Annex B

Digital tools for effective contact tracing

1.   Effective contact tracing is critical as Singapore ends its Circuit Breaker measures and gradually resumes its business and social activities. A good contact tracing programme, enabled by digital contact tools, helps to halt the spread of the disease by quickly identifying close contacts, providing early treatment and isolating them effectively. This will enable transmissions to be well-contained, so that we do not have to go back into Circuit Breaker mode again due to an uncontrolled outbreak.

2.   As contact tracing remains a human endeavour, the widespread use of the TraceTogether programme and SafeEntry will help to supplement the efforts by contact tracers at the Ministry of Health (MOH) and entrust them with the necessary information during this crisis. When used in tandem, these digital contact tracing tools have enabled us to go from taking 2-3 days to do activity-mapping for a patient, to issuing a quarantine order in less than a day. However, for the time efficiency and accuracy of contact tracing to improve, we need more people on board the TraceTogether programme. It is only with sufficient usage and the relevant data that these digital tools can work effectively.

3.   To date, about 2.1 million people have downloaded the TraceTogether app on a voluntary basis, but this is not enough. The app currently does not cover the digitally excluded population including the elderly and young children who may not have smartphones. It also does not work reliably on iOS devices, and can pose a significant drain on battery life. This is a feature of the iOS, and cannot be reliably overcome by the app design.

4.   In order to extend effective protection to as many people as possible, we expanded the TraceTogether Programme to include a portable device – TraceTogether Token. The TraceTogether Token will ensure better coverage for everyone in Singapore for effective contact tracing under the TraceTogether programme. It will function in the same way the app does and uses Bluetooth signals to record other nearby Tokens or TraceTogether apps. By increasing the overall pool of participants, every user of the app or Token would benefit by being informed as early as possible, if/when they have been exposed to COVID-19.

<u>TraceTogether data will only be used to fight COVID-19 pandemic</u>

5. Preserving and upholding privacy remains our key priority as we continue to improve these digital solutions to meet our needs and circumstances. Personal data will be protected and used only for contact tracing purposes and to curb the spread of COVID-19.

6. Only a small number of authorised personnel will have access to the data for contact tracing purposes. All public sector data protection rules will apply to the data held by MOH, including abiding by recommendations of the Public Sector Data Security Review Committee.