any of the other arbitrations

The tribunal shall determine the Coordinated Proceedings application after giving all parties an opportunity to be heard, having regard to the principle of confidentiality. If coordinated, the arbitrations will continue as separate proceedings, each with its own decisions, rulings, orders, and awards.

In practical terms, Coordinated Proceedings fill in the gaps in the existing consolidation rules, to the effect that even if two arbitrations are unable to be consolidated for reasons such as the lack of compatibility in arbitration agreements, those meeting the criteria for Coordinated Proceedings could still be managed in a coordinated manner. This new mechanism reduces the need for the tribunal to hear repetitive submissions, saving time and costs, and lowers the risk of inconsistent decisions.

Conclusion

The latest updates in the SIAC Rules 2025 have introduced significant changes to the framework for SIAC arbitrations, enhancing both efficiency and transparency of dispute resolution in SIAC, and further bringing the rules into alignment with other institutions.

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