The Singapore Academy of Law

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The Singapore Academy of Law (SAL) is a statutory body established by the Singapore Academy of Law Act 1988 of which every advocate and solicitor, every judge and every legal officer of the Government is a member. It performs functions that in Switzerland are divided among the bar associations, the law faculties and commercial publishers. It publishes the Singapore Law Reports and operates LawNet, the subscription database of judgments and legislation. It runs the Law Reform Committee, which produces reports that have often preceded legislation. It houses the Singapore Mediation Centre and the Asian Business Law Institute (ABLI), founded in 2016 to promote convergence of commercial law in Asia. It also administers the examinations and the registration of foreign lawyers for the purposes described in Chapter I.[1]

SAL's work on digital assets has been substantial. In November 2022 ABLI and SAL published "Cryptoassets and Property Law (Singapore edition)" as the first part of a Cryptoasset Series. The eighty-eight-page report asks whether crypto assets are property under Singapore law, surveys the case law to that date and identifies gaps in the judicial and statutory treatment. An updated edition incorporating the ByBit decision and the final report of the Law Commission of England and Wales

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appeared after the cut-off date of this book. SAL has also published a knowledge guide on digital-asset management for practitioners.[23] Part J, Chapter I draws on the 2022 report in analysing the property question.

The Swiss reader should understand SAL as the institution through which Singapore's legal profession thinks collectively about new problems. Where a Swiss practitioner looks to the doctrine in the commentaries and to the Federal Office of Justice's reports, a Singapore practitioner looks to SAL's Law Reform Committee and ABLI reports and to the judgments that cite them. A foreign lawyer who wants to contribute to the development of Singapore law on digital assets does so through SAL's committees and conferences.

Notes

1. Singapore Academy of Law Act 1988 (2020 Rev Ed), s. 3 (establishment) and s. 4 (functions); the Asian Business Law Institute was established by SAL in January 2016. ↩
2. Asian Business Law Institute and Singapore Academy of Law, "ABLI-SAL Cryptoasset Series – Cryptoassets and Property Law (Singapore edition)", first published November 2022, 88 pages; the updated edition is described on the ABLI website as published in October 2026 and incorporating the ByBit decision of July 2023 and the Law Commission's final report. ↩
3. Singapore Academy of Law, "Digital Assets Management Knowledge Guide", published on the SAL website in 2025. ↩

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