



Agenda

Handling Emerging Workplace Challenges in the 21st Century

Time	Topic
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	Registration
1:00 pm – 1:10 pm	Welcome remarks
1:10 pm – 2:10 pm	HR health checks: Managing risk in the face of regulatory change and increasing enforcement In this session, our team will share common HR compliance gaps across Hong Kong, Mainland China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, along with recommendations for structuring HR compliance audits.
2:15 pm – 3:00 pm	Complex issues in recruitment This session will focus on immigration developments across the region, the use of AI in recruitment and employee background checks.
3:00 pm – 3:20 pm	Break
3:20 pm – 4:05 pm	Employees and tech: Opportunities and challenges This session will cover how new technologies present both opportunities and challenges for employers. It will include discussions on when employee use of technology goes wrong as well as workplace surveillance and data privacy implications.
4:10 pm – 5:10 pm	Regional employment update Hong Kong, Mainland China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan
5:10 pm – 5:15 pm	Closing remarks
5:15 pm – 6:30 pm	Drinks



Resources



Q&A

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Reductions in Force



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**Workforce Redesign
Legal Updates**

Key Employment Law Trends and Developments (Asia Pacific, Q2 2025)

Changing geo-political landscape

- Employers making changes to "right size" their businesses. Particularly challenging in jurisdictions where unilateral termination of employment is difficult e.g., **Japan**, **Indonesia**, **South Korea**, **mainland China** and **Philippines**.
- Immigration law/policy changes to protect local workforces e.g.:
 - Indonesia**: Constitutional Court Decision No.168/PUU-XXI/2023: Prioritizing employment of Indonesian workers.
 - Singapore**: Fair Consideration Framework: Job advertising requirements and requirement to consider workforce in Singapore fairly for job opportunities.
 - Malaysia**: 1:3 Internship Policy: companies with approval for certain expatriate employment passes are required to offer up to three internship or work-based learning placements for local talent for each employment pass approved. Official implementation commences on 1 January 2026.
 - Philippines**: New Regulations on Employment of Foreign Nationals: New requirements for a Labor Market Test and implementation of a Skills Development Program / Understudy Training Program to transfer skills to Filipino workers.
- Minimum wage increases in 2025 in **Hong Kong**, **Indonesia**, **South Korea**, **Malaysia**, **Taiwan** and **Thailand**.

ID&E related enhancements

- Singapore**: Second part of Workplace Fairness Act expected to introduce soon, with the whole legislation to come into force in 2026/27.
- Several APAC jurisdictions require employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace e.g., **Australia**, **Hong Kong**, **Japan**, **mainland China** and **Taiwan**.
- Japan**: Anti Customer Harassment Ordinance in Tokyo (effective April 2025): employers expected to take measures to protect employee health and safety.
- Thailand**: The Marriage Equality Act came into effect on 23 January 2025, legalizing same-sex marriages and granting same-sex spouses the same legal rights as those in a heterosexual marriage.
- Taiwan**: Guidelines for Preventing Illegal Harm While Performing Duties 4th Edition (effective Feb 2025): specifies potential workplace harm behaviors with examples.
- Increase in family friendly rights e.g.:
 - Australia**: Increase in Paid Parental Leave from 22 weeks to 24 weeks, effective 1 July 2025.
 - South Korea**: Enhancements to childcare, paternity, maternity and infertility treatment leave, effective 23 February 2025.
 - Japan**: Expansion of childcare benefits under the childcare and family care leave regulations, effective 1 April 2025.

Expansion of benefits

- Japan**: Employers with more than 50 employees are required to enroll part-time employees in social insurance, effective 1 October 2024.
- Vietnam**: The New Law on Social Insurance, effective 1 July 2025 broadens the scope of compulsory social insurance subjects including foreign employees.
- Philippines**: Automatic coverage of solo parents and their children/dependents to the National Health Insurance Program pursuant to PhilHealth Circular in September 2024.
- Malaysia**: Increase in wage ceiling for Social Security Organization (SOCSO) related contributions effective 1 October 2024. Additionally, effective 1 July 2024, all foreign employees in Malaysia must contribute to the SOCSO Invalidity Scheme. Employees' Provident Fund contribution rate for foreign employees to be introduced soon and set at 2%.
- Mainland China**: Statutory retirement age will gradually increase over 15 years (starting from 1 January 2025). Also, an increase in statutory public holidays from 11 to 13 days, effective 2025.
- Hong Kong**: Abolishment of MPF set-off mechanism, effective 1 May 2025.
- Thailand**: Employers with more than 10 employees must register their employees with the Employee Welfare Fund (unless the employer has already set up a provident fund for its employees or a separate support program for its employees in the event of employment cessation or death). Fund contributions commence on 1 October 2025.

Movements to grant protections to non-employees

- Singapore**: The Platform Workers Act provides new protections for platform workers covering work injury compensation, CPF contributions and representation rights, effective 1 January 2025.
- Australia**: Same job, Same pay for labour hire workers, effective 1 November 2024. Further, "employee-like" workers who are engaged through digital employment platforms are also being extended certain rights, including minimum standards.
- Philippines**: Pending Bills on freelance workers' rights, aiming to enhance protections for freelancers.
- Japan**: Freelance Act (effective 1 November 2024), sets out certain protections for freelancers including clarification of terms and conditions and timely payments of service fees.

Managing workplace relations

- Changes in union laws: **Vietnam's** New Trade Union Law comes into effect on 1 July 2025. **Malaysia's** trade union laws were amended in September 2024 easing trade union formation and supporting workers' right to freedom of association.
- Right to disconnect introduced in **Australia**.

Notes