



THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

TRADE DISPUTES ACT 1941

2020 REVISED EDITION

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Trade Disputes Act 1941

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An Act to control trade disputes and matters arising therefrom.

[5 December 1941]

Short title

1. This Act is the Trade Disputes Act 1941.

Interpretation**2. In this Act —**

“award” means an award made by an Industrial Arbitration Court and includes a collective agreement a memorandum of the terms of which has been certified by the president of the Industrial Arbitration Court in accordance with the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act 1960;

“industrial action” means —

- (a) any act or omission by a body of persons employed in any trade or industry, acting in combination or under a common understanding, which would result in any limitation or restriction on, or delay in, the performance of any duties connected with their employment; or
- (b) a strike, that is to say, the cessation of work by a body of persons employed in any trade or industry acting in combination, or a concerted refusal, or a refusal under a common understanding of a number of persons who are, or who have been so employed, to continue to work or to accept employment;

“injury” means injury to a person in respect of his business, occupation, employment or other source of income and includes any actionable wrong;

“intimidate” means to cause in the mind of a person a reasonable apprehension of injury to him or to any member of his family or to any of his dependants or of violence or damage to any person or property;

“lockout” means the closing of a place of employment or the suspension of work, or the refusal by an employer to continue to employ any number of persons employed by him in consequence of a trade dispute, done with a view to compelling those persons, or to aid another employer in compelling persons employed by him, to accept terms or conditions of or affecting employment;

“maliciously” means the doing of a wrongful act intentionally without just cause or excuse;

“trade dispute” means any dispute between employers and employees or between employees and employees, or between employers and employers which is connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of employment or the conditions of labour, of any person.

Illegal industrial action and lockout

3.—(1) An industrial action shall be illegal if —

- (a) it has any other object than the furtherance of a trade dispute within the trade or industry in which the persons taking part in the industrial action are engaged;
- (b) it is in furtherance of a trade dispute of which an Industrial Arbitration Court has cognizance; or
- (c) it is designed or calculated to coerce the Government either directly or by inflicting hardship on the community.

(2) A lockout shall be illegal if —

- (a) it has any other object than the furtherance of a trade dispute within the trade or industry in which the employers locking out are engaged;
- (b) it is in furtherance of a trade dispute of which an Industrial Arbitration Court has cognizance; or
- (c) it is designed or calculated to coerce the Government either directly or by inflicting hardship on the community.

When lockout or industrial action not deemed to be illegal

4. A lockout in consequence of an illegal industrial action or an industrial action in consequence of an illegal lockout shall not be deemed to be illegal.

Penalties in relation to illegal industrial action and lockout

5.—(1) Any person who commences, continues or otherwise acts in furtherance of an illegal industrial action shall be guilty of an offence