

## **Abstract**

### **Singapore Government's Efforts in Connecting Strategic Foresight into Risk Management**

In the 1980s, scenario planning (SP) offered a structured methodology to surface hidden assumptions and mental models, and helped to inculcate an anticipatory mindset in public sector officers. However, the increasingly volatile environment of the last two decades has highlighted the inadequacy of scenario planning, which tends to miss out on major shocks and discontinuities. In the 2000s therefore, the Risk Assessment and Horizon Scanning Programme (RAHS) was launched to detect weak signals of potential future shocks, and the Centre of Strategic Futures (CSF) was established to focus on experimentation and cultivation of a rich network that would help public officers navigate a more complex environment, while addressing groupthink and cognitive biases. Through the use of national scenarios and other foresight analyses, public sector officers and leaders are sensitised to possible futures that challenge existing dominant narratives. Scenario planning, along with other foresight tools, has since become a key part of the government's planning process, and been embedded into our annual strategic planning and budget cycles. In 2006, the WOG-Integrated Risk Management (WOG-IRM) framework was initiated: drawing on analyses from futures-oriented work, WOG-IRM seeks to draw interconnections between systemic risks – and to alert ministries to the need to mitigate and prepare for such risks. Even with all these initiatives in place, we cannot plan exhaustively for every contingency, but can only seek to develop resilience and to be ready to act quickly in the face of the inevitable surprises that will surely occur in this increasingly complex world.