

employment intelligence

APAC REGIONAL EMPLOYER | Singapore | October 2, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Registration and Breakfast

9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Welcome Remarks

9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Poor Economy and Poor Actors: Important strategies for the professional navigating both

In today's dynamic business environment, in-house counsel and HR professionals across the Asia-Pacific region face increasing pressure to manage both employees' bad decisions and workforce transitions – often simultaneously – with legal precision and strategic foresight.

This panel will explore the complex landscape of employment termination in APAC, focusing on two key areas:

- **Termination for Misconduct:** Using Singapore as a case study, panelists will examine the legal thresholds for summary dismissal, including what constitutes "misconduct," the importance of "due inquiry," and the employer's burden of proof. The discussion will also touch on how similar standards are applied—or diverge—in other APAC jurisdictions.
- **Reduction in Force (RIF) Strategies:** In contrast to dismissals for misconduct, RIFs are often driven by economic shifts and industry pressures. They have become a critical tool for workforce management. Panelists will discuss key approaches to business restructuring and collective redundancies, including employee rights to notification and severance, as well as the role of mutual separation agreements. The session will highlight how Singapore's approach compares with those of other APAC countries, offering a regional perspective on compliance and employee relations.

By comparing these two approaches, attendees will gain practical insights and actionable strategies for managing terminations in both contexts while minimizing legal risk and preserving organizational integrity.

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Break

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Time Off: Navigating Evolving Paid and Unpaid Leave Employment Standards Across APAC

Taking time away from work is a well-accepted way to prevent burnout and help employees stay engaged and productive. Governments and companies provide a myriad of leave entitlements and options for workers, which can make managing time off a difficult issue for the in-house lawyer or human resource manager.

This interactive Q&A session will provide region-specific insight and practical policy guidance about the most pressing questions HR professionals face when overseeing diverse, multi-jurisdictional workforces:

- **Annual Leave Carry-Over and Forfeiture Rules:** Are employers required to allow employees to carry over unused annual leave, or can it be forfeited or paid out?
- **Annual Leave Usage Mandates:** What are the key considerations when mandating the use of annual leave – such as during office shutdowns or to prevent excessive accruals?
- **Protected Leave Categories:** What are the latest developments in sickness, parental, maternity, miscarriage, fertility, or religious leaves across APAC?
- **Leave as an Accommodation for Disability or Religion:** Which countries require employers to consider paid time off as an accommodation for a disability, sickness, or religious observance? What limitations can employers place on such accommodations?

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Wage and Hour Compliance in APAC: Working Hours, Time Tracking, Overtime, and other Premium Pay Entitlements

Managing wage and hour compliance across APAC jurisdictions is essential for businesses to mitigate legal risks and uphold fair labor practices. With diverse regulations governing working hours, rest periods, time tracking, and overtime pay, companies must stay informed to avoid penalties and maintain employee satisfaction.

This session will address key compliance challenges and emerging trends, including:

- **Tracking Working Time:** What are the legal obligations for timekeeping? How can HR ensure compliance in remote and hybrid work environments?
- **Flexible Work and the Right to Disconnect:** How are APAC countries promoting work-life balance through new laws?
- **Wages and Overtime Compliance:** What are the latest wage reforms and enforcement trends across the region?

1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Managing a Borderless Workforce: Legal, Operational, and Strategic Considerations for Remote and Hybrid Work in APAC and Beyond

Remote and hybrid work models stubbornly remain an important competitive advantage in many industries across Asia. While some companies offer expansive and generous remote work options, others are pushing to require a return to the office. This panel will explore the common legal and operational challenges employers face in navigating this evolving landscape.

Key discussion points will include:

- **Remote Work Across International Borders:** Drawing from global frameworks, panelists will outline legally compliant structures for managing international remote workers, including local payroll registration, employer-of-record models, and independent contractor arrangements. We'll also explore how to assess and mitigate risks related to permanent establishment (PE), payroll obligations, and local employment laws

- Immigration and work authorization risks
 - Tax residency and social security obligations
 - Health and safety responsibilities
 - Strategies for short-term vs. long-term remote work arrangements
- **Hybrid Work and Return-to-Office Strategies:** As companies recalibrate their workforce models, we'll examine how to implement flexible return-to-office policies, including staggered schedules and region-specific adaptations. The session will highlight strategies for balancing employee autonomy with operational oversight.

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Labor Trends in the APAC Region: Part 1

Focusing on Australia, China, and Hong Kong, this session offers a unique opportunity to explore the latest court cases, legislative and regulatory developments, and key trends that will impact your workplace and responsibilities throughout the remainder of the year and beyond.

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Break

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

AI in the Workplace: Strategic Adoption, Legal Risk, and Human-Centric Leadership in APAC

As artificial intelligence reshapes the workplace, HR leaders and in-house counsel across the APAC region face a dual challenge: harnessing AI's transformative potential while navigating complex legal, ethical, and cultural landscapes. This panel will explore how organizations can responsibly implement AI tools—from recruitment and performance management to data security and employee relations.

Through real-world use cases and interactive discussion, panelists will address:

- How to evaluate and deploy AI tools that align with business goals and local compliance requirements
- Strategies for overcoming employee resistance, upskilling talent, and fostering trust in AI systems
- Legal implications of emerging risks, including deepfakes, data privacy, and AI misuse in harassment
- Best practices for governance, transparency, and ethical AI adoption tailored to APAC's diverse regulatory environments

Attendees will leave with a practical playbook for leading AI transformation in their organizations—balancing innovation with integrity, and technology with the human touch.

3:45 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.

Labor Trends in the APAC Region: Part 2

Focusing on India, Japan, Korea, and Singapore, this session offers a unique opportunity to explore the latest court cases, legislative and regulatory developments, and key trends that will impact your workplace and responsibilities throughout the remainder of the year and beyond.

4:10 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

“You Won’t Believe What Happened at Work...” — Real HR Scenarios from Across APAC

Get ready for a fast-paced, interactive roundtable where seasoned legal practitioners from across the APAC region dive into the real-life HR scenarios that keep you up at night—and sometimes make you laugh out loud. This isn’t your typical panel. No slides. No lectures. No talking heads. Just a group of experienced session leaders guiding a candid, practical, and occasionally hilarious discussion of the toughest workplace issues multinationals face in the region.

What’s on the table?

- “What happens when local law says one thing, but HQ says another?”
- “Can I fire someone for what they posted on social media in another country?”
- “What do I do when my employee refuses to come back from “remote work” in Bali?”
- “How do I handle a harassment complaint... when it’s the employee’s pet that’s causing the disruption?”

Why Attend?

- Learn how different APAC countries approach the same tricky issues—from termination to time zones.
- Hear how your peers have handled the unexpected (and sometimes absurd).
- Walk away with practical strategies, legal insights, and a few good stories to share back at the office.

This session is designed to be fun, fast, and full of practical takeaways. Bring your questions, your curiosity, and your sense of humor.

5:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks