



UPDATE

on the
implementation
of laws

Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses

September 2019 Edition



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Contents

Monitoring Matrix	1
Narrative Reports	21
Agriculture and Food	22
Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies	42
Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation	48
Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes	51
Economic Affairs	52
Education Arts and Culture	53
Energy	54
Foreign Relations	56
Games, Amusement and Sports	57
Government Corporations and Public Enterprises	58
Health and Demography	59
Justice and Human Rights	79
Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development	83
Public Order and Dangerous Drugs	84
Public Services	86
Public Works	88
Science and Technology	93
Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development	98
Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship	99
Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement	112
Ways and Means	113
Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender	117
Youth	120
Others	121



Foreword

It is through the proper implementation of laws that the true intent of legislation will be realized. A faithful evaluation of the implementation of laws measures how well a law moves society towards the legislative goals. There is, thus, a need for continued monitoring of laws as an integral undertaking in this institution.

This handbook seeks to update Senators, Senate officials and staff and the general public on the status of implementation of nationally significant laws enacted from January 2018 to July 2019. It contains reports on the status of Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of these laws, key milestones, issues encountered by departments and agencies, and recommendations.

It endeavors to provide a valuable window of information on the laws recently enacted and their implementation. In addition to raising public awareness on these new laws, this will allow a review if there is need for further legislative action. Also, highlighting the implementation of these new laws may lead to a process of addressing the emerging problems or the need for further policy development.

As mandated by the Senate since 1993 the Executive-Legislative Liaison Service (ELLS) of the External Affairs and Relations Department is fully committed to providing timely, accurate and useful information on the implementation of laws and to make these more accessible to stakeholders.

We hope that by coming out with this publication, we are able to provide a feedback mechanism for the legislative policies formulated by our hardworking legislators.

We are very grateful for the cooperation of the departments and agencies tasked to implement these laws for their time and effort in furnishing the relevant information and data, as well as the Office of the National Administrative Register for providing a copy of the IRR of some laws.



ENRIQUE LUIS D. PAPA

Deputy Secretary, External Affairs and Relations Department
Senate of the Philippines

LIST OF ACRONYMS

4Ps	Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (RA 11310)
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMLA	Anti-Money Laundering Act
AMLC	Anti-Money Laundering Council
APEC	Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport
APO	Accredited Professional Organization
AQRF	ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
ARTA	Anti-Red Tape Authority
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATI	Agricultural Training Institute
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
BIR	Bureau of Internal Revenue
BOC	Bureau of Customs
BPI	Bureau of Plant Industry
BSP	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Philippine Central Bank)
BTr	Bureau of Treasury
CALABARZON	Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon Provinces
CAR	Cordillera Autonomous Region
CEZA	Cagayan Economic Zone Authority
CHD	Department of Health-Center for Health Development
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
CIDG	Criminal Investigation and Detection Group
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children
DA	Department of Agriculture
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DepEd	Department of Education
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOE	Department of Energy
DOF	Department of Finance
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DOT	Department of Tourism
DOTr	Department of Transportation
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FDC	Food Development Center
GCG	Governance Commission for GOCCs
GFI	Government Financial Institution
GOCCs	Government-owned and Controlled Corporation
GSIS	Government Service Insurance System
HDMF/PAG-IBIG	Home Development Mutual Fund
HTAC	Health Technology and Assessment Council
IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations
LAREC	Luzon Agricultural and Experimental Center
LBP	Landbank of the Philippines (Landbank)
LGAREC	La Granja Agricultural Research Center
LGU	Local Government Unit
LTFRB	Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Bureau
LTFU	Lost to Follow-Up Patient

MIMAROPA	Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan Provinces
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NEA	National Electrification Administration
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NFA	National Food Authority
NGA	National Government Agency
NGO	Nongovernment Organization
NHA	National Housing Authority
NHIP	National Health Insurance Program
NIA	National Irrigation Administration
NNC	National Nutrition Council
NSQCS	National Seed Quality Control Services
NTP	National Tuberculosis Control Program
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
PAB	Philippine Accreditation Bureau
PAGASA	Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration
PAGCOR	Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation
PBRIS	Philippine Business Regulations Information System
PCMH	Philippine Council for Mental Health
PDIC	Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
PDP	Philippine Development Plan
PHIC/Philhealth	Philippine Health Insurance Corporation
Philmech	Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization
PhilSys	Philippine Identification System (RA 11055)
PIA	Philippine Information Agency
PNP	Philippine National Police
PNRI	Philippine Nuclear Research Institute
PPAN	Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition
PRC	Professional Regulation Commission
PQF	Philippine Qualifications Framework
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
PSC	Philippine Sports Commission
PWD	Person(s) With Disabilities
RCEF	Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund
RDE	Research, Development and Extension
RDTWG	Rare Disease Technical Working Group
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
ROW	Right-of-way
RTC	Regional Trial Court
SDN	Service Delivery Network
SEAMEO TROPMED	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education-Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SRA	Sugar Regulatory Administration
SSS	Social Security System
TB-DOTS	Tuberculosis-Directly Observed Treatment, Short-Course
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TRAIN	Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Act (RA 10963)
TWG	Technical Working Group
UHC	Universal Healthcare (RA 11223)
UPLB	University of the Philippines, Los Baños
UP-NIH-IHG	University of the Philippines National Institutes of Health-Institute of Human Genetics
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

Part 1

Monitoring Matrix

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

This section contains information on the status of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of selected laws passed during the 16th and 17th Congresses that have a broad national impact. The contents are based on:

- a. Feedback from implementing agencies;
- b. Websites of implementing agencies and other government offices; and
- c. News reports from reputable media outlets.

Laws with IRRs labeled **Approved** means that the IRR has been approved and published by the implementing agencies. The date of approval, publication or effectivity is also indicated.

Laws with IRRs labeled **Pending** means that the IRR is still being drafted by the implementing agencies.

Laws with IRRs labeled **No Update** means that the status of the IRR is unknown due to the following:

- a. Failure of implementing agencies to respond in time;
- b. Lack of information from other reputable sources; and/or
- c. Difficulty communicating with implementing agencies.

Laws with IRRs labeled **Not required** means that the law does not explicitly require implementing agencies to promulgate an IRR.

Narrative reports are provided for some laws. If available, the page number of the narrative report is indicated.

The cut-off date of laws included in this matrix is April 17, 2019. Laws passed after this cut-off will be included in next year's report.

Some IRRs can be downloaded through our online IRR database:
tinyurl.com/ellsirrdatabase

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10635	An Act Establishing the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) as the Single Maritime Administration Responsible for the Implementation and Enforcement of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, As Amended, and International Agreements or Covenants Related Thereto	March 13, 2014	16th	July 24, 2014	
10639	An Act Mandating the Telecommunications Service Providers to Send Free Mobile Alerts in the Event of Natural and Man-Made Disasters and Calamities	June 20, 2014	16th	July 21, 2015	
10640	An Act to Further Strengthen the Anti-Drug Campaign of the Government, Amending for the Purpose Section 21 of Republic Act No. 9165, Otherwise Known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002	July 15, 2014	16th	July 21, 2015	
10641	An Act Allowing the Full Entry of Foreign Banks in the Philippines, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7721	July 15, 2014	16th	Not required	
10642	An Act Strengthening Consumer Protection in the Purchase of Brand New Motor Vehicles	July 15, 2014	16th	November 17, 2014	
10643	An Act to Effectively Instill Health Consciousness Through Graphic Health Warnings on Tobacco Products	July 15, 2014	16th	February 9, 2016	59
10644	An Act Promoting Job Generation and Inclusive Growth Through the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	July 15, 2014	16th	December 19, 2014	
10645	An Act Providing for the Mandatory Philhealth Coverage for All Senior Citizens	November 05, 2014	16th	December 17, 2014	
10647	An Act Strengthening the Ladderized Interface Between Technical-Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education	November 21, 2014	16th	March 1, 2015	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10648	An Act Providing Scholarship Grants to Top Graduates of All Public High Schools in State Universities and Colleges and Appropriating Funds Therefor	November 27, 2014	16th	No update	
10649	An Act Increasing the Burial Assistance for Veterans From Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000)	November 27, 2014	16th	Not required	
10650	An Act Expanding Access to Educational Services by Institutionalizing Open Distance Learning in Levels of Tertiary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor	December 09, 2014	16th	February 29, 2016	
10653	An Act Adjusting the 13th Month Pay and Other Benefits Ceiling Excluded From the Computation of Gross Income for Purposes of Income Taxation	February 12, 2015	16th	March 13, 2015	
10654	An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing	February 27, 2015 (Lapsed)	16th	September 22, 2015	22
10655	An Act Repealing the Crime of Premature Marriage Under Article 351 of Act No. 3815	March 13, 2015	16th	Not required	
10657	An Act Regulating and Modernizing the Practice of Chemistry in the Philippines	March 27, 2015	16th	December 29, 2015	
10659	An Act Promoting and Supporting the Competitiveness of the Sugarcane Industry and for Other Purposes	March 27, 2015	16th	January 23, 2018	28
10660	An Act Strengthening Further the Functional and Structural Organization of the Sandiganbayan	April 16, 2015	16th	Not required	
10661	An Act Declaring November of Every Year as National Childrens Month	May 29, 2015	16th	Not required	
10664	An Act Declaring the Last Full Week of August as Armed Forces of the Filipino People Week	July 06, 2015	16th	No update	
10665	An Act Establishing the Open High School System in the Philippines and Appropriating Funds Therefor	July 09, 2015	16th	No update	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10666	An Act Providing for the Safety of Children Aboard Motorcycles	July 21, 2015	16th	June 22, 2016	
10667	An Act Providing for a National Competition Policy	July 21, 2015	16th	May 31, 2016	
10668	An Act Allowing Foreign Vessels to Transport and Co-load Foreign Cargoes for Domestic Transshipment and for Other Purposes	July 21, 2015	16th	May 14, 2016	
10669	An Act Declaring August 18 of Every Year as Jesse Robredo Day, a Special Working Holiday, and for Other Purposes	August 18, 2016	16th	Not required	
10676	An Act Protecting the Amateur Nature of Student Athletes in the Philippines by Regulating the Residency Requirement and Prohibiting the Commercialization of Student Athletes	August 26, 2015	16th	No update	
10679	An Act Promoting Entrepreneurship and Financial Education Among Filipino Youth	August 27, 2015	16th	June 13, 2019	120
10687	An Act Providing for a Comprehensive and Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (Unifast), Thereby Rationalizing Access Thereto	October 15, 2015	16th	May 11, 2016	
10688	An Act Regulating the Practice of Metallurgical Engineering in the Philippines, Repealing for this Purpose Presidential Decree Numbered 1536	October 20, 2015	16th	October 19, 2016	
10689	An Act Declaring August 9 as National Indigenous Peoples Day and Mandating the Meaningful Observance Thereof	October 23, 2015	16th	No update	
10690	An Act Regulating the Practice of Forestry in the Philippines and Appropriating Funds Therefor	October 23, 2015	16th	September 6, 2016	
10691	An Act Defining the Role of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) the Local Government Units (LGUs), and Accredited Nongovernment Organizations (NGOs) in the Establishment and Operation of the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) and the Operation of Job Placement Offices in Educational Institutions (EIs)	October 26, 2015	16th	June 22, 2016	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10692	An Act Providing for the Modernization of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), Providing Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes	November 03, 2015	16th	June 23, 2016	93
10693	An Act Strengthening Nongovernment Organizations (NGOS) Engaged in Microfinance Operations for the Poor	November 03, 2015	16th	August 16, 2016	99
10694	An Act Creating Two (2) Additional Municipal Trial Courts in Cities for Angeles City, One (1) Municipal Trial Court for Magalang, and One (1) Municipal Trial Court in Cities for the City of Mabalacat, all Situated in the Province of Pampanga	November 11, 2015	16th	Not required	122
10695	An Act Creating a Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of San Jose Del Monte, Situated in the Province of Bulacan	November 11, 2015	16th	Not required	122
10696	An Act Creating Two (2) Additional Branches of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities and Two (2) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Baguio	November 11, 2015	16th	Not required	122
10697	An Act Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction by Managing the Trade in Strategic Goods, the Provision of Related Services, and for Other Purposes	November 13, 2015	16th	August 31, 2017	
10698	An Act to Regulate and Modernize the Practice of Naval Architecture in the Philippines	November 13, 2015	16th	June 22, 2016	
10699	An Act Expanding the Coverage of Incentives Granted to National Athletes and Coaches, Appropriating Funds Therefor, Repealing for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9064	November 13, 2015	16th	March 27, 2017	57
10700	An Act Creating Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in San Jose City, Situated in the Province of Nueva Ecija	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	123
10701	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed At Initao, Situated in the Province of Misamis Oriental	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	123

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10702	An Act Creating An Additional Regional Trial Court To Be Stationed in the City of Meycauayan, Situated in the Province of Bulacan	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	123
10703	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Guihulngan, Situated in the Province of Negros Oriental	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	123
10704	An Act Creating Nineteen (19) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to Be Stationed in Quezon City, Metro Manila	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	124
10705	An Act Converting the Existing 5th Municipal Circuit Trial Court of Carmona-General Mariano Alvarez Into a Municipal Trial Court with Seat At the Municipality of Carmona, and Creating a Separate Municipal Trial Court for the Municipality of General Mariano Alvarez, All Situated in the Province of Cavite	November 20, 2015	16th	Not required	124
10706	An Act Protecting Seafarers Against Ambulance Chasing and Imposition of Excessive Fees, and Providing Penalties Therefor	November 26, 2015	16th	April 19, 2016	
10707	An Act Amending Presidential Decree No. 968, Otherwise Known as the Probation Law of 1976	November 26, 2015	16th	No update	
10708	An Act Enhancing Transparency in the Management and Accounting of Tax Incentives, Administered by Investment Promotion Agencies	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	113
10709	An Act Providing for Thirty (30) Days Forfeitable Leave Privileges Annually to All Judges of the First Level Courts	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	
10710	An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the Cities of Alaminos, Dagupan and San Carlos, All Situated in the Province of Pangasinan	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	124
10711	An Act Creating Five (5) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court and Five (5) Additional Branches of the Metropolitan Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to be Stationed in Pasay City, Metro Manila	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	125

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10712	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in Sorsogon City, Situated in the Province of Sorsogon	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	125
10713	An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to Be Stationed in Paranaque City, Metro Manila	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	125
10714	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Vigan, Situated in the Province of Ilocos Sur	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	126
10715	An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Bacolod, Situated in the Province of Negros Occidental	December 09, 2015	16th	Not required	126
10739	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the Science City of Munoz, Situated in the Province of Nueva Ecija	December 29, 2015	16th	Not required	126
10741	An Act Strengthening the Operations of the National Labor Relations Commission	January 12, 2016	16th	Not required	
10742	An Act Establishing Reforms in the Sangguniang Kabataan Creating Enabling Mechanisms for Meaningful Youth Participation in Nation-Building, and for Other Purposes	January 15, 2016	16th	July 11, 2016	
10743	An Act Declaring the Fifth Day of October of Every Year as the National Teachers' Day	January 29, 2016	16th	Not required	
10744	An Act Providing for the Creation and Organization of Credit Surety Fund Cooperatives	February 06, 2016	16th	June 20, 2017	100
10747	An Act Promulgating a Comprehensive Policy in Addressing the Needs of Persons with Rare Disease	March 03, 2016	16th	December 7, 2017	60
10752	An Act Facilitating the Acquisition of Right-Of-Way Site or Location for National Government Infrastructure Projects	March 07, 2019	16th	June 30, 2016	88

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10754	An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons with Disability	March 23, 2016	16th	December 1, 2016	114
10755	An Act Authorizing the Punong Barangay to Administer the Oath of Office of Any Government Official, Including the President of the Republic of the Philippines	March 29, 2016	16th	Not required	
10756	An Act Rendering Election Service Non-Compulsory for Public School Teachers, Authorizing the Appointment of Other Qualified Citizens, Providing for Compensation and Other Benefits	April 08, 2016	16th	September 5, 2017	
10757	An Act Reducing the Retirement Age of Surface Mine Workers From Sixty (60) to Fifty (50) Years, Amending for the Purpose Article 302 of Presidential Decree No. 442, as Amended	April 08, 2016	16th	December 19, 2016	
10766	An Act Extending the Life of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board	April 19, 2016	16th	Not required	
10767	An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Philippine Plan of Action to Eliminate Tuberculosis as a Public Health Problem and Appropriating Funds Therefor	April 26, 2016	16th	April 24, 2017	62
10771	An Act Promoting the Creation of Green Jobs, Granting Incentives and Appropriating Funds Therefor	April 29, 2016	16th	September 7, 2017	
10786	An Act Declaring the Fourth Week of September of Every Year as the National Thyroid Cancer Awareness Week	May 03, 2016	16th	Not required	
10789	An Act Amending Presidential Decree No. 442, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Labor Code of the Philippines by Adding a New Article 302-A Reducing the Retirement Age of Racehorse Jockeys from 60 to 55	May 03, 2016	16th	February 2, 2017	
10801	An Act Governing the Operations and Administration of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration	May 10, 2016	16th	November 16, 2016	
10816	An Act Providing for the Development and Promotion of Farm Tourism in the Philippines	May 16, 2016	16th	December 1, 2016	31

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10817	An Act Instituting the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Program, Creating for the Purpose the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Board, and for Other Purposes	May 16, 2016	16th	July 26, 2017	32
10821	An Act Mandating the Provision of Emergency Relief and Protection for Children Before, During, and After Disasters and Other Emergency Situations	May 18, 2016	16th	February 28, 2017	117
10844	An Act Creating the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Defining its Powers and Functions, Appropriating Funds Therefor	May 23, 2016	16th	October 17, 2016	
10845	An Act Declaring Large-Scale Agricultural Smuggling as Economic Sabotage, Prescribing Penalties Therefor and for Other Purposes	May 23, 2016	16th	May 9, 2017	
10846	An Act Enhancing the Resolution and Liquidation Framework for Banks, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 3591, as Amended, and Other Related Laws	May 23, 2016	16th	Not required	42
10847	An Act Lowering the Age Requirement for Applicants Taking the Board Examination for Social Workers, Providing for Continuing Social Work Education, and Upgrading the Sundry Provisions Relative to the Practice of Social Work	May 23, 2016	16th	July 28, 2017	
10848	An Act Further Extending the Period of Implementation of the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF)	May 23, 2016	16th	Not required	
10862	An Act Regulating the Practice of Nutrition and Dietetics in the Philippines, Repealing for the Purpose Presidential Decree No. 1286, Known as the Nutrition and Dietetics Decree of 1977	May 25, 2016	16th	October 13, 2017	
10863	An Act Modernizing the Customs and Tariff Administration	May 30, 2016	16th	Pending	116
10864	An Act Defining Raw Sugar or Raw Cane Sugar, Amending Section 109(A) and (F) of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as Amended, and for Other Purposes	June 10, 2016	16th	No update	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10867	An Act Reorganizing and Modernizing the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and Providing Funds Therefor	June 23, 2016	16th	December 20, 2016	
10868	An Act Honoring and Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Filipino Centenarians, and for Other Purposes	June 23, 2016	16th	February 15, 2017	
10869	An Act Institutionalizing the Nationwide Implementation of the Jobstart Philippines Program and Providing Funds Therefor	June 29, 2016	16th	September 8, 2017	
10870	An Act Regulating the Philippine Credit Card Industry	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	April 26, 2018	121
10871	An Act Requiring Basic Education Students to Undergo Age-Appropriate Basic Life Support Training	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	No update	
10878	An Act Strengthening and Institutionalizing Direct Credit Support of the Land Bank of the Philippines to Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries, Small Farmers and Fisherfolk, Further Amending RA 3844	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Pending	
10880	An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court with Seat At Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro in the Fourt Judicial Region	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Not required	126
10881	An Act Amending Investment Restrictions in Specific Laws Governing Adjustment Companies, Lending Companies, Financing Companies and Investment Houses	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Not required	52
10882	An Act Exempting Surviving Children of Military Personnel Who Are Mentally Incapacitated From Termination of Benefits Upon Reaching the Age of Twenty-One (21), Amending for the Purpose	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	May 30, 2018	
10883	An Act Providing for a New Anti-Carnapping Law of the Philippines	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Pending	84
10884	An Act Strengthening the Balanced Housing Development Program, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7279, as Amended, Otherwise Known as the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	December 7, 2017	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10905	An Act Requiring All Franchise Holders or Operators of Television Stations and Producers of Television Programs to Broadcast or Present Their Programs with Closed Captions Options, and for Other Purposes	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	No update	
10906	An Act Providing Stronger Measures Against Unlawful Practices, Businesses, and Schemes of Matching and Offering Filipinos to Foreign Nationals for Purposes of Marriage of Common Law Partnership, Repealing for the Purpose RA 6955	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	No update	
10908	An Act Mandating the Integration of Filipino-Muslim and Indigenous Peoples History, Culture and Identity in the Study of Philippine History in Both Basic and Higher Education	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Not required	
10909	An Act Prohibiting Business Establishments From Giving Insufficient or No Change to Consumers and Providing Penalties Therefor	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	December 21, 2016	100
10910	An Act Increasing the Prescriptive Period for Violations of Republic Act No. 3019, Otherwise Known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, From Fifteen (15) Years to Twenty (20) Years	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Not required	
10911	An Act Prohibiting Discrimination Against Any Individual in Employment on Account of Age and Providing Penalties Therefor	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	February 2, 2017	
10912	An Act Mandating and Strengthening the Continuing Professional Development Program for All Regulated Professions, Creating Continuing Professional Development Council, and Appropriating Therefor, and for Other Related Purposes	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	February 7, 2019	48
10913	An Act Defining and Penalizing Distracted Driving	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	April 4, 2017	86
10915	An Act Strengthening, Modernizing and Aligning the Practice of Agricultural Engineering in the Country Into the Internationally Recognized Practice of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, and for Other Purposes	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	No update	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10916	An Act Requiring the Mandatory Installation of Speed Limiter in Public Utility and Certain Types of Vehicle	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	April 12, 2018	87
10917	An Act Amending Certain Provisions of R.A. 9547 Otherwise Known as An Act Strengthening and Expanding the Coverage of the Special Program for Employment of Students	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	March 20, 2017	
10918	An Act Regulating and Modernizing the Practice of Pharmacy in the Philippines, Repealing for the Purpose Republic Act Numbered Five Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty-One (R.A. No. 5921), Otherwise Known as the Pharmacy Law	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	February 21, 2017	
10922	An Act Declaring the Second Week of November of Every Year as Economic and Financial Literacy Week	June 30, 2016 (Lapsed)	16th	Not required	
10927	An Act Designating Casinos as Covered Persons Under Republic Act No. 9160, Otherwise Known as the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001, as Amended	July 14, 2017	17th	October 18, 2017	43
10928	An Act Extending the Validity of Philippine Passports, Amending for the Purpose Section 10 of Republic Act No. 8239, Otherwise Known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996, and for Other Purposes	August 2, 2017	17th	October 25, 2017	56
10929	An Act Establishing the Free Internet Access Program in Public Places in the Country and Appropriating Funds Therefor	August 2, 2017	17th	June 14, 2018	
10930	An Act Rationalizing and Strengthening the Policy Regarding Driver's License by Extending the Validity Period of Drivers' Licenses, and Penalizing Acts in Violation of its Issuance and Application	August 2, 2017	17th	June 26, 2019	87
10931	An Act Promoting Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education by Providing for Free Tuition and Other School Fees in State Universities and Colleges, Local Universities and Colleges and State-Run Technical-Vocational Institutions	August 3, 2017	17th	No update	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
10932	An Act Strengthening the Anti-Hospital Deposit Law by Increasing the Penalties for the Refusal of Hospitals and Medical Clinics to Administer Appropriate Initial Medical Treatment and Support in Emergency or Serious Cases	August 3, 2017	17th	November 17, 2017	
10951	An Act Adjusting the Amount or the Value of Property on Which a Penalty Is Based, and the Fines Imposed Under the Revised Penal Code, Amending for the Purpose Act No. 3815	August 29, 2017	17th	Not required	
10962	An Act Regulating the Issuances, Use and Redemption of Gift Checks	December 19, 2017	17th	March 11, 2019	101
10963	Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Act	December 19, 2017	17th	Various dates (2018-2019)	
10966	An Act Declaring December 8 of Every Year a Special Nonworking Holiday in the Entire Country to Commemorate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Principal Patroness of the Philippines	December 28, 2017	17th	Not required	
10968	An Act Institutionalizing the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), Establishing the Pqf-National Coordinating Council (NCC) and Appropriating Funds Therefor	January 16, 2018	17th	April 26, 2019	53
10969	An Act Providing Free Irrigation Service, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 3601, as Amended, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes	February 2, 2018	17th	December 18, 2018	35
10970	An Act Declaring the Twenty-Fifth Day of August of Every Year as the National Tech-Voc Day	February 7, 2018	17th	Not required	83
10973	An Act Granting the Chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Director and the Deputy Director for Administration of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) the Authority to Administer Oath and to issue Subpoena and Subpoena Duces Tecum	March 1, 2018	17th	Not required	85
11014	An Act Declaring January 23 of Every Year a Special Working Holiday in the Entire Country to Commemorate the Declaration of the First Philippine Republic	April 5, 2018	17th	Not required	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
11032	An Act Promoting Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9485 Otherwise Known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007	May 28, 2018	17th	July 17, 2019	102
11035	An Act Institutionalizing the Balik Scientist Program, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes	June 15, 2018	17th	October 4, 2018	97
11036	An Act Establishing a National Mental Health Policy for the Purpose of Enhancing the Delivery of Integrated Mental Health Services, Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Persons Utilizing Psychiatric, Neurologic and Psychosocial Health Services, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes	June 20, 2018	17th	February 19, 2019	69
11037	An Act Institutionalizing a National Feeding Program for Undernourished Children in Public Day Care, Kindergarten and Elementary Schools to Combat Hunger and Undernutrition Among Filipino Children and Appropriating Funds Therefore	June 20, 2018	17th	Pending	54
11038	An Act Declaring Protected Areas and Providing for Their Management, Amending for This Purpose Republic Act No. 7586, Otherwise Known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act of 1992, and for Other Purposes	June 22, 2018	17th	July 1, 2019	
11039	An Act Institutionalizing the Electric Cooperatives Emergency and Resiliency Fund and Appropriating Funds	June 29, 2018	17th	December 14, 2018	54
11040	An Act Declaring April 27 of Every Year as a Special Working Public Holiday Throughout the Country and a Special Nonworking Holiday in the City of Lapu-Lapu, Province of Cebu, to Commemorate the Victory of Lapu-Lapu and His Men over the Spaniards	June 29, 2018	17th	Not required	
11052	An Act Regulating the Practice of Food Technology in the Philippines, Creating for the Purpose the Board of Food Technology and Appropriating Funds Therefor	June 29, 2018	17th	No update	
11053	An Act Prohibiting Hazing and Regulating Other Forms of Initiation Rites of Fraternities, Sororities, and Other Organizations, and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof	June 29, 2018	17th	No update	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
11054	An Act Providing for the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	July 27, 2018	17th	Not required	
11055	An Act Establishing the Philippine Identification System	August 6, 2018	17th	October 5, 2018	79
11057	An Act Strengthening the Secured Transactions Legal Framework in the Philippines, Which Shall Provide for the Creation, Perfection, Determination of Priority, Establishment of a Centralized Notice Registry, and Enforcement of Security Interests in Personal Property, and for Other Purposes	August 17, 2018	17th	No update	
11058	An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof	August 17, 2018	17th	December 6, 2018	
11059	An Act Establishing a Retirement Benefit System in the Office of the Ombudsman, Augmenting its Employee Benefits, and Appropriating Funds Therefor	August 17, 2018	17th	October 22, 2018	
11106	An Act Declaring the Filipino Sign Language as the National Sign Language of the Filipino Deaf and the Official Sign Language of Government in All Transactions Involving the Deaf, and Mandating its Use in Schools, Broadcast Media, and Workplaces	October 30, 2018	17th	Not required	
11127	An Act Providing for the Regulation and Supervision of Payment Systems	October 30, 2018	17th	Pending	45
11131	An Act Regulating the Practice of Criminology Profession in the Philippines, and Appropriating Funds Therefor	November 08, 2018	17th	No update	
11148	An Act Scaling Up the National and Local Health and Nutrition Programs Through a Strengthened Integrated Strategy for Maternal, Neonatal, Child Health and Nutrition	November 29, 2018	17th	May 2, 2019	73
11163	An Act Declaring the Last Monday of January Every Year as a Special Working Holiday in Observance of National Bible Day	December 20, 2018	17th	Not required	
11164	An Act Increasing the Monthly Old-Age Pension of Senior Veterans	December 20, 2018	17th	Not required	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
11165	An Act Institutionalizing Telecommuting as An Alternative Work Arrangement for Employees in the Private Sector	December 20, 2018	17th	March 26, 2019	
11166	An Act Strengthening the Philippine Comprehensive Policy on Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Prevention, Treatment, Care, and Support, and Reconstituting the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC)	December 20, 2018	17th	July 12, 2019	
11168	An Act Allowing Home Economics Graduates to Teach Home Economics Subjects and Home Economics-Related Technical-Vocational Subjects in All Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Educational Institutions	January 3, 2019	17th	No update	
11180	An Act Requiring Higher Education Institutions to Report Participation and Program Support Expenditures in All College Athletic Programs	January 03, 2019	17th	No update	
11188	An Act Providing for the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof	January 10, 2019	17th	June 4, 2019	118
11194	An Act Mandating the Conservation of Gabaldon School Buildings Nationwide, Providing Penalties for Violations, and Appropriating Funds Therefor	January 18, 2019	17th	No update	
11199	An Act Rationalizing and Expanding the Powers and Duties of the Social Security Commission to Ensure the Long-Term Viability of the Social Security System	February 7, 2019	17th	May 22, 2019	58
11200	An Act Providing for the Rank Classification in the Philippine National Police, Amending for the Purpose Section 28 of Republic Act No. 6975	February 8, 2019	17th	March 24, 2019	
11201	An Act Creating the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, Defining its Mandate, Powers and Functions, Providing Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes	February 14, 2019	17th	July 19, 2019	112
11202	An Act Requiring Mobile Service Providers to Provide Nationwide Mobile Number Portability to Subscribers	February 8, 2019	17th	June 11, 2019	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
11203	An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice and for Other Purposes	February 14, 2019	17th	March 28, 2019	36
11206	An Act Establishing a Career Guidance and Counseling Program for All Secondary Schools and Appropriating Funds Therefor	February 14, 2019	17th	No update	
11207	An Act Providing for Reasonable Rates for Political Advertisements, Amending for the Purpose Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9006, Otherwise Known as the Fair Election Act	February 14, 2019	17th	March 29, 2019	
11210	An Act Increasing the Maternity Leave Period to One Hundred Five (105) Days for Female Workers with An Option to Extend for An Additional Thirty (30) Days Without Pay, and Granting An Additional Fifteen (15) Days for Solo Mothers, and for Other Purposes	February 20, 2019	17th	May 1, 2019	
11211	An Act Amending Republic Act Number 7653, Otherwise Known as the New Central Bank Act, and for Other Purposes	February 14, 2019	17th	Not required	46
11214	An Act Establishing a Sports Complex Known as the National Sports Training Center	February 14, 2019	17th	Pending	98
11215	An Act Institutionalizing a National Integrated Cancer Control Program and Appropriating Funds Therefor	February 14, 2019	17th	August 9, 2019	77
11216	An Act Declaring September 3 of Every Year a Special Working Holiday Throughout the Country, in Commemoration of the Surrender of the Japanese Military Forces Led by General Tomoyuki Yamashita in Baguio City	February 14, 2019	17th	Not required	
11222	An Act Allowing the Rectification of Simulated Birth Records and Prescribing Administrative Adoption Proceedings for the Purpose	February 21, 2019	17th	Pending	119
11223	Act Instituting Universal Health Care for All Filipinos, Prescribing Reforms in the Health Care System, and Appropriating Funds Therefor	February 20, 2019	17th	Pending	77
11227	An Act Mandating the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) to Develop, Publish, Disseminate and Update a Handbook on the Rights and Responsibilities of Migrant Workers	February 22, 2019	17th	No update	

Monitoring Matrix

RA Number	Title	Date Approved	Congress	IRR Signing, Publication or Effectivity Date	Narrative Report Page Number
11228	An Act Providing for the Mandatory Philhealth Coverage for All Persons with Disability (PWDS)	February 22, 2019	17th	Pending	
11229	An Act Providing for the Special Protection of Child Passengers in Motor Vehicles and Providing Appropriating Funds Therefor	February 22, 2019	17th	No update	
11230	An Act Instituting a Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program and Free Access to Technical - Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and Appropriating Funds Therefor	February 22, 2019	17th	June 17, 2019	84
11231	An Act Removing the Restrictions Imposed on the Registration, Acquisition, Encumbrance, Alienation, Transfer and Conveyance of Land Covered by Free Patents Under Sections 118, 119 and 121 of Commonwealth Act No. 141	February 22, 2019	17th	Not required	
11232	An Act Providing for the Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines	February 20, 2019	17th	April 25, 2019	51
11234	An Act Establishing the Energy Virtual One-Stop Shop for the Purpose of Streamlining the Permitting Process of Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution Projects	March 8, 2019	17th	May 28, 2019	55
11235	An Act Preventing and Penalizing the Use of Motorcycles in the Commission of Crimes by Requiring Bigger, Readable and Color-Coded Number Plates and Identification Marks, and for Other Purposes	March 8, 2019	17th	No update	
11239	An Act Abolishing the Road Board and Providing for the Disposition of the Motor Vehicle Users Charge Collections	March 8, 2019	17th	Pending	92
11241	An Act Regulating the Registration, Licensure, and Practice of Occupational Therapy, Providing Funds Therefor and for Other Related Purposes	March 11, 2019	17th	No update	
11249	An Act Regulating the Practice of Speech Language Pathology in the Philippines, and Providing Funds Therefor	March 22, 2019	17th	No update	
11310	An Act Institutionalizing the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)	April 17, 2019	17th	Pending	98

Part 2

Narrative Reports

Agriculture and Food

Republic Act 10654: An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

S 2414/H 4536, Approved on February 27, 2015

SYNOPSIS

The law seeks to prevent and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the country. Sanctions have been raised to as high as Php 45 million for commercial fishing violators and Php 120 million for poachers. It seeks to prevent foreign fishing vessels from fishing in the country's territorial seas, and provides the creation of an Adjudication Committee under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), which would speed up the determination of liability of violators and the imposition of penalties.

One of the most salient features of this law is the installation of a Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System in all Philippine waters and Philippine-flagged fishing vessels. The system will use vessel monitoring technology to better track and identify commercial fishers operating in no-take zones and municipal waters, thereby improving fisheries transparency.

UPDATE

BFAR provided the matrix in the following pages outlining its accomplishments in implementing this law.

Table 1: BFAR accomplishments in the implementation of RA 10654

Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Within one (1) month from effectivity date - 10 November 2015					
Rule 32.2 List of Authorized Landing Sites	Make available publicly a list of authorized ports and landing sites, including landing ports established by canneries, seafood processors and all fish landing sites approved prior to the effectivity of the Code	PHTD FRQD NFRDI FIMC HFIU	Regional Counter-parts	PHTD - updated list of EU and BFAR approved Fish Processing Establishments	
Sec. 35. Incentives for Commercial Fishers to Fish Further into the EEZ	Promulgate guidelines re a) tax and duty exemptions in the importation of fishing vessels not more than 5 years old, equipment and paraphernalia; and b) duty and tax rebates on fuel consumption for commercial fisheries operations in the High Seas	FRQD CFD NMFD In collab w other govt agencies	Regional Counter-parts	FRLD - This is no longer being pursued due to international agreement.	
Sec 8. Harvest Control Rules and Reference Points	Establish Harvest Control Rules, Target Reference Points and Limit Reference Points in all fishing grounds or Fishery Managed Areas	NFRDI CFD NMFD		<p>CFD - As requirement of RA 8550 as amended by RA 10654 (Section 8), prepared Proposed Joint Administrative Order Establishment and Governance of Fisheries Management Areas, Harvest Control Rules and Reference Points</p> <p>Conduct of Stakeholders' Consultation on the said Draft JAO August 2-4, 2017 (Mindanao Cluster, Davao City); November 15-17, 2017 (Luzon Cluster, Tagaytay City; One (1) Stakeholders' consultation / Workshop on the said JAO for Visayas Cluster in Cebu by April CY 2018</p> <p>NFRDI - Interim Harvest Control Rules for oceanic tuna drafted before the 3rd Q of 2018 (NFRDI)</p> <p>- Compliance to WCPFC Scientific Data Requirements including submission of Scientific Report to WCPFC (Ar Pt 1) (NFRDI)</p> <p>- Initial Limit and Target Reference Points (LRP,TRP) established for</p>	<p>Process in place in FAO 263 on the Establishment of Fisheries Management Areas for the Conservation and Management of Fisheries in the Philippines</p> <p>Process in place in FAO 263 on the Establishment of Fisheries Management Areas for the Conservation and Management of Fisheries in the Philippines</p>
Sec 10. Introduction of Foreign Aquatic Species	Review existing regulations and promulgate a regulation when necessary	FRQD <u>Fish Health (Dr. Somga)</u> <u>Aqua Div</u> NFRDI NIFTDC NFFTC NIFTC	Regional Counter-part	<p>NIFTC - Conducted risk assessment activity in the introduction of foreign aquatic species in coordination with FRQD and Fish Health</p>	
Rule 32.1 Distant Water Fishing	Revise FAO No. 252 s. 2014	CFDNMFDC FRQD		<p>CFD - Scheduled for revision by 2019</p> <p>FRLD - Some aspects of this provision are already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is subject for NFARMC consultation on March 26, 2018.</p>	<p>FAO 260 on Vessel Monitoring Measures and FAO 261 on Fisheries Observer Program to a certain degree amends BFAR Circular 252</p>
Rule 33.1 Importation, Construction of New Fishing Vessels and Gears and Conversion of other vessels	Revise FAO No. 198 s. 2000	NMFDC FRQD CFD		<p>FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018</p>	<p>FAO 198-1 has been approved.</p>
Rule 38.5 Reportorial Requirements	Develop guidelines for a municipal Catch Documentation System (CDS) in coordination with LGUs	FRQD NMFD CFD FRMD	Regional Counter-parts	<p>FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018</p>	<p>FAO 198-1 has been approved. Also, user training of the Philippine Electronic Catch Documentation and Traceability System has been conducted on February 4 and 6-8, 2019 East Asia Royale Hotel, General Santos City</p>
Rule 40.2 Assignment of Radio Frequency	Assignment of Radio Frequency in the area of operation by fishing vessels*			<p>FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018</p>	<p>FAO 198-1 has been approved.</p>

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Rule 43.1 Operation of Radio Communication Facilities Onboard Fishing Vessels	Issue the appropriate regulation in coordination with NTC on the qualifications of Fishing Vessel Radio Operator	FRQD NMFDC FRPLES-QRT		FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018	
					FAO 198-1 has been approved.
Rule 86.2 Regulating Fishing in Municipal Waters	Formulate rules, in coordination with the LGUs and stakeholders, governing the capture of fish, including that for live fish trade in municipal waters, to ensure that they are caught using legal, sustainable and proper fishing methods as a prerequisite for the grant of license or permit by the LGU	CFD FRQD NFRDI FHIU FRMD	Regional Counter-parts	CFD - Conducted three (3) Stakeholders' Consultation on Rule 86.2 (Regulating Fishing in Municipal Waters) 1) September 12, 2017 (Cagayan De Oro City) 2) October 18, 2017 (Davao City) 3) November 9, 2017 (Cebu City) 4) November 29, 2017 (Iloilo City) 5) 1st sem CY 2018 (Luzon Cluster) Last 2 remaining clusters for Luzon scheduled this April 2018 (to be conducted in Batangas and Region 1)	
				NFRDI - CFD spearheading the consultations, with NFRDI providing technical support and science based information gathered from the NSAP.	Process in place in FAO 263 on the Establishment of Fisheries Management Areas for the Conservation and Management of Fisheries in the Philippines
Rule 102.4 Transplanted Captive-Bred species	In consultation with stakeholders, promulgate rules and regulations to implement Sec. 102(c)	Aqua Division FRQD FHIU All National Centers, except NMFDC and NSTDC	Regional Counter-part	NIFTC - Briefing/orientation on the impact of the transplantation of captive-bred species to the ecosystem & biodiversity conservation was conducted in coordination with the stakeholders and regional counterparts.	
				AQD - Linked to Section 10 "Introduction of Foreign Aquatic Species, since Rule 102.4, as the two items are to be analyzed using a risk assessment framework and quarantine measures. (FRQD)	
Rule 105.1 Importation or exportation of fish or fishery species	Promulgate a regulation identifying the species that are not allowed for export or importation	FRQD NFRDI FHMQAS OSEDC	Regional Counter-part	NFRDI - currently engaged with FRLD on updating the Philippine Aquatic Red List.	
Rule 116.1 Fisheries Observer Coverage	Determine the successive schedules for the vessels not yet covered by the above schedules in consultation with stakeholders	NMFDC CFD		NMFDC - Conducted 5 Public Consultations covering Regions 4-A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and ARMM for the draft FAO for Fisheries Observer coverage. Remaining Regions are also scheduled for public consultation on the 2ND Quarter of 2018.	FAO 261 on Fisheries Observer Program has been approved
				CFD - FAO on Fisheries Observer Coverage shall have its last remaining consultations for Regions 1, 2, 3, 4b and NCR this CY 2018	
Rule 119.2 Implementation of the Vessel Monitoring Measures	Determine the appropriate VMM technology and the corresponding schedule to cover the vessels not included in the above schedule upon consultation with stakeholders	EIMC NMFDC CFD FLERS LEG	Regional Counter-part	NMFDC - Conducted 5 Public Consultations covering Regions 4-A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and ARMM for the draft FAO for VMM. Remaining Regions are also scheduled for public consultation on the 2nd quarter of 2018. CFD - FAO on Vessel Monitoring Measures shall have its last remaining consultations for Regions 1, 2, 3, 4b and NCR this CY 2018	FAO 260 on Vessel Monitoring Measures has been approved

Narrative Reports

Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Rule 142.1 Fisheries Management Fund	Coordinate with the DBM in the implementation of this section	FPED Finance			
Rule 157.5 Delineation of municipal waters	The Department through DBM shall allocate sufficient funds for these purposes (delineation of municipal waters and mapping of navigational lanes)				
Rule 164.1 Appropriation	The DA-BFAR, in coordination with the DBM shall propose the necessary funds in its budget in the GAA to implement Sections 79 (NFARMC, IFARMC, M/C FARMC Funds); Sec 143 (Municipal Fisheries Grant Fund); Sec 144 (Fishery Loan Guarantee Fund); Sec 145 (Fishing Vessels Development Fund); Sec. 146 (Special Fisheries Science and Appropfishtech Fund) and Sec 147 (Aquaculture Investment Fund)				Draft FAO on Delineation of Municipal Waters with Offshore Islands underway.
Rule 154.1 National Fisheries Extension Program (NFEP)	Develop and implement NFEP in coordination with concerned agencies	FIDSSD CFD Aqua Division PHTD FRMD IFCU All National Centers	Regional Training Divisions	<p>AqD - FPHTD-CO continuing conducts capability building for Post-harvest regional focal persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training related to aquaculture have been specified and discussed among BFAR Regional Production Division Chief during series of consultation-workshops - Issued memo requesting BFAR Regional Offices to submit specifics of their respective aquaculture related trainings, in aide of M & E (BFAR Regional Office No. 1 and 3, complied to date) <p>NIFTC - Develop and implement the containment of knifefish infestation in Laguna de Bay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement the National Inland Fisheries Enhancement Program (NIFEP)/ BASIL Program 	
Rule 44.1 Use of Superlight or Fishing Light Attractor	Determine the appropriate limits for superlights and fishing light attractors Assist the LGUs in regulating the use of superlights*	NMFDC CFD NFRDI	Regional counter parts	<p>CFD - Data collection by fisheries observers in commercial fishing areas in Palawan and Zamboanga waters to monitor the use of superlight and other light attractors including catch, production data and other fishing information to support the proposed policy on light fishing. Presentation of Study on Superlights and Other Fishing Light Attractors to the Stakeholders</p> <p>Conducted (2) Stakeholders Consultation on the Proposed Regulation on the Use of Superlights and other Light Attractors in Commercial Fishing Iloilo 27-29/01/2017 (Zamboanga City)</p>	
Rule 48.1 Incentive/Disincentive System	Establish a Disincentive system in coordination with the DENR, including but not limited to, fines and penalties for pollutants and effluents traceable to the government-leased and privately-owned fishpond and a system of incentives or awards for compliance with environmental regulations	Aqua Division FHMQAS FRMD FRQD All NCs except NMFDC		<p>NFLD - Official samples taken from farms for lab analysis (disease diagnosis, water quality, and residue analysis) are shouldered by BFAR. Farm registration include inspection, monitoring and certification</p> <p>AQD - Under preparation, per TOR of Aquaculture Development Specialist" BFAR-UN FAO project "Supporting Aquaculture Resources Mapping and Development Planning Through ICT-based Solutions" (TCPF 3606)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expected date of completion August, 2018. - See other BFAR units involved 	
Rule 110.1 Gathering and Marketing of Shellfishes and other Aquatic Species	Promulgate regulation identifying the heavily-traded species covered by this section and impose the corresponding measures following the process stated in Rule 65.2	FRMD FRQD NFRDI CFD NIFTC		<p>NFRDI - Regular monitoring of the occurrence of HABs in different coastal areas nationwide to safeguard the public consumers against negative health impacts of HABs.</p>	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

* Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Rule 58.1 Comprehensive Post-Harvest and Ancillary Industries Plan(CPHAIIP)	DA-PFDA and DA-BFAR to prepare and complete the CPHAIIP in consultation with concerned agencies and the private sector	PHTD CFD FIDSD FPED		PHTD - Draft already consolidated by planning after the 3 series of workshops	Comprehensive Post-Harvest, Marketing, and Ancillary Industries Plan 2018-2022 was approved last year
No period indicated					
Sec 11. List of Rare, Endangered and Threatened Aquatic Species	Update list of Rare, Endangered and Threatened Aquatic Species	FRQD NFRDI FRMD		NFRDI - currently engaged with FRLD on updating the Philippine Aquatic Red List.	
Rule 22. Demarcated Fishery Rights	Identify municipal waters suitable for mariculture operations and establish the linear boundaries of the area to be demarcated	AqD NMC FRMD FLERS-LEG	Regional Counter-parts	<p>NMC - Demarcated 6 new Mariculture sites thru actual technical and environmental survey, and delineation of carrying capacity as per request of LGU's: Samal Mariculture Park, DN; San Isidro Mariculture Park, DO; Sta. Cruz MP, DS; Siocon, Zamboanga Del Norte, Nasipit, Agusan Norte, and Alabel, Sarangani Province.</p> <p>AqD - There are only 67 mariculture zones established (covering 34, 806 hectares) to date, out of the entire coastal municipalities nation-wide. - Mariculture operations may not be suitable in ALL coastal municipalities - This Rule must be interpreted in a wider context to include Fishery</p>	
Rule 29.1 Regulation for Fishing Gear Registration and Licensing	Review and revise FAO No. 198 s. 2000	FRQD CFD		FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018	
Rule 38.2 Reportorial Requirements	Summary of catch documentation records transmitted manually on a quarterly basis to BFAR	FRQD FRMD FPED		FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018	
Rule 38.4 Reportorial Requirements	Publication of production data from commercial fishing shall be based on the aggregate data by species and by type of fisheries	NFRDI-NSAP FRQD FIMC CFD		FRLD - This is already included in the proposed FAO 198-1 which is scheduled to be presented at the NFARMC on March 26, 2018	
Rule 40.1 Demarcation of Fishing Areas	In coordination with NAMRIA and to produce a map of the PH waters with each FA designated with number code and color code	FRQD CFD FRMD		<p>CFD - Coordination with NAMRIA on the finalization of the technical description of the initially identified 16 Fisheries Management Areas as a result of previous workshop and consultation in Davao, Cebu and Tagaytay in CY 2016</p> <p>FRLD - Fisheries management areas have already been initially demarcated (please consult with Sir Raffy of CFD).</p>	
Rule 42.1 Port State Measures	Establishment of Port State Measures consistent with existing international agreements and protocols	FRQD CFD		FRLD - Draft Joint Administrative Order is already in place for consultation with stakeholders.	Draft Executive Order for the Implementation of the 2009 PSMA now with the Office of the President
Rule 49.2 AUU Fishponds	Identification of all AUU fishponds	FRQD AqD FRQD FIMC		AqD - The mentioned items all involves mapping, which is the primary delivery specified under "Output No. 1 ICT based aquaculture resources data inventory and mapping system developed and piloted BFAR-UN FAO project "Supporting Aquaculture Resources Mapping and Development Planning Through ICT-based Solutions" (TCPF 3606) - GIS-based, web-enabled, with DRRM features inventory system - Beta testing (Feb 20-23, 2018, Butuan City)	
Rule 51.1 Carrying Capacities of Lakes	Determine the carrying capacity of lakes in coordination with relevant research institutions as guidance for LGUs in delimiting the suitable water surface areas for aquaculture purposes	NIFTC Aqua Division NIFTDC	Regional counter parts	NIFTC - The activity is incorporated in the NIPEP since the project was implemented in 2015, carrying capacity was determined through natural productivity of inland waters through quantitative measurements of plankton present in coordination with regional project counterparts & LGUs.	

Narrative Reports

Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Sec. 52 Pearl Farms	Inventory of Pearl Farms Prepare a model Municipal Fisheries Ordinance as basis for issuance of permits for the operation of pearl farms	AqD	Regional counter parts	<p>AQD - The mentioned items all involves mapping, which is the primary delivery specified under "Output No. 1 ICT based aquaculture resources data inventory and mapping system developed and piloted BFAR-UN FAO project "Supporting Aquaculture Resources Mapping and Development Planning Through ICT-based Solutions" (TCPF 3606)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GIS-based, web-enabled, with DRRM features inventory system - Beta testing (Feb 20-23, 2018, Butuan City) - Pilot-testing (March 19-23, 2018, Catanduanes Prov) - Integration workshop April 24, 2018 - Training of Trainors and Launching September 2018 - See other BFAR units involved 	
Rule 54.1 Insurance for fishponds, etc.	Coordinate with PCIC to include for insurance coverage fish pens, fish cages, seaweed farms, other aquaculture projects and non-agriculture assets such as ice plants, cold storage and other post-harvest facilities	AqD FIDSSD PHTD All National Centers		<p>NMC - The PCIC Regional office XI had already conducted orientation to fisheries stakeholders on the coverage including the amount and items to be insured last 2017 held at BFAR NMC Panabo</p> <p>AQD - For review and update of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</p> <p>NIFTC - No activity/coordination was conducted awaiting for a prospective clients to avail the program.</p>	
Rule 56.1. Registration of Fish Hatcheries, Private Fishponds, etc.				NFFTC - Registration of Fish Hatcheries Private fishpond is now included in the Tilapia Action Plan - 2018-2022 for future implementation	
Rule 57.1 Registration of Fish Hatcheries, Private Fishponds, etc	Issue regulations on the operation of fish hatcheries, fish breeding facilities and private fishponds in coordination with the LGUs and in accordance with Sec 65.2 of the Code and Sec 16(b) OF RA 10611 or the Food Safety Act of 2013	FIMC AqD FIMQAS All National Centers except NMFDCC		<p>AQD - On-going pilot testing of ICT-based application and mapping of aquaculture farm in Butuan City and Catanduanes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The mentioned items all involves mapping, which is the primary delivery specified under "Output No. 1 ICT based aquaculture resources data inventory and mapping system developed and piloted BFAR-UN FAO project "Supporting Aquaculture Resources Mapping and Development Planning Through ICT-based Solutions" (TCPF 3606) - GIS-based, web-enabled, with DRRM features inventory system - Beta testing (Feb 20-23, 2018, Butuan City) <p>NFLD - 494 registered aquaculture farms for the Residue Monitoring Program Registration is based on GAQP. Registered farms in Residue Monitoring Programs are eligible to supply raw materials to accredited establishment. Registered farms are monitored and sampled for disease surveillance and residues.</p>	
Sec 60 Registration and Licensing of all Post-Harvest Facilities	Establish minimum standards for PH facilities using as reference, among others, the HACCP-based system Coordinate with LGUs in the implementation of the standards	PHTD NFRDI FIU FIMC	Regional counter parts	<p>PHTD - BFAR is currently a member Technical working group with Agricultural and Fisheries Mechanisation and Engineering Resource Network (AFMech ERN) working on the implementation the online registration system for Post Harvest facilities. Registered farms are monitored and sampled for disease surveillance and residues.</p> <p>Initial Implementation of online registration system for post-harvest facilities</p>	

Provision/ Particulars	Activity	Key Division/Units Concerned		Updates	As of July 1, 2019
		CO	RFOs/PFOs		
Rule 62.1 Trade Related Measures	DA-BFAR, DA-BAFS and NFRDI shall collaborate in the establishment, development and updating of relevant standards for fish and fishery products	PHTD FLERS FRQD FIDSSD FIU		<p>PHTD - 23 Published Philippine National Standards (PNS) for fish and fishery products</p> <p>On-going PNS development for other fish and fishery products (i.e scallops and siganids)</p> <p>Amendments of existing PNS (i.e Tilapia and Milkfish)</p>	

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 10659: An Act Promoting and Supporting the Competitiveness of the Sugarcane Industry and for Other Purposes

S 2400/H 4633, Approved on March 27, 2015

SYNOPSIS

Under this law, the government will provide a Php 2 billion investment to the industry, of which 15 percent will be allocated to block farm grants, 15 percent to research and development, 15 percent to socialized credits, 5 percent to scholarship grants, and the remaining 50 percent will be devoted to infrastructure development.

UPDATE

The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) through Undersecretary Waldo R. Carpio of the Department of Agriculture (DA) informed the Senate of the following milestones in the implementation of this law and its IRR:

Block farming program

163 block farms were accredited from 2016 to 2018 with a total area of 6,693 hectares.

Table 2: Block farms accredited from 2016-2018

	GAA 2016			GAA 2017			GAA 2018		
	Visayas	Luzon & Mindanao	Total	Visayas	Luzon & Mindanao	Total	Visayas	Luzon & Mindanao	Total
Num of block farms accredited	37	25	62	35	21	56	25	20	45
Num of block farms validated	37	25	62	35	21	56	25	20	45
Num of beneficiaries	984	780	1,805	1,209	520	1,729	728	451	1,180
Area involved	1,266.34	1,346.84	2,722.24	1,260.87	944.61	2,205.48	805.49	960.61	1,766.10

Table 3: Status of infrastructure projects (as of May 31, 2019)

Appropriation (PhP)	GAA		
	2016	2017	2018*
	917.4 M	547.0 M	750.0 M
Pre-implementation			2
Awarded but not yet started			0.847
Construction completed	33	54.59	29
Construction completed but sub-standard or requires repairs	3	3.56	21.040
Construction ongoing	5	10.3	9
Not concreted	1	1.61	8.901
Not implemented/ funds returned to DBM	1	2.12	31
Total	43	72.18	40.58
	39	30.642	47.645

* Fund for 2018 projects transferred to DPWH dated October 20, 2018 amounting to PhP 112.5 M representing mobilization fee (15% of PhP 750 M)

Infrastructure program

SRA reported that based on the agency's infrastructure roadmap, "100 percent was accomplished in 2016". For 2017 and 2018, accomplishments were significantly below target due to "decreased funding for infrastructure".

SRA noted that the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act Inter-Agency Committee reported to Congress that under RA 10963, PhP 35.5 billion was collected from the sugar-sweetened beverage excise tax. SRA said that programs under RA 10659, especially infrastructure projects, should have a share of these revenues pursuant to provisions of RA 10963 (Section 82).

Table 4: Status of loan applications (as of May 31, 2019)

Region	Loan applications endorsed to LBP			LBP Approved Loans		LBP Loan Releases		
	Num of farmers	Ha.	Loan Amount	Num of farmers	Approved loan amount	Num of farmers	Ha.	Amount
Luzon	147	346.59	27,080,936.64	96	19,775,580.13	38	80.16	5,297,900.00
Visayas	1,115	1,808.65	157,900,109.59	389	44,133,756.00	227	316.94	16,007,001.00
Mindanao	79	203.67	22,874,640.43	29	7,455,705.38	22	54.48	3,137,981.18
TOTAL	1,341	2,358.91	207,855,686.66	514	71,365,041.51	287	451.58	24,442,882.18

Socialized credit program

Out of the PhP 207.9 million worth of loans endorsed to the Landbank of the Philippines (Landbank/LBP), PhP 71.3 million was approved, of which PhP 24.4 million have been released as of May 31, 2019.

Table 5: Status of scholarship program

Mill District	SRA	CHED	TOTAL	TESDA
San Carlos		20	20	31
Victorias	1	18	19	49
Tolong + Mabinay + Bayawan		14	14	60
Daconcogon-Sonedco	3	68	71	45
Sagay-Danao		29	29	26
Ma-ao		14	14	99
Lopez	3	8	11	24
La Carlota	1	22	23	115
Isabela		1	1	
HPCO	1	10	11	
Bogo-Medellin + Cebu		19	19	15
Biscom	3	26	29	165
Bais-Ursumco	1	3	4	
Bac-Murcia	3	7	10	70
Batangas-Don Pedro + Cavite + QC	7	33	40	144
Bukidnon	2	94	96	245
Capiz, Iloilo, Panay		21	21	154
Carsumco + Isabela, Cagayan	2	53	55	100
Cotabato	3	35	38	
Davao	1	41	42	325
Iloilo, Panay	3	36	39	
Ormoc-Hideco	1	21	22	85
Pampanga	13	23	36	80
Pensumil + Bicol	4	23	27	67
Tarlac	5	20	25	149
Negros Oriental				68
TOTAL	57	659	716	2,116

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Table 6: Scholarship inventory (as of June 30, 2019)

On-going scholars	536
Graduates	160
On-hold	3
Discrepancy (CHED)	26
Disqualified (SRA and CHED)	50
For board approval	136
Total	911

Scholarship program

From 2016-2018, there were 716 undergraduate and postgraduate scholars funded by Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and SRA through this law, while 2,116 scholars were trained by Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

Research, Development and Extension (RDE)

There were 37 RDE projects funded under this law. They were categorized into variety improvement, propagation of high-yielding varieties, soil fertility improvement, irrigation, capacity building, farm mechanization, supply value chain analysis, technology transfer, harmonization of laboratories and study on high-fructose corn syrup.

These projects include the following:

- Improving sugarcane varieties through biotechnology and nuclear radiation (with DOST-PNRI);
- Marker-assisted breeding project (LGAREC);
- Assessment of drought-resistant and water logging-tolerant sugarcane varieties (LGAREC, LAREC, UPLB); and
- Identifying emerging and re-emerging diseases of sugarcane (UPLB).

Issues and concerns

Most of the issues encountered by SRA in the implementation of this law involved the scholarship program.

Table 7: SRA response to scholarship program issues

Issue	SRA Response
Disapproval of thesis grant for non-sugar related topics	There is no clear cut-off date for the implementation of the "sugar-related thesis only" policy. SRA TWG will meet with CHED to define the effectivity of a revised policy. If approved, the new policy will be applied prospectively, thus entitling theses conducted prior to the approval of the new policy with the appropriate financial benefits.
Delay in release of stipend	SRA still waiting for release of budget
No stipend allocation for summer classes of MS scholars	Funding allocation is being reviewed to possibly accommodate one summer class
Establishing an award system	Under review
Lack of coordination between scholars, SUC and CHED resulting in delay in release of benefits	Scholars will (a) create social media group page for better information dissemination; (b) appoint a focal person; and (c) designate a bulletin board within the campus for posting scholarship updates
Opening of individual ATM account	Pending

Republic Act 10816: An Act Providing for the Development and Promotion of Farm Tourism in the Philippines

S 3002/H 5299, Approved on May 16, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to attract visitors and tourists to farm areas for production, educational and recreational purposes.

Incentives under the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010 may also apply to farm tourism activities, such as: exemption from the payment of duties on the importation of agricultural equipment, machinery and implements as provided under the amended Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act; identification by LGUs of local taxes that may be offered as incentives to organic input production and utilization; provision of preferential rates and special window to organic input producers and users at Landbank; subsidies for certification fees and other support services to facilitate organic certification; zero-rated value added tax on transactions involving the sales/purchase of bio-organic products, whether organic inputs or organic products; and income tax holiday for seven years, starting from the date of registration with the concerned investment promotion agency for organic food and organic input producers.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Benito C. Bengzon, Jr. of the Department of Tourism (DOT) reported to the Senate that an amended IRR of this law was signed by Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat. This document incorporated comments and inputs from 58 farm tourism stakeholders representing DOT and its regional offices, Farm Tourism Development Working Group, regional farm tourism associations, DA, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and others.

The final draft of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan (FTSAP) was revised to cover investment promotion and financing; market research and information; accreditation of farm tourism camps; market promotion and development; agriculture and fishery research; development and extension; institutional and human resource development, and infrastructure support. The plan was scheduled to be finalized and rolled-out in July 2019.

Meanwhile, Usec. Bengzon said that DOT regional offices are holding strategic planning workshops with farm tourism stakeholders to support the formulation of Regional FTSAPs covering Regions II, III, IV-A, IV-B, VII, IX, X, XII and CAR. The activities are carried out thru funding from the DOT Central Office. The Regional FTSAPs are set to be completed in August 2019. Advocacy on farm tourism thru Agribusiness Support for Promotion and Investment in Regional Exposition (ASPIRE) and capacity building trainings on Good Agricultural Practices for farmers, farm operators and local communities are being implemented in collaboration with the DA.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Among the various promotional events conducted were the “Kain Na!” Food and Travel Festival, Asian Culinary Exchange, and the Manila Coffee Festival. As of July 15, 2019, DOT has carried out some 125 projects/activities to implement this law.

Issues and recommendations

DOT noted that farmers are generally risk-averse in availing bank loans. Offering a farmer-friendly loan package may address the issue of lack of capital for farm tourism.

DOT also highlighted limitations in terms of capital requirements, tourism-oriented manpower, marketing capabilities, and facilities to service farm tourism sites.

Moving forward, DOT must partner with Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and sub-national support organizations to ensure that farm tourism is enshrined in the LGU’s local development plan and investment plan on ease of doing business. Moreover, DOT will continue to provide capacity-building activities for small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, including new farm tourism site operators.

Republic Act 10817: An Act Instituting the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Program, Creating for the Purpose the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Board, and for Other Purposes

S 2831/H 6347, Approved on May 16, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to develop and promote the Halal industry and increase the exports of Halal products. It establishes the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Program and the Halal Board.

UPDATE

DTI through Undersecretary Abdulgani M. Macatoman and Assistant Secretary Mary Jean T. Pacheco reported to the Senate that the full implementation of the law will commence in August 2019. DTI and the Halal Board carried out the following activities in preparation for the law’s full implementation:

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam on Halal Cooperation

This MoU was a key outcome of the State visit of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah in Manila in April 2017.

The first Joint Committee (JC) meeting between the two countries was held in August 2018 in Brunei Darussalam. This meeting resulted in the finalization of the structure of the JC, as well as the terms of reference that will guide the initiatives of the two parties moving forward. The second JC

meeting was held on July 4, 2019 in Clark, Pampanga while the 2nd Philippine Halal Conference was taking place (July 2 to 4, 2019).

2. Strategic Framework or Roadmap (2018-2022) for Halal in the Philippines/1st Philippine Halal Conference

The Halal Board approved the roadmap on November 8, 2017, with the strategic goal of making the Philippines “a respectable player in the global Halal ecosystem”.

The roadmap was launched in May 2018 in Davao City during the 1st Philippine National Halal Conference. An assembly of Muslim religious leaders (Ulama) was also held during this conference to clarify the religious aspects of Halal certification, among other issues.

3. Membership to the International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF)

IHAF is an independent, non-government network of accreditation bodies that seeks to build a “solid foundation” for the industry and harmonize accreditation practices. Its ultimate goal is to facilitate Halal trade worldwide. The Philippines is represented by the Philippine Accreditation Bureau (PAB), an office under DTI.

4. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PAB and the Emirates Standardization and Metrology Authority (ESMA) of the United Arab Emirates

ESMA recognition of PAB paves the way for the export of Philippine Halal products to UAE. The MoU was first signed in Dubai on February 27, 2018, and then in Manila in July 2018 during the visit of ESMA officials.

5. Philippine National Halal Certification Scheme

This document resulted from an extensive review of existing standards developed for Halal from local and international standards-setting authorities. It outlines the general guidelines to be followed by Halal certification bodies accredited by PAB.

6. Official Halal Logo

The official Philippine Halal logo to be used for product labeling was approved in March 2019. The logo is mandatory for exports and optional for the domestic market.

7. 2nd Philippine National Halal Conference

This event was held on July 2 to 4, 2019 in Clark, Pampanga with the theme “Leveraging on Unified Opportunities for Inclusive Growth in the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion.” More than 400 local and international players in the global Halal industry participated in the conference. It also served as a venue to prepare Region 3 stakeholders for the Southeast Asian Games to be held in Clark in November 2019, where about half of participants, spectators and guests are expected to come from Muslim countries.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Moreover, this conference also featured the following side-events:

- Nationwide halal engagement and cascading of Philippine Halal programs through the DTI Negosyo Centers scattered across the country;
- Assembly of respected Muslim scholars in the Philippines; and
- Exhibition of companies with Halal-certified products and B2B meetings.

Issues and Concerns

DTI noted that global Muslim markets are imposing new, stricter Halal regulations resulting in difficulties for some local Halal exporters, with some products being rejected and returned. Standards of local Halal certifying bodies need to be aligned with the shifts in the global Halal regulatory landscape.

Meanwhile, outlined below is the response of the Halal Board to some of the concerns of local Halal certifying bodies:

1. Halal certification as purely a religious and voluntary function

The Halal Board clarified that Halal certification is not purely religious in nature “as it also serves to protect the interests of consumers against hazards to health and safety, and against deceptive, unfair and unconscionable sales acts and practices.”

Moreover, the Halal Board said that the law does not grant any government body the power to issue Halal certification – that role is reserved for accredited Halal certifying bodies. RA 10817 only gives PAB the authority to formulate accreditation policies, and approve or deny accreditation. And accreditation does not remove the sanctity of Halal certification – in fact, it adds value by attesting to the impartiality, competence, integrity and consistency of certification services, which ultimately benefits consumers. DTI clarified that a Supreme Court decision (G.R. No. 153888. July 9, 2003), which ruled Halal certification as a “purely religious function”, implies that government cannot perform Halal accreditation and certification at the same time since it violates the separation of church and state, and gives rise to conflict of interest.

2. Zero-sum game in favor of foreign Halal certifying bodies

The Halal Board noted that the law seeks to strengthen trade for exports, and as a result, local accreditation bodies and producers must adhere to the standards set by trading partners. Meanwhile, foreign businesses conducting business in the Philippines must adhere to standards set by local laws, rules and regulations. DTI noted that the government is helping local Halal certifying bodies by conducting capacity-building activities.

3. Declaration of exported goods as Halal

According to news reports, DTI has set an annual Halal export growth rate of 6 to 8 percent. But measuring this could be difficult as “we don't have in our export declarations the particular note that this product is indeed halal...but what we can assume is that we have indicative halal products

because they are being sent to Muslim countries", said Assistant Director Anthony Rivera of DTI Export Marketing Bureau (www.rappler.com/business/227934-dti-seeks-grow-halal-trade).

Republic Act 10969: An Act Providing Free Irrigation Service, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 3601, as Amended, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes

S 1465/H 5670, Approved on February 2, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This act declares that all farmers with landholding of eight hectares and below are exempted from paying irrigation service fees for water derived from National Irrigation Systems and Communal Irrigation Systems that were, or are to be funded, constructed, maintained and administered by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

NIA is mandated to implement this law in consultation with concerned government agencies, farmers, irrigators associations, farmers' cooperatives, and other stakeholders.

UPDATE

NIA Deputy Administrator C'zar M. Sulaik outlined the following issues and concerns on the implementation of this law:

Difficulty in establishing the registry of landowners, farmers and other irrigation water users

NIA field offices encountered the "hesitance" of some landowners and farmers in submitting the proof of ownership or voluntary declaration of total landholdings owned by them. The registry is supposed to show the extent or size of landholding, and is the basis for determining those who are exempt from paying the irrigation service fee.

Inadequate amount of subsidy or fund support received by irrigators associations (IAs) for the partial or full operation and maintenance (O&M) of irrigation systems

Through the irrigation management transfer (IMT) program, secondary canals and facilities of national irrigation systems (i.e. those with service area of at least 1,000 ha) are turned over by NIA to IAs. The program also transfers O&M of communal irrigation systems (i.e. those with service area below 1,000 ha) to IAs. However, NIA noted that according to IAs, the current rates of PhP 150 per hectare per cropping season and PhP 1,750 per canal section as O&M subsidy are not enough considering the high cost of wages and materials.

Slow process of condonation and writing off of past due accounts or unpaid irrigation service fees, and IA loans before RA 10969

Documents submitted by landowners and farmers applying for condonation and writing off of their past due obligations were found to be incomplete or deficient. As a result, their applications could not be acted upon by NIA.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Recommendations

The NIA official identified the following recommendations for future actions:

- Recognition of notarized extra-judicial partition of landholdings, affidavits and other documents duly verified as "proofs of ownership" of landholdings. According to NIA, this will expedite the establishment of the registry and facilitate the process of condonation and past due accounts;
- Review of current IA O&M subsidy; and
- Tapping the National Confederation of Irrigators Associations for a "massive information dissemination" of the law and its IRR, as well as to provide assistance to their members on the submission of required documents, especially those related to the establishment of the registry.

Republic Act 11203: An Act Liberalizing the Importation, Exportation and Trading of Rice, Lifting for the Purpose the Quantitative Import Restriction on Rice and for Other Purposes

S 1998/H 7735, Approved on February 14, 2019

SYNOPSIS

The law mandates the creation of a PhP 10 billion fund called the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) to be derived from the tariffs imposed on rice importation. It will be set aside for local farmers yearly.

Aside from removing the regulatory powers of the National Food Authority (NFA) over the import and export of rice, RA 11203 also repealed NFA functions over the domestic rice industry such as licensing and registration of persons and entities engaged in the grains business, collection of regulatory fees, issuance of negotiable warehouse receipts, warehouse inspection, authority to seize hoarded stocks, and enforcing rules and regulations in the grains business.

UPDATE

The DA through Undersecretary Waldo R. Carpio informed the Senate of the following milestones in the implementation of this law and its IRR:

A. National Food Authority

1. Transition from previous trading regime to the new regime

- NFA released Memo Nos. AO-2019-03-003 and AO-2K19-03-002 dated March 4, 2019 setting the guidelines on how to proceed from the previous rice trading regime to the new regime.

2. NFA's restructuring or reorganization plan

- On May 22, 2019, NFA submitted to the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG) its restructuring plan for their review and recommendation;
- On May 29, 2019, GCG endorsed to the Office of the President two

versions of the compensation package for affected NFA personnel – 1.5 months salary for every year of service, or 2 months salary for every year of service;

- The NFA TWG and GCG held an initial meeting on June 7, 2019 regarding NFA's restructuring plan. GCG's initial recommendation involved the merging of Buffer Stocking Management and Technical Services Department into one department called Operations Coordination Department. GCG also recommended the merging of two GSD divisions into one, two HRMD divisions into one, and four Finance divisions into two. GCG did not consider the proposed salary upgrade of Regional Directors, Provincial Managers, Department Managers and Division Chiefs. It also did not have a policy on staff considered co-terminus with the incumbent. The change management team submitted additional justifications supporting their restructuring plan to the GCG the following day;
- On June 13-14, 2019, NFA invited GCG representatives to an ocular inspection of its operations in Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac. As a result, GCG endorsed the retention of NFA regional offices. It also kept its recommendation of merging some departments in the central office, despite strong reservations from NFA. On June 18, 2019, the NFA TWG reported to the NFA Council the revised proposal of GCG;
- During the third meeting between NFA TWG and GCG on June 25, 2019, GCG instructed NFA to submit justifications on the retention of certain positions and offices. This was submitted to GCG on June 28, 2019.

3. Transfer of Food Development Center (FDC) from NFA to DA

- On May 21, 2019, FDC received an advance copy of a DA memo requesting Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), PhilMech, Philrice and FDC to submit the following documents for harmonization of DA proposals:
 - Updated agency proposal as of May 21, 2019;
 - Narrative for the proposal, including work to be done for the newly created positions;
 - Plan for phasing-in of additional staff complement;
- On May 24, 2019, NFA submitted to DA Policy Research Service (PRS) the latest version of its proposed organizational modification plan (OMP) with 77 filled-up positions, down from the 133 originally proposed manpower complement in the original draft. On May 31, 2019, it also submitted the "Draft matrix of functions and description of functions of FDC", including the list of equipment;
- On June 5, 2019, FDC submitted to PRS its comments on the harmonized organization plan.

4. Transfer of commercial rice stocks survey (CRSS) from NFA to PSA

- NFA has already submitted to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) "all necessary inputs" to the CRSS such as the Manual of Operations, data, sample respondents and list of hired enumerators;
- A coordination meeting between NFA and PSA was scheduled in July 2019 to discuss the mechanics, operations, existing practices and other concerns on the implementation of CRSS. This is to assist PSA in the formulation of revised guidelines and methodology on CRSS to ensure alignment with PSA standards. The meeting was also called to gather

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

inputs in the preparation of an action plan for the transition stage of the turnover of CRSS to PSA.

5. Transfer of food safety function from NFA to BPI

- NFA extended technical assistance to BPI by holding a training on physical grain quality test, moisture content determination, and sampling of palay and other grains on July 8-12, 2019;
- The draft “Rules and Regulations for Food Safety on Plant Food for Domestic Consumption” is still being finalized by BPI in consultation with NFA.

6. Study on rules, regulations and procedures on the acquisition, maintenance and distribution of buffer stocks

- NFA comments on the proposed terms of reference for the study were submitted to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) on June 27, 2019;
- Pending the results and adoption by the NFA Council of the findings and recommendations of the study, the NFA is required to maintain a rice inventory equivalent to 15-30 days of national rice consumption, except to make releases in response to emergencies, disaster relief, or when required to dispose stocks as necessary. NFA said that its inventory as of June 30, 2019 is 523,020 MT, which is good for an estimated 16.05 days. Total palay procurement is 232,486 MT which is 115.04 percent of target. NFA also continued its rice distribution, which totaled 440,741 MT as of June 30, 2019 equivalent to 84 percent of target.

7. Joint DA-Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) task force on harmonizing and cross matching the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) (dubbed “Listahan”)

- NFA has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DSWD on file sharing of the Listahan II database maintained by DSWD. NFA uses this database to cross match with its existing farmers' database. To optimize operations, NFA is recommending the harmonization of RSBSA to its farmers' database as well.

B. Bureau of Plant Industry

1. Pest risk analysis

BPI conducts pest risk analysis to evaluate biological or other scientific and economic evidence to determine whether an organism is a pest, whether it should be regulated, and the measures that should be taken. The agency noted that rice imports from the following countries are currently allowed: Thailand, Vietnam, China, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Japan, Taiwan, Italy and Spain.

2. Sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC)

BPI issues SPSIC to rice importers. It reported the following key statistics regarding the issuance of SPSIC:

- Total number of registered importers (as of June 28, 2019): 484
- Total number of importers with SPSIC application: 190
- Total number of SPSICs issued (as of June 30, 2019): 1,518
- Total volume applied (as of June 30, 2019): 1,478,751.854 MT
- Actual volume arrived (as of June 28, 2019): 707,909.503 MT
- Total number of used SPSICs (as of June 28, 2019): 755

3. Other regulatory functions

National Plant Quarantine Services Division streamlined registration and renewal of registration requirements. It also conducted a consultation meeting with rice importers to discuss requirements on the application of SPSIC, as well as other issues and concerns governing rice importation.

The Plant Product Safety Services Division drafted guidelines on food safety requirements governing the importation of plant food. It reported to the Senate the following data:

- Total number of certificates issued for pesticide/residue analysis: 169
- Total number of certificates issued for heavy metals analysis: 93
- Total number of certificates issued for aflatoxin analysis: 73
- Total number of certificates issued for moisture content analysis: 126

4. Other activities

BPI held a dialogue with the Bureau of Customs on agricultural products classified as SGL/GL that should go through plant quarantine inspection. It also submitted a proposal to DBM on additional manpower, laboratories and equipment, among others.

Issues and concerns

1. Transfer of grain quality test and food safety functions

BPI said there should be defined policy and guidelines regarding the transfer of the grain quality test and food safety functions to BPI.

In response to the passage of the law, the agency is currently conducting grain quality test based on its knowledge and experience in physical purity for seed quality testing. As mentioned in the previous section on NFA activities, BPI also sought the assistance of NFA in training BPI personnel from the National Plant Quarantine Services Division, National Seed Quality Control Services (NSQCS), and Plant Product Services Division on grain quality tests. It was held on July 8-12, 2019.

Moreover, BPI informed the Senate that there are no existing guidelines on the funding source of grain quality tests. The agency conducts the tests even without the appropriate budget allocation by tapping into resources intended for seed quality determination. It noted that additional budget is necessary since it can “no longer stretch our resources when more seed samples for seed quality determination tests will be received under seed certification this CY 2019, when the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP) implementation has started.”

2. Manpower

Another issue is the lack of manpower to perform the grain quality tests and seed quality determination tests – “a perennial limitation” for BPI in the implementation of seed certification. Currently, field certification, sampling and tagging are performed by deputized seed inspectors from the local government units, who are not under the administrative supervision of BPI. The agency has proposed to DBM 139 regular positions consisting of agriculturists, chemists, laboratory technicians and laboratory aides to augment the existing 170 regular positions.

The additional manpower would enable BPI to handle the additional target of 500,000 bags to be approved for seed certification in the second half of 2019 for RCEP, which is on top of the annual target of 1,300,000 bags. The target for 2020 is an additional 1,000,000 bags. This target will be doubled when the 20 kg/bag packaging required by RCEP in the procurement of certified seeds is implemented instead of the current 40 kg/bag. With the increase in target and the volume of activities in seed certification, BPI said that seed inspectors should be regular employees of the agency. Additional manpower would also enable BPI to dedicate staff who will conduct physical analysis, which is a time consuming activity. It noted that it has received “many samples” since the IRR of this law was approved.

3. Upgrading of facilities and equipment

BPI underscored the need to upgrade or repair laboratory buildings, facilities and equipment to complement its request for additional manpower, as well as a service vehicle for mobilization and monitoring of accredited seed production areas, seed inventory and stocks.

C. Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (Philmech)

Philmech reported that it has set up a Program Management Office to handle the mechanization component of this law. Moreover, following a series of nationwide consultations, the implementation guidelines for the mechanization component were already drafted and presented to the Program Steering Committee. However, approval was deferred pending the determination of facility requirements per region, provinces and municipalities, among other concerns. Budgetary and manpower requirements for the implementation of the mechanization component, as well as for program management, have been submitted to DA and/or DBM.

A “soft launching” of the RCEF mechanization component was held on May 20-21, 2019 and was attended by representatives of regional field offices, local government units and farmer organizations.

The agency reported that it has not yet received funds for rice machineries and program implementation. Moreover, plantilla positions for the implementation of the program have not yet been approved by DBM.

D. Philippine Rice Research Institute (Philrice)

Philrice informed the Senate of the following milestones in implementing this law:

- Approval of the RCEF Seed Implementing Guidelines during the first meeting of the RCEF Program Steering Committee on June 18;
- Preparation and submission to DBM of the proposed organizational modification as required by law, including detailed budget proposal for 2019 and 2020 for program management, additional positions, and RCEF-Seed;
- Firming-up of coverage areas in target provinces and municipalities, including variety distribution based on the national and regional recommendations;
- Market scanning of the local seed industry, in consultation with the Government Procurement Policy Board and DA Legal Office, the results of which are being used as a guide in the seed acquisition plan and matching of seed supply and demand;
- Planning for higher seed class requirement and availability throughout program duration;
- Discussion with and granting of assistance to seed grower associations/cooperatives that could participate in the program as certified seed producers;
- Validation of the qualifications of seed grower associations/cooperatives based on their BPI-NSQCS accreditation and program eligibility criteria;
- Initial gathering of list of farmer organizations that are potential beneficiaries based on the database of the Cooperative Development Authority and the National Irrigation Administration;
- Consultation with industry stakeholders on the operationalization of implementing guidelines, especially on seed distribution;
- Commencement of baseline documentation of the provinces not included in the 2016 Rice-based Farm Household Survey, which shall serve as a basis for program monitoring and evaluation;
- Development of protocol for DNA fingerprinting under the Support to Seed Development Project; and
- Drafting of the technology demonstration protocol and messaging conference for the promotion component of RCEF-Seed.

Philrice, in the coming weeks, “will continue to cascade” the implementing guidelines to its partners in the DA regional field offices, local government units and farmer organizations pending the release of funds from DBM. It hopes to strengthen collaboration with these partners to ensure the law’s effective implementation on the ground.

E. Agricultural Training Institute (ATI)

ATI reported to the Senate that members of the TWG on Rice Extension Services Program (RES) was scheduled to convene in July 2019 to finalize the targets and workplan of the interventions.

Meanwhile, the “trainer’s training” for the rice specialist training course is being implemented by Philrice. The objective is to develop a new generation of rice specialists that will implement RCEP. Meanwhile, a “writeshop” to develop a harmonized training module on inbred rice production, farm mechanization and financial literacy is in the pipeline, as well as “harmonization” meetings with implementing agencies and other partners.

Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Republic Act 10846: An Act Enhancing the Resolution and Liquidation Framework for Banks, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 3591, as Amended, and Other Related Laws

S. No. 2976/H. No. 6020, Approved on May 23, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law amended the Charter of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC). It seeks to address the inconvenience caused to depositors by the absence of deposit records of closed banks, or by irregularities in the documentation and deposit record keeping of a closed bank. It also allows faster payment of deposit insurance claims and faster access to customers' locked funds.

UPDATE

PDIC President and CEO Roberto B. Tan reported to the Senate in 2018 the following issuances related to the implementation of this law:

As statutory receiver of closed banks:

- Master Liquidation Plan for Closed Banks (approved by PDIC Board on January 18, 2017). This document governs the conduct of liquidation by PDIC for closed banks. Copies are sent to regional trial courts where petitions for assistance in the liquidation of closed banks are filed/pending;
- Memorandum No. 2018-01 (approved by the PDIC Board on July 26, 2017 and published on February 18, 2018). It sets out procedures for the filing of claims by creditors against the assets of the closed bank with the receiver within 60 days from the date of publication of the notice of closure, in accordance with Section 16 (L) of the PDIC Charter; and
- Rules of procedure for Section 16 (B) of the PDIC Charter (pending). These rules shall set specific guidelines on the petition for assistance in the liquidation of a closed bank. Once finalized, the rules shall be submitted to the Supreme Court for consideration.

As deposit insurer/co-regulator of banks:

- Regulatory Issuance No. 2017-01 (approved by the PDIC Board on April 3, 2017). It governs the payment of regular assessment to PDIC by banks incorporated under Philippine law, including branches and agencies in the Philippines of foreign banks; and
- Bank Risk Monitoring and Mitigation Framework (approved by the PDIC Board on October 5, 2016). It sets out PDIC's role in supervising banks to complement the functions of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). This framework focuses on banks deemed "high risk" to PDIC and the depositing public. It outlines the interaction of offsite monitoring, onsite examination, enforcement action, and bank resolution to protect depositors and minimize losses to the Deposit Insurance Fund. Mr. Tan noted that this framework enhanced PDIC's authority and functions with respect to:
 - Exchange of information with BSP on banks under Prompt Corrective Action and those deemed high risk, consistent with Section 11 (b) of the PDIC Charter;

- Capacity to impose such enforcement action as termination of the insured status of banks which do not comply with cease and desist order in relation to unsafe and/or unsound deposit practices provided under Section 8 (c) of the PDIC Charter; and
- Capacity to commence resolution activity on a failed bank classified under prompt corrective action (PCA) if it requests in writing to be placed under resolution, and it has a third-party investor with a viable business plan, consistent with Section 11 (a) of the PDIC Charter.

Other updates

Mr. Tan informed that PDIC and BSP reviewed the existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on information exchange and sharing to reflect the latest regulatory and industry environment. This document seeks to establish an overall framework by which the two agencies shall share relevant bank information/data while respecting data privacy. It also seeks to enhance the effectiveness of their respective operations, and strengthen their cooperation in achieving their mandates. Moreover, PDIC also revisited the MOA with BSP on the standardized procedures in the conduct of examination of banks. This MOA was previously amended on 27 November 2013.

Recommendations

Mr. Tan proposed the enactment of a law formally creating the Financial Stability Coordinating Council (FSCC) chaired by the BSP governor, with the Department of Finance (DOF), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Insurance Commission, and the PDIC as members.

The FSCC in 2018 was a voluntary interagency council created via MOA between the above agencies. It was formed to identify, manage and mitigate the buildup of systemic risks, consistent with the overall prudential objective of financial stability. Enacting a law creating the FSCC will equip it with the necessary powers to ensure financial stability and the integrity of the banking system.

Republic Act 10927: An Act Designating Casinos as Covered Persons Under Republic Act No. 9160, Otherwise Known as the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001, as Amended

S. No. 1468/H. No. 5663, Approved on July 14, 2017

SYNOPSIS

This act states that casinos, including internet and ship-based casinos, with respect to their casino cash transactions related to their gaming operation, and such other entities as may be determined by Appropriate Government Agency (AGA), are designated as covered persons under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA).

UPDATE

On November 12, 2018, President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed Executive Order No. 68 approving the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism Strategy (NACS).

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

In a statement, AMLA said that the NACS "lays out seven concrete objectives ranging from the enhancement of Philippine laws and regulations, strengthening the AMLC's investigations and prosecutions, coordinated action among government agencies, development of mechanisms to deter money laundering and financing of terrorism, improved supervision of covered persons, international cooperation, and information dissemination to combat money laundering and terrorism financing." EO 68 also created the National AML/CFT Coordinating Committee (NACC) to oversee the implementation of NACS. It is composed of BSP, Insurance Commission, SEC, DOF and Department of National Defense, among others. AMLA is the secretariat of NACS.

AMLA noted the timeliness of the EO, given that the Philippines is undergoing its Third Round Mutual Evaluation, which reviews the technical compliance of the country's laws and regulations with international standards, as well as their effectiveness. On November 28, 2019, the On-Site Mutual Evaluation by assessors appointed by the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering was completed. Heads of government agencies, private financial institutions and non-profit organizations, among others, participated in this activity (amlc.gov.ph/16-news-and-announcements/158-president-duterte-approves-national-aml-cft-strategy).

Meanwhile, in 2018, AMLA Executive Director Atty. Mel Georgie B. Racela, reported to the Senate the following activities to implement this law:

Casino implementing rules and regulations (CIRR)

CIRR took effect on November 4, 2017 with the support of a technical assistance project by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). It requires casinos to institute risk management policies and implement a comprehensive risk-based money laundering and terrorist financing prevention program. It also empowers PAGCOR, APECO and CEZA to supervise, assess and monitor compliance of casinos with their obligations under the AMLA, CIRR and other applicable measures. Atty. Racela noted that such powers do not impede upon AMLC's role as chief policymaker and implementing agency of AMLA.

Training for casino supervisors and casino operators

After the passage of CIRR, the AMLC with the assistance of ADB held training sessions on the CIRR for casino supervisors and casino operators:

- Training for AMLC Secretariat, PAGCOR, APECO, CEZA and BSP supervisors on October 23-25, 2017; and
- Training for "land-based" and "internet-based" casino operators supervised by PAGCOR and CEZA on December 4-5 and 7-8, 2017. Forty-eight (48) operators attended the two training sessions.

Regulatory exchange program with the Australia Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (Austrac)

Austrac is the financial intelligence unit of the Australian government. It extended a technical assistance project related to casino supervision. In February 2018, supervisors from the AMLC secretariat, PAGCOR and CEZA

visited casinos in Australia and the Austrac offices to learn about best practices. Moreover, Austrac supervisors visited the offices of PAGCOR and CEZA in April 2018 to offer their help in the development of a casino AML/CFT supervision framework. Austrac also visited casinos in Entertainment City, Manila Bay to check the implementation of money laundering prevention programs and offer advice on AML/CFT compliance mechanisms.

AMLC registration and reporting guidelines for casinos (ARRGC)

The ARRGCC took effect on May 19, 2018. It requires casinos to register with AMLC's electronic reporting system to be able to file covered transaction reports (CTR) and suspicion transaction reports (STR). It also requires relevant government agencies to ensure that casinos, casino operators and licensees, and integrated resorts under their watch install an AML/CFT reportorial system within a reasonable time within 90 days from publication of the ARRGCC. As of July 2018, PAGCOR and CEZA have submitted to AMLC a list of casinos under their supervision. Moreover, eight casinos have already registered with the reporting system.

Mutual evaluation (ME) of the Philippines

Atty. Racela said that on February 22, 2018, Executive Secretary Salvador C. Medialdea issued a memorandum instructing government agencies, departments, bureaus, offices and agencies to extend their assistance in the third round of mutual evaluations (ME) by APG. The ME seeks to gauge the country's compliance with international AML/CFT standards.

Furthermore, AMLC issued operational guidelines for the ME on April 11, 2018. It called for the creation of an inter-agency working group consisting of key government agencies.

Risk assessment on Casino Services and Products

Section 16 of the CIRR require casinos to establish and record the true identity of their customers based on recognized identification documents presented during account opening and/or redemption of casino chips, tokens or gaming instruments.

PAGCOR is working closely with integrated casino resorts on the determination of a reasonable CDD threshold that is also compliant with international standards. Atty. Racela noted that the FATF-recommended threshold stood at approximately PhP 150,000.

Republic Act 11127: An Act Providing for the Regulation and Supervision of Payment Systems

S 178/H 5000, Approved on October 30, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law grants BSP with supervisory and regulatory powers over payment systems in the Philippines, for the purpose of ensuring the stability and effectiveness of the monetary and financial system. BSP may also own and operate payment systems as may be deemed necessary by

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

the Monetary Board. Within six months from the effectivity of this law, all operators of payment systems must register with BSP.

UPDATE

BSP through Atty. Teofilo R. Ragadio, officer-in-charge of the Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, reported to the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending. The initial draft of the IRR was released to the industry for comments. Atty. Ragadio noted that the draft IRR “prioritizes the creation, through registration, of a baseline inventory of all operators of payment systems (OPS) in the country.” This inventory will feed into the crafting of an oversight framework for payment systems, as well as in determining the criteria for designating certain payment systems or operators. “The draft IRR provides descriptive examples of activities to sufficiently guide the stakeholders in determining the entities that are required to register with BSP as an OPS,” he added.

Republic Act 11211: An Act Amending Republic Act Number 7653, Otherwise Known as the New Central Bank Act, and for Other Purposes

S 1297/H 7742, Approved on February 14, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law removes money supply and credit levels as the sole basis for determining monetary policy and restores the BSP's authority to issue debt papers as part of its regular operation. It widens the coverage of institutions under BSP supervision to include money service businesses, credit granting businesses and payment system operators. It also increases BSP's capitalization from PhP 50 billion to PhP 200 billion while exempting it from taxes on income derived from its governmental functions.

UPDATE

The BSP through Atty. Teofilo R. Ragadio, officer-in-charge of the Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, reported to the Senate that it is in the process of reviewing all existing policies that are affected, or may be affected, by amendments introduced under this law. The end goal is to issue new regulations or update existing ones to fully enforce this law.

Price and monetary stability

The initial review of regulations conducted by BSP on price and monetary stability, a key mandate of the institution, yielded the following key areas that needed a thorough review, adoption of a policy framework, and issuance of regulations:

- Credit granting entities;
- Money service businesses;
- Payment system operators;
- Financial market infrastructure; and
- Non-stock savings and loan associations.

Atty. Ragadio noted that the proposed regulations “will include the scope of BSP’s authority, and the conduct of examination and supervision.” The upcoming policy framework will clarify BSP’s authority over the above entities to avoid overlap with other regulatory agencies. Other proposed issuances will cover the following areas:

- Enhanced enforcement framework;
- Minimum capital ratios of banks; and
- Preliminary rules and regulations covering licensing of new Islamic banks, in anticipation of the passage of a law on Islamic banking.

BSP capitalization

Atty. Ragadio reported that BSP met with representatives of the Bureau of Treasury (BTr) and DBM to determine procedures for carrying out the payment of the increase in capital, which will be sourced from BSP’s declared dividends. During the meeting, BTr and DBM “raised their concern on how the disbursement of funds will be made in favor of BSP in light of the constitutional provision requiring appropriations before any payment out of the Treasury is made,” the BSP official said. The agencies explained that there is a need for the payment of BSP capital to go through the appropriations process, even if the law already provides a particular source for BSP’s capitalization. BSP, BTr and DBM will continue discussions on this matter.

BSP’s tax exemption

BSP has not yet implemented or pursued its tax exemption under Section 44 of the law due to the position of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) of the need to clarify which items of the BSP income are taxable and which are covered by the tax exemption. Moreover, BIR said that a revenue issuance is required before the tax exemption is implemented.

Atty. Ragadio noted that since “BSP’s tax exemption pertains to its income from transactions relating to the exercise of its supervisory, regulatory and examination powers over entities within its jurisdiction, as well as maintaining price, monetary and financial stability, it can happen that other income items, while derived from central banking functions, can be considered by BIR as subject to tax.”

Negotiations between BSP and BIR are ongoing. However, Atty. Ragadio remarked that BSP anticipates “differences in position” on items in the BSP income, which exposes BSP to “risks of future deficiency tax assessments.” BSP is committed to “amicably resolve” this possible issue on tax assessment, said Atty. Ragadio.

Operational matters

Atty. Ragadio remarked that BSP anticipates the need to increase its manpower given the expanded responsibility given to the institution. BSP will address this issue as soon as the policies necessary to implement the provisions of this law are in place.

Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation

Republic Act 10912: An Act Mandating and Strengthening the Continuing Professional Development Program for All Regulated Professions, Creating Continuing Professional Development Council, and Appropriating Therefor, and for Other Related Purposes

S. No. 2581/H. No. 6423, Approved on July 21, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This act requires professionals to earn a specific number of units before their licenses are renewed. The units will be acquired through development programs such as seminars, workshops, technical lectures, tours and visits. Such programs must equip professionals with advanced knowledge, skills and values in specialized or inter/multidisciplinary field(s) of study, self-directed research, and /or lifelong learning.

This law was passed to upgrade and ensure the competencies and qualifications of professionals for the practice of their professions pursuant to the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), and the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements (ASEAN-MRA).

UPDATE

Commissioner Yolanda D. Reyes of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) reported to the Senate in 2018 that the IRR of this law was issued on February 28, 2017 as PRC Resolution No. 1032. It took effect on March 15, 2017. 21 Professional Regulatory Boards (PRBs) had approved operational guidelines:

- Professional Teachers;
- Electrical Engineering;
- Landscape Architecture;
- Architecture;
- Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering;
- Accountancy;
- Chemistry;
- Respiratory Therapy;
- Interior Design;
- Civil Engineering;
- Pharmacy;
- Customs Brokers;
- Nurses;
- Environmental Planning;
- Forestry;
- Electronics Engineering;
- Sanitary Engineering;
- Social Work;
- Dentistry;
- Medical Technology; and
- Aeronautical Engineering.

The commissioner noted the following issues regarding the implementation of this law, as well as the corresponding action of PRC:

Difficulty in renewal of licenses

PRC carried out the following measures to help ease the difficulty faced by some professionals in renewing their licenses:

- Professionals unable to earn the required number of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units may renew their ID card by executing an undertaking indicating their commitment to complete the required CPD units before the next renewal deadline of their ID. Such undertaking is already embedded in the application form for the renewal of the ID;
- Applicants that already comply with CPD requirements under self-directed learning and lifelong learning can claim their ID card on the same day;
- Professionals classified as “balik manggagawa”, senior citizens, physically differently abled, and pregnant women are provided an express lane; and
- All certificates issued by the Department of Education in the last 3 years are acceptable for the renewal of the ID card. There's no need to file for application under self-directed learning.

Lack of funding for CPD implementation

Commissioner Reyes claimed that in 2018 there were no funds available in the General Appropriations Act to support the implementation of the law, specifically for the payment of honoraria of the first and second members of the CPD councils, monitoring of the programs, and other related expenses.

Large volume of applications for accreditation as CPD (and related) providers are finding it difficult to cope, causing delays in the issuance of the Certificate of Accreditation.

To assist the CPD councils, PRC pursued the following actions:

- Mandated PRBs to recommend additional CPD evaluators from the Accredited Integrated Professional Organization (AIPPO)/Accredited Professional Organization (APO), as well as the academe;
- Mandated PRBs to recommend additional monitors of CPD programs. This is to ensure that programs submitted and approved by the CPD Council are strictly followed; and
- Developed the CPD Accreditation System which allows applicants to apply for CPD provider accreditation online.

Resistance from some professionals or professional groups to comply with CPD requirements

PRC is conducting consultations and information campaigns. It is also exercising “maximum flexibility” in implementing the law to ensure affordability and accessibility.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Difficulty of professionals in the regions to access CPD seminars and programs

PRC pursued the following activities to facilitate access to such programs:

- Approved the following additional activities that can earn CPD credit units:
 - Community outreach program;
 - Livelihood programs;
 - Medical missions;
 - Disaster response;
 - Donations to select projects, including scholarships and disaster relief;
 - Assistance to PRC, CPDs and professional service;
- Participation to PRC committees and other government-created committees;
 - Innovations/inventions;
 - Travels/study tours;
 - Exhibits of professional products;
 - Plant visits;
 - Proven new learning and transfer of knowledge in the workplace;
 - Other activities, as recommended by CPD councils and approved by PRBs and PRC.
- Encouraged private and government organizations to apply as CPD providers (Memorandum Circular No. 07 s. 2017). So far some 230 private organizations and institutions have been accredited, making their in-house training eligible for CPD units;
- Encouraged APOs to conduct CPD seminars and trainings even in remote areas;
- Encouraged CPD providers to provide online programs. The Philippine Nurses Association, for instance, has launched an online program requiring only a minimal management fee from participants;
- Some APOs have started offering free CPD programs, including the United Architects of the Philippines, Philippine Institute of Interior Design, Philippine Physical Therapy Association, Integrated Institute of Electrical Engineers, Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the Philippine Dental Association;
- Some institutions have started offering free in-house trainings for their employed professionals; and
- Encouraged CPD providers to offer at least five free slots for unemployed professionals, especially those from the regions.

Excessive registration fees of some CPD providers

CPD councils are making an effort to disapprove programs charging exorbitant fees. They carefully scrutinize applications for accreditation, taking into consideration the professionals' capacity to pay, venue and duration of the CPD activity, the number and qualifications of speakers, and other inclusions in the packages being offered.

For the PRC's part, in 2018 it finalized a set of "rationalized" fees for CPD providers.

Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes

Republic Act 11232: An Act Providing for the Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines

S 1280/H 8374, Approved on February 20, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law allows for the registration of a corporation with a single stockholder, known as a “one-person corporation (OPC)”. It removes the 50-year term limit of a corporation, allowing it to exist in perpetuity. A corporation whose term has expired can be revived by filing an application with the SEC. Moreover, it removes the required 25 percent subscription, payment and minimum paid-up capital, as well as the minimum number of incorporators, directors and trustees.

UPDATE

SEC Chairperson Emilio B. Aquino reported to the Senate that the IRR of this law was released through three memorandum circulars (MC), each addressing specific provisions in the law:

1. MC No. 07, s. 2019, effective May 1, 2019: Contains guidelines, rules and regulations in the establishment of OPCs. The SEC accepts applications manually through its Company Registration and Monitoring Department;
2. MC No. 10, 2. 2019, effective April 27, 2019: Contains rules on material-related party transactions for publicly-listed companies (PLC). Material transactions are those that are at least 10 percent of a PLC's total assets;
3. MC No. 13, s. 2019, effective June 21, 2019: Contains amended guidelines and procedures on the use of corporate and partnership names, including rules on corporate names of OPCs, and standards on their distinguishability.

In the pipeline are at least five additional MCs to fully implement this law:

1. Registration of corporations with less than five incorporators other than OPC;
2. Guidelines for reviving the corporate existence of corporations whose terms have expired;
3. Guidelines for corporations that do not formally organize and commence their business;
4. Guidelines for converting ordinary stock corporations into OPC; and

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

5. Requiring at least 20 percent of the board of directors of corporations vested with public interest to consist of independent directors.

Chairperson Aquino noted the following provisions in the law that are self-executory and therefore, do not require further guidelines for their implementation:

- Perpetual term of existence of corporations;
- Removal of minimum paid-up capital requirements; and
- Removal of residency requirement for directors of corporations not engaged in nationalized or partly nationalized activities.

Moreover, he cited SEC-Office of the General Counsel Opinion No. 19-16 dated April 15, 2019 stating that the law is already clear that "the corporate term of a corporation existing prior to, and which continues to exist upon the effectivity of the [law], shall be automatically deemed perpetual without any further action on the part of the corporation."

As of August 28, 2019, the SEC has approved the application of approximately 652 OPCs.

According to news reports, the first company to receive its certificate of registration under the new rules was Smart Transportation and Solutions OPC on May 7, 2019 (www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1069294).

Economic Affairs

Republic Act 10881: An Act Amending Investment Restrictions in Specific Laws Governing Adjustment Companies, Lending Companies, Financing Companies and Investment Houses

S 3023/H 6395, Approved on July 17, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This act allows 100 percent foreign ownership in adjustment, lending, and financial companies as well as investment houses.

UPDATE

Atty. Teofilo R. Ragadio, officer-in-charge of the Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services of BSP, reported to the Senate that BSP issued Circular No. 1038 dated April 22, 2019. This circular amended regulations on the election of foreign nationals as directors of quasi-banking and/or other BSP-supervised financial institutions. It is applicable to the election of foreigners as directors of financing companies, lending companies, and investment houses with quasi-banking licenses.

Given the passage of RA 11211, which expanded the supervisory mandate of BSP over credit granting businesses, Atty. Ragadio said that BSP will conduct a study to determine whether this law will have an impact on the implementation of RA 10881.

Education, Arts and Culture

Republic Act 10968: An Act Institutionalizing the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), Establishing the PQF-National Coordinating Council (NCC) and Appropriating Funds Therefor

S 1456/H 6572, Approved on August 27, 2015

SYNOPSIS

Under this law, the Philippine Qualifications Framework National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) is created to harmonize and promote a seamless education and training system.

UPDATE

Secretary Isidro S. Lapeña of TESDA informed the Senate of the agency's key accomplishments in implementing this law:

- Publication of the IRR on April 26, 2019;
- Enhancement of the Philippine Qualifications Register (PhQuaR), drafting of the Philippine Credit Transfer System; and
- Promotion, advocacy and endorsement of the PHL AQRF (ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework) Referencing Report to the ASEAN Secretariat during the 6th AQRF Committee Meeting on May 21-23, 2019 in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

He identified the following challenges:

- Inclusion of additional representatives from the economic and industry sectors in the PQF-NCC;
- Establishment of the Permanent Secretariat;
- Reconstitution of the Working Groups Head and members;
- Interface of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education qualifications at PQF Level V (Diploma or Associate degree) from ladderized programs;
- Policy shift to lifelong learning to expand existing programs that offer pathways and equivalences; and
- Compliance to PhQuaR.

Moving forward, the PQF-NCC outlined the following priorities:

- Work on the inclusion of two representatives from industry and economic sectors;
- Establishment of Permanent Secretariat;
- Reconstitution of the Working Groups;
- Continue to lead the advocacy and promotion of PQF and AQRF concepts to gain public traction;
- Conduct strategic planning workshop to address concerns presented in the PHL AQRF Referencing Report and to discuss long-term approaches and strategies in strengthening the PQF system as a result of the AQRF referencing process; and
- Designation of co-chair/alternate chair of PQF-NCC.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 11037: An Act Institutionalizing a National Feeding Program for Undernourished Children in Public Day Care, Kindergarten and Elementary Schools to Combat Hunger and Undernutrition Among Filipino Children and Appropriating Funds Therefore

S 1279/H 5269, Approved on June 20, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law establishes a National Feeding Program to address undernutrition among Filipino children, with the following components:

- Supplemental feeding program for day care children;
- School-based feeding program;
- Milk feeding program;
- Micronutrient supplementation;
- Health examination, vaccination and deworming;
- Gulayan sa paaralan;
- Water, sanitation and hygiene;
- Integrated nutrition, education, behavioral transformation and social mobilization.

It creates a National Nutrition Information System to harmonize all existing national and local nutrition databases from NGAs, LGUs and other relevant agencies of government to identify individuals, groups and localities with the highest magnitude of hunger and malnutrition. LGUs are required to assist NGAs in implementing this law by using a portion of the Special Education Fund and/or their 20 percent development fund. Private sector participation is encouraged.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Luzviminda C. Ilagan of DSWD informed the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending. A series of nationwide consultations were scheduled in July 2019 to gather inputs from stakeholders for the IRR.

Energy

Republic Act 11039: An Act Institutionalizing the Electric Cooperatives Emergency and Resiliency Fund and Appropriating Funds

S 1461/H 7054, Approved on June 29, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law institutionalizes the emergency and resiliency fund for electric cooperatives. It requires cooperatives to submit comprehensive and integrated management programs which will be evaluated by the National Electrification Administration (NEA) and National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

It mandates that PhP 750 million of NDRRMC funds be allocated for the initial implementation of this law. The NEA may also receive donations in the form of funds, materials or equipment, whether local or international, to restore or rehabilitate damaged power facilities.

UPDATE

The NEA through Deputy Administrator Artis Nikki L. Tortola informed the Senate that, as specified in the IRR, the agency converted the ad-hoc Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (DRRMD) into a regular department.

On February 18, 2019, NEA requested electric cooperatives (ECs) to submit to DRRMD for evaluation their Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA), Resiliency Compliance Plan (RCP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) using prescribed templates. Since then, DRRMD has advised ECs on how to prepare for calamities, and monitored calamities' effect on ECs electric service delivery. The specific role of DRRMS in assisting and guiding ECs is outlined as follows:

- Preparation of VRA, RCP and ERP towards ECs resiliency;
- Monitoring of power situation before, during and after a calamity;
- Supervising the rehabilitation and power restoration after a calamity;
- Evaluation of requested calamity fund from the national government to cover the rehabilitation and power restoration of damaged facilities; and
- Monitoring of calamity-related projects and close-out of temporary projects.

Issues and recommendations

NEA requested additional appropriation from the national government, specifically from the disaster risk reduction and management fund of the NDRRMC and the Office of Civil Defense. Additional funds will be used in pre-disaster activities/projects by ECs to complement the law's focus on restoration and rehabilitation after calamities.

Republic Act 11234: An Act Establishing the Energy Virtual One-Stop Shop for the Purpose of Streamlining the Permitting Process of Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution Projects

S 1439/H 8417, Approved on March 8, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law creates an Energy Virtual One-Stop Shop (EVOSS) under the supervision of the Department of Energy (DOE). It establishes an EVOSS steering committee chaired by the Office of the President, with the Department of Energy as vice-chair, to oversee the implementation of this law.

This law requires all relevant agencies and local government units to ensure that all actions on applications shall be released within the set time frames, counted from the date of submission of complete documentary

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

requirements. Failure to act within the time frames shall result in the automatic approval of applications.

UPDATE

DOE Assistant Secretary Gerardo D. Erguiza Jr. reported to the Senate that a department order creating the EVOSS-IRR Technical Working Committee was issued on April 17, 2019 following the passage of this law.

DOE conducted several “writeshops” with representatives from member agencies of the EVOSS Steering Committee, generation, distribution and transmission sectors, and resource persons from Congress. Also represented were the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA), Board of Investments and Department of Justice (DOJ).

A public consultation was held on May 21, 2019 to gather more inputs from industry stakeholders and the public. Finally, the IRR was signed on May 28, 2019 by Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi, published on June 14, 2019, and filed with the Office of the National Administrative Register on June 18, 2019.

Foreign Relations

Republic Act 10928: An Act Extending the Validity of Philippine Passports, Amending for the Purpose Section 10 of Republic Act No. 8239, Otherwise Known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996, and for Other Purposes

S. No. 1365/H. No. 4767, Approved on August 2, 2017

SYNOPSIS

This act extends the validity of Philippine passports from five to ten years, except for those of minors which would only have a five-year validity. However, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), as the passport issuing authority, can choose to limit passport validity to less than ten years whenever in the national economic interest or political stability of the country such restriction is necessary.

This law also mandates the DFA to make necessary reforms to make the passport processing system seamless, convenient and pro-people, and to make the production and security of passports at par with technological advances and world standards.

UPDATE

DFA Assistant Secretary Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz informed the Senate in 2018 that a total of 1,280,434 passports, which will expire in the year 2028, were issued from January to June 2018. She revealed that the agency is planning to introduce upgrades to the passport's security features and the material used in its production to ensure longevity.

Games, Amusement and Sports

Republic Act 10699: An Act Expanding the Coverage of Incentives Granted to National Athletes and Coaches, Appropriating Funds Therefor, Repealing for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9064

S 2898/H 5912, Approved on November 13, 2015

SYNOPSIS

This law grants national athletes and coaches certain privileges, which include the following:

- 20 percent discount from establishments offering transportation services, hotels and lodging services, restaurants and recreation centers, and purchase of medicine and sports equipment;
- 20 percent discount on admission fees charged by theaters, cinema houses and concert halls, circuses, carnivals, and other similar places of culture, leisure and amusement;
- Free medical and dental consultations in government hospitals and similar establishments;
- Coverage in the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth);
- Comprehensive social security program to be formulated by the Social Security System;
- Priority in national housing programs, affordable “pabayah” loans and other housing opportunities subject to the guidelines and qualifications set by the National Housing Authority (NHA) or the Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF);
- Scholarship benefits; and
- Retirement and death benefits.

UPDATE

Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) chairperson William I. Ramirez reported to the Senate that the commission is coordinating with the BIR and DOF for the formulation of a Revenue Regulation providing for the manner of availment of the benefits and privileges under this law. PSC is also coordinating with SSS for the execution of a MOA for the provision of a comprehensive social security program for national athletes and coaches.

Chairperson Ramirez noted that the implementation of benefits and privileges for national athletes and coaches has been “the most pressing issue that the commission has had since the enactment of RA 10699”.

Government Corporations and Public Enterprises

Republic Act 11199: An Act Rationalizing and Expanding the Powers and Duties of the Social Security Commission to Ensure the Long-Term Viability of the Social Security System

S 1753/H 2158, Approved on February 7, 2019

SYNOPSIS

The Social Security Act of 2018 was passed to strengthen the pension fund through the implementation of a gradual increase in monthly contributions from the current 11 percent to an additional 1 percentage point yearly starting in the year of implementation until it reaches 15 percent by 2025. It also requires the gradual adjustment of the minimum and maximum monthly salary credit.

The law states that a member who finds himself involuntarily unemployed can claim unemployment benefit equivalent to 50 percent of his average monthly salary credit for a maximum of two months. The member should not be more than 60 years old and has paid at least 36 months of contributions, 12 of which should be within the 18-month period prior to the involuntary unemployment or separation. A member can only claim unemployment benefits once every three years.

UPDATE

Senior Vice President Voltaire P. Agas of SSS Legal Enforcement Group informed the Senate that the new rate of contributions, as well as the minimum and maximum Monthly Salary Credits is now being implemented starting April 2019 pursuant to the following issuances, all dated March 15, 2019:

- SSS Circular No. 2019-005 for Employers, Employees, Self-Employed, Voluntary and Non-Working Spouse Members;
- SSS Circular No. 2019-006 for Household Employers and Kasambahay Members; and
- SSS Circular No. 2019-007 for OFW Members.

Meanwhile, Atty. Agas reported that according to media reports, a petition for certiorari was filed before the Supreme Court on June 17, 2019 questioning the constitutionality this law, including the provisions on the coverage of OFW members. The SSS is yet to receive a copy of the petition, as well as any related order from the Supreme Court.

Health and Demography

Republic Act 10643: An Act to Effectively Instill Health Consciousness Through Graphic Health Warnings on Tobacco Products

S 27/H 4590, Approved on July 15, 2014

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to implement measures to warn the public of the devastating effects of tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke. It requires all tobacco products manufactured or imported for sale in the Philippines to carry graphic health warnings on the lower portion of a cigarette pack, in at least 50 percent of both sides of the pack.

A maximum of 12 templates of Graphic Health Warnings shall be printed simultaneously and these shall be rotated periodically for each brand family and also for each variant, so that every 24 months, the variations of the warnings shall appear in the market with approximately equal frequency and equal display of health warnings and messages on retail packages.

Noncompliant packages thereafter found in the market on display, for sale or distribution shall be subject to removal and/or confiscation.

UPDATE

The Department of Health (DOH) through Usec. Rolando Enrique D. Domingo informed the Senate that its Health Promotion and Communication Service is having difficulty in collecting original photos that could be included in the new set of templates. The law requires DOH to issue up to 12 templates of graphic health warnings, which shall be valid for two years. Within one year from the effectivity of the preceding set of templates, the DOH is required to issue the new set of templates that will take effect upon the expiration of the previous set.

DOH is recommending the introduction of plain or standardized packaging with larger graphic health warnings "to reduce the appeal of tobacco products packages especially that of cigarette packs." DOH defines plain packaging as "a measure to restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colors, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard color and font style."

Meanwhile, DTI through Assistant Secretary Mary Jean T. Pacheco and Director Domingo R. Tolentino, Jr. reported to the Senate that the Inter-Agency Committee on Tobacco (IAC-T) last met in 2017, with a pending discussion on monitoring and evaluation guidelines. The IAC-T is working to schedule a meeting this year.

Nevertheless, DTI is making an effort to monitor the compliance of business establishments to the standards set by RA 9211 (An Act

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Regulating the Packaging, Use, Sale, Distribution and Advertisements of Tobacco Products), particularly on the following sections:

- Section 7 (vending machines, self-service facilities);
- Section 8 (retailer compliance with respect to self-serving facilities);
- Section 9 (minimum age sales);
- Section 10 (sale of tobacco products within school perimeters);
- Section 11 (signage); and
- Section 12 (proof of age verification).

The agency cited lack of manpower as a key challenge in monitoring compliance to the above laws. For instance, a provincial office is said to have one or two monitors who are also responsible for monitoring compliance to other fair trade laws. However, anti-smoking ordinances passed by local governments have helped ensure compliance to these laws.

Republic Act 10747: An Act Promulgating a Comprehensive Policy in Addressing the Needs of Persons with Rare Disease

S 2990/H 5973, Approved on March 3, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law requires the identification, referral and registration of persons with rare disease to help them receive adequate care for their condition. It designates persons with rare disease as persons with disabilities (PWD), making them eligible to receive benefits under RA 7277. It creates the Rare Disease Technical Working Group (RDTWG) to define disorders or diseases considered as rare, regulate the approval and certification of orphan drugs and orphan products, and establish a system to ensure comprehensive healthcare of patients.

UPDATE

DOH Usec. Rolando Enrique D. Domingo informed the Senate of the following updates on the implementation of this law and its IRR:

Designation of rare disease; identification and referral of persons with rare disease

- A registry for Inborn Errors of Metabolism (IEM) now exists at the UP National Institutes of Health-Institute of Human Genetics (UP-NIH-IHG), as well as a referral system for the diagnosis and treatment of patients.

Creation and management of registry of persons with rare disease

- Identification of persons with rare disease is being done via the newborn screening centers. Once a case is confirmed, the patient is referred to Newborn Screening Continuity Clinics for the management of their condition;
- Newborn Screening Centers and Newborn Screening Continuity Clinics report to and provide updates on patient status to UP-NIH-IHG.

Availability of specialists for managing persons with rare disease

- Currently, there is no capability building program that addresses this concern. The RDTWG is scheduled to address this in their upcoming meetings.

Creation of DOH oversight committee for integrated rare disease management

- The RDTWG currently serves as this oversight committee;
- DOH is developing an administrative issuance for integrated rare disease management, which is set to be released in November 2019.

Designation of persons with rare disease as PWD

- DOH has held several meetings with the National Council on Disability Affairs for the inclusion of persons with rare disease in the latest version of the registry of persons with disability.

Enforcement of the rights and privileges of persons with rare disease

- The DSWD and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) handle this aspect of the implementation of the law;
- Diagnosed patients are given a medical certificate by their attending physicians and are advised to avail of a PWD ID from their respective local government units.

Designation of orphan drugs and products; improved access to such drugs and products

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) already has a list of orphan drugs and products;
- Improving access to such drugs and products is set to be included in the research agenda of DOH;
- The Health Regulation Office has issued a permit for three enzymes (Laronidase, Idursulfase, Agalsidase) valid for a period of one year;
- The Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Act (RA 10963) repealed the tax free importation of orphan drugs and products. The RDTWG requested the recommendation and legal opinion of DOJ and subsequently, the DOF and the BIR on the implementation of this provision.

Problems and concerns

- Numerous inquiries from patients, relatives and health workers regarding the expansion of the list of rare diseases beyond the Inborn Errors of Metabolism;
- Availability and accessibility of orphan drugs and products, which are very expensive and not readily available to patients diagnosed with rare disease.

Recommendations for future action

- Creation of a proper oversight committee for integrated rare disease management;
- Further expansion of rare disease list;
- Conduct of health technology assessment of orphan products and orphan drugs, which is consistent with the requirements of the Universal Healthcare Act (RA 11223);
- Development of a Philhealth special benefit package for rare diseases; and
- Re-visiting some provisions of this law and its IRR for possible revision after the release of the IRR of the Universal Healthcare Act (RA 11223).

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 10767: An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Philippine Plan of Action to Eliminate Tuberculosis as a Public Health Problem and Appropriating Funds Therefor

S 2653/H 5042, Approved on April 26, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law mandates the DOH to establish a comprehensive action plan for tuberculosis (TB), consisting of the following:

- Strategies and targets in addressing TB;
- Prevention, treatment, care and support system;
- Development and application of technologies;
- Strengthening of linkages with local and international organizations for possible partnership in education, advocacy, research and funding assistance;
- Establishment of a review and monitoring system to gather data and monitor the progress made in the elimination of TB; and
- Immediate mobilization of anti-TB services during and after natural and man-made disasters through collaborative efforts of national and local governments and other entities.

UPDATE

DOH Usec. Rolando Enrique D. Domingo informed the Senate of the following milestones in the implementation of this law.

A. Comprehensive Philippine plan of action to eliminate tuberculosis

DOH has approved Phase I of its **2017-2022 Philippine Strategic Elimination Plan**, the roadmap to address the country's high TB burden as revealed by the 2016 national TB prevalence survey. Key accomplishments in carrying out this plan are outlined below, organized based on the strategies identified in the plan.

1. Empower communities and patient groups to promptly access quality TB services

In 2018, 15 percent (49,776/323,037) of total TB notifications were from community referrals – above the 9 percent target set in the plan. 49 percent of regional national tuberculosis program (NTP) policies and plans were incorporated with patients' agenda. This is above the 40 percent plan target. DOH held the Health Promotion Strategy Workshop on December 11-13, 2018 to strengthen the implementation of this strategy.

2. Network with other agencies to reduce out-of-pocket expenses and expand social protection programs

In 2018-2019, the DOH budget for TB elimination increased by 12 percent – below the 25 percent average annual increase set in the plan. 100 percent of provinces and highly-urbanized cities have budgetary support for TB elimination. Meanwhile, for the following targets, no data is available yet as it is "still on development" in the TB monitoring system:

- 70 percent of TB cases treated in TB DOTS facilities are supported by benefit payments from Philhealth; and
- 70 percent of National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS) members with TB are availing of social protection programs.

A mission visit in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific was held on October 1-5, 2018 to study and address the catastrophic cost of TB to families consulting in DOTS facilities.

3. Galvanize local and national efforts to ensure adequate and competent human resources

84 percent (12,196/14,447) of DOH-deployed human resources were involved in TB elimination efforts, which is below the 100 percent target specified in the plan. No data is available yet for the following targets:

- 20 percent increase in LGU-hired health care providers (determining the number of staff is being supported by the HRH 2030 project of USAID);
- 90 percent of healthcare providers conduct tasks according to NTP protocol (however, 83 percent or 13,768/16,582 of healthcare providers such as doctors, nurses, midwives and medtechs are trained on TB Manual of Procedures (MOP) protocol).

Meanwhile, DOH held the following activities to support this strategy:

- Human Resource Information Systems Result Presentation and Workshop on August 1, 2018;
- Joint Mission on National Health Workforce Accounts and Workload Indicators of Staffing Need on September 19-20, 2018;
- Development of eLearning Module for National Tuberculosis Program by TAP and HRH 2030.

4. Advance generation of TB information and utilization for decision-making

95 percent of public and private TB care providers notified DOH of TB cases, which is higher than the 50 percent target. 98.41 percent of reporting units submit accurate and timely TB information vs. the 60 percent plan target. Targets for the following were 100 percent complied with:

- WHO standards for TB surveillance and vital registration systems met;
- 100 percent of program managers use information for evidence-based decision-making.

Meanwhile, DOH held the following activities to support this strategy:

- Four batches of ITIS User's Conference, May-June 2018;
- Two batches of Orientation-workshop on New NTP forms, September-October 2018;
- Development of integrated NTP monitoring tool;
- Privacy impact assessment and development of privacy guidelines in compliance with the Data Privacy Act (RA 10173);
- Administrative Order on Mandatory Tuberculosis Notification drafted;
- Handbook on Monitoring and Supervision drafted.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

5. Guarantee compliance to national standards of TB care and prevention services, and availability of quality products at DOTS facilities

75 percent (1,766/2,368) of DOTS facilities were certified to be complying with the revised NTP standards, below the 95 percent plan target. 69.6 percent (10/17) of regions had no “stock outs” of drugs, below the 100 percent target. 94 percent (31/33) of TB culture and drug susceptibility test (DST) laboratories met biosafety standards, below the 100 percent target. The only indicator that met or exceeded the target was the proportion of public and private TB laboratories that are under a well-functioning quality assurance system, which was at 95 percent (2,562 vs 2,691) – higher than the 92 percent set in the plan. No data is available yet for “TB incidence rate among health facility staff is less than national incidence rate”.

Meanwhile, DOH held the following activities to support this strategy:

- Approval of the Public-Private Mix (PPM) National Action Plan, April 2018;
- Consultative Planning and Workshop with Hospitals and Provincial/City Health Officers in Various Regions, April, May and October 2018;
- Global Drug Facility (GDF) Mission, April 23-27, 2018;
- Accreditation of National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory (NTRL) for ISO 15189;
- Revision of the TB Diagnostic Algorithm;
- Laboratory Network Operational Plan drafted.

6. Expand the provision of integrated patient-centered TB services

86 percent of diagnosed drug-resistant TB (DRTB) were enrolled in DOTS, below the 90 percent target. 17 percent of multi-drug resistant TB (MDRTB) were lost to follow-up, higher than the target of below 10 percent. Only 5 percent (10/193) of health facilities providing drug-resistant TB services submitted pharmacovigilance reports, below the 90 percent target. 56 percent (91,472/164,412) of TB patients 15 years old and above have documented HIV status, below the 100 percent target. 17 percent (54,623/323,037) of notified TB cases were from private healthcare providers, below the 25 percent target.

The following targets had no available performance data:

- 100 percent of new and relapse cases underwent rapid TB diagnostic test as primary diagnostic tool;
- 80 percent of priority high-risk population groups are screened for TB;
- 90 percent of household contacts screened for TB;
- 90 percent of DOTS facilities are adapting patient-centered approach; and
- 80 percent of provinces/highly urbanized cities are with a functional DOTS network providing expanded and integrated TB care and prevention services.

Meanwhile, DOH held the following activities to support this strategy:

- Provision of free chest x-ray for persons deprived of liberty, May 2018;
- National Consultation Meeting of Provincial Health Officers on TB and

HIV, November 21-24, 2018;

- National Consultative Workshop on Programmatic Management of Latent TB Infection (LTBI), November 28-29, 2018;
- Administrative Order for LTBI drafted;
- Administrative Order for TB-DM drafted.

7. Drum up support from national government agencies, legislative body and local government units/agencies on the multi-sectoral implementation of the TB elimination plan

DOH reported that the following targets were met in 2018:

- 100 percent of regions, provinces, highly urbanized cities and municipalities have clear and costed TB elimination plans; and
- National and all regions, provinces, cities and municipalities have active multi-sectoral committees supporting TB elimination efforts at all levels.

B. Strengthening of the National and Regional Coordinating Committees (NCC and RCCs)

Under the law, these committees “serve as the National TB Control Program’s arm in strengthening and supporting nationwide capacity for program operations and bridging collaborative efforts between the public and private sector”. All DOH Centers for Health Development (CHD) have established their respective RCCs.

For its part, NCC has so far held two meetings, in which the following matters were discussed:

- Presentation of Philippine Strategic TB Elimination Plan (Philstep 1);
- Approval of NCC governance manual and selection of DSWD as co-chair;
- Finalization of some commitments of NCC members in support of Philstep 1;
- NTP updates on logistics and supplies;
- Possible inclusion of TB in 4Ps conditionality;
- Philhealth proposal for MDRTB package;
- FDA data surveillance of pharmacies; and
- Monitoring tool to track NTP accomplishments on a monthly basis.

DOH highlighted the following commitments made by partner agencies and organizations:

1. Philippine Information Agency (PIA)

- Assist in information dissemination through PIA’s Information Centers and Regional Centers;

2. Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis

- Review content of information materials for TB campaigns;
- Encourage/regulate members to comply with mandatory notification;

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

3. Philippine Pharmacists Association

- Encourage/regulate members to comply with “no prescription, no dispensing” policy;
- Consolidate and report data on TB prescriptions;

4. Food and Drug Administration

- Surveillance of dispensing prescription medicines, including TB drugs;

5. USAID

- Assist in determining appropriate media platforms for TB campaign;
- Assist in determining manpower gap at various levels based on health workload;
- Roll out alternative learning platforms for health workers;
- Implement technical assistance on developing self-reliance of communities in implementing TB elimination plan;

6. World Health Organization

- Support to next catastrophic cost survey;
- Contribute tools for data analysis (e.g. dashboard for monthly monitoring);

7. Patient Group (*Samahang Lusog Baga, SLB*)

- Assist in counseling patients to improve adherence;

8. Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)

- Explore possibility of 4P conditionality to include TB, and social protection for TB patients;
- Implement information and education for 4P members to support TB screening;

9. Department of Interior and Local Government

- Encourage participation of local governments;
- Implement TB elimination programs in jails, including mass screening;

10. League of Provinces of Philippines (LPP)

- Encourage LGUs to support TB elimination campaign;
- Advocate for establishment of a service delivery network (SDN) among members;

11. Department of Labor and Employment

- Report on annual CXR screening and TB cases;

12. National Economic and Development Authority

- Include TB agenda in national committees;

13. Philhealth

- Expand coverage to include drug resistant TB, TB screening and latent TB infection;

14. Department of Health

- Explore possibility of transferring funds from NTP (Health Promotion) to PIA;
- Develop clear guide for patient participation in TB elimination;
- Ensure timely procurement of TB drugs and commodities, including option of Global Drug Facility procurement;
- Provide technical assistance for establishing the SDNs (following lessons from advance implementation sites);
- CHDs to lead in convening regional multisectoral body for TB;
- Follow-up/monitor CHD-issued memo for deployed human resources to be involved in TB elimination activities;
- Revisit strategy of limiting private sector dispensing of TB drugs to the six large chain pharmacies/drugstores.

15. Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education

- Include TB in the curriculum (currently included in the Grade 4 and 8 curriculums; TB is taught under the Prevention and Control of Diseases and Disorders)

C. Research, demonstration projects, education and training

DOH reported to the Senate the following research projects to support the implementation of this law:

Table 8: Philstep strategy-based research

Philstep Strategy	Number of priority research
Empower communities and patient groups to promptly access quality TB services	7
Network with other agencies to reduce out-of-pocket expenses of TB patients and expand social protection programs	3
Galvanize national and local efforts to ensure adequate competent human resources	1
Advance the generation of TB information and utilization for decision-making	7
Guarantee provision of TB services in accordance with national standards and availability of quality NTP products	3
Expand integrated patient centered services to TB patients	26
Drum up support from the national, regional agencies, and local government units for the multisectoral implementation of TB elimination plan	1

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Table 9: NTP-based research

Research Information	Status
<p>Title: Costing the delivery of TB services in the Philippines from a health systems' perspective</p> <p>Participating regions: Regions III, MIMAROPA and XI</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to provide a comprehensive set of unit costs for TB services in the Philippines 2. to develop a sustainable framework for TB cost data collection at the country level; and 3. to facilitate the estimation of the technical efficiency of TB services 	Data collection and cleaning is ongoing. Target that data collection be finished by August.
<p>Title: Improving Molecular Diagnosis of Drug-resistant Tuberculosis</p> <p>Participating regions: NCR, CAR, I, II, III, IV-A, MIMAROPA, V, VII, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII</p> <p>General objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to characterize hetero-resistance and its association with clinical outcomes among cohort of patients with DRTB; 2. to identify novel genetic markers that predict and cause XDR-TB and pre-XDR phenotypes <p>Additional objectives: (Patient Tracing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to accurately reflect the overall effectiveness of the PMDT program 2. to encourage LTFU patients to go back to the treatment program 	Ongoing data collection
<p>Title: Tuberculosis Diagnostic Network Mapping</p> <p>Participating regions: Nationwide</p> <p>Objective: To develop a design of diagnostic network that will be more efficient in reaching "missing people with TB."</p>	<p>-Phase 1 is done; Phase 2 is ongoing with the aid of Family Health Office (FHI)360 private sector data</p> <p>-Diagnostic network mapping is being revised which will be presented on July</p>

Notification on TB cases

Draft Administrative Order on mandatory TB notification

This order requires all health care providers and facilities, both public and private, to notify the DOH about every case of TB they had seen which will be monitored using the official TB surveillance system.

The DOH said that based on the 2016 National TB Prevalence Survey, approximately 1 million Filipinos have TB and the burden remains unabated in the last 10 years. WHO estimated that around 581,000 new TB cases develop every year. However, only 55 percent are notified to the National TB Control Program (NTP), thus around 260,000 are still "missing." Since the same survey shows that 1/3 of the presumptive TB consult private practitioners, the program, through this order, would be able to engage private practitioners and capture cases that remain unreported to NTP.

The general objective of this order is to provide guidance on the standardized data collection, analysis, and response on mandatory TB notification that will help in the development of policies and plan to reach, treat and protect TB patients.

Specific objectives are the following:

- Specify the policies and implementing guidelines on the different processes of TB notification;
- Describe health systems support mechanisms to enable health care providers to comply with the order;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders;
- Define the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for this order.

Based on the most recent available data (February 19, 2019) covering CHDs in Metro Manila, Region III and Region IV, 8,753 private MDs have been mapped, of which 83 percent (7,251) have been oriented. Of those oriented, 83 percent (6,002) had reported TB cases.

Republic Act 11036: An Act Establishing a National Mental Health Policy for the Purpose of Enhancing the Delivery of Integrated Mental Health Services, Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Persons Utilizing Psychiatric, Neurologic and Psychosocial Health Services, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes

S 1354/H 6452, Approved on June 20, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to provide mental health patients with access to the benefits of government medical insurance under PhilHealth. These benefits include payment coverage for medical check-up, medicine, and hospital confinement. It also mandates the government to develop capabilities and manpower dedicated to attending to the needs of mental health patients.

UPDATE

DOH through its Legislative Liaison Division under Usec. Rolando Enrique D. Domingo informed the Senate that to effectively implement the IRR of this law, DOH requested a technical assistance from WHO on the following: (1) Hiring of a consultant to develop the Strategic Plan for the Philippine Council for Mental Health (PCMH); and (2) hiring of a short term technical staff to assist the Secretariat in PCMH affairs.

Update on agency guidelines based on the IRR of the Mental Health Act

a. For Section 13: Guidelines to fully operationalize the provision regarding informed consent to treatment, exceptions to informed consent, advanced directives, legal representatives and supported decision making, DOH conducted the following meetings:

- Stakeholders Meeting held on March 26, 2019;
- 1st Technical Working Group Meeting held on April 12, 2019;
- Core Group Meeting held on May 3, 2019 for the development of the Narrative of the Algorithm; and
- 2nd Technical Working Group Meeting held on May 10, 2019.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

The final draft of the guidelines has been completed and translated into an Administrative Order. A public consultation on the 4th week of July was scheduled before the finalization and issuance of the guidelines into an Administrative Order.

b. For Section 14 and Section 34: Guidelines and rules of practice relating to operationalization of the Internal Review Board (IRB) in mental health facilities and joint implementation guidelines for the effective implementation of this provision, the following meetings were conducted by DOH, in coordination with the Commission on Human Rights:

- Stakeholders Meeting held on May 30, 2019;
- 1st TWG Meeting held on June 13, 2019;
- Core-group meeting held on July 2, 2019;
- 2nd TWG Meeting held on July 12, 2019.

Draft guidelines of the Internal Review Board and a process flow for complaints are currently under development. The guidelines for Section 34 (Joint Implementation for Complaints and Investigation) will also be incorporated within the guidelines of the Internal Review Board.

c. For Section 24: Integration of mental health into the educational system, strengthened school and workplace mental health promotion plan:

Department of Education

DepEd conducted several Program Implementation Review (PIR) sessions of Oplan Kalusugan (OK) which included a discussion on the IRR of the Mental Health Act, as presented by Ms. Frances Prescilla Cuevas:

- Manila – Tanza, Cavite held on February 19, 2019
- Visayas – Dumaguete held on April 2-3, 2019
- Mindanao –General Santos City held on May 28, 2019

A preliminary meeting of the potential members of the DepEd TWG for Mental Health Integration was held on May 16, 2019. The TWG was formally constituted the following month. Moving forward, DepEd will pursue the following activities:

- Draft DepEd Order or Memorandum in August 2019;
- Pilot-testing of School-based Psychosocial/Mental Health Program on September-December with DepEd International Cooperation Office and SEAMEO TROPMED.

Commission on Higher Education

CCHED will establish strong collaboration with the student support services and with the network of guidance counselors. CCHED had set August 2019 as a deadline for the release of guidelines in the education system. It will integrate mental health through the curriculum in three ways: (1) on existing topics, (2) on separate programs/courses or electives, and (3) on post-graduate programs. Moreover, Physical Education will be revised into Integration of Wellness.

Technical Education Skills and Development Authority

DOH is following up with TESDA on their timeline and updates on the development of their school and workplace mental health promotion plan.

d. For Section 37: Duties and responsibilities of DSWD, guidelines to implement community resilience and psychosocial well-being training, including psychosocial support services during and after natural disasters and other calamities

DSWD is in the process of developing new guidelines (strengthening/enhancing wellness guidelines) which will be aligned with the provisions of the law. Many of their activities will be integrating mental health. While there is no update on the agency's schedule of meetings for the development of the guidelines, DSWD issued an advisory regarding a Mental Health Orientation on May 22-24, 2019 within Metro Manila inviting DOH and other stakeholders. DSWD shared that it is revitalizing the National Committee of the Filipino Family as a venue to discuss family-related concerns, including parenting and other mental health elements. Moreover, for the observance of the International Year of the Family, DSWD's activities will focus on mental health.

e. For Section 36: Duties and responsibilities of DOLE and CSC, guidelines and standards on appropriate and evidenced-based mental health programs for the workplace and policies to promote mental health in workplace & mental health programs for overseas Filipino workers

Department of Labor and Employment

DOLE has created an administrative order (AO) to facilitate the development of these guidelines, with the DOH assigned to aid their TWG. The development of workplace policies and programs is designed to raise awareness, correct stigma, and provide support and access to treatment. The DOLE-TWG was created through AO 115, series 2019. The agency's timeline is indicated below:

- Creation of TWG – March 2019
 - 1st TWG Meeting (DOLE and DOH) last April 10, 2019
 - 2nd TWG Meeting (DOLE, DOH, Mental Health experts and other stakeholders) last May 3, 2019
 - 3rd TWG Meeting (DOLE, DOH, Mental Health experts and other stakeholders) last May 21, 2019
 - 4th TWG Meeting (DOLE, DOH, Mental Health experts and other stakeholders) last June 11, 2019
 - 5th TWG Meeting (DOLE, DOH, Mental Health experts and other stakeholders) last July 3, 2019
- A draft mental health workplace policy has been developed. The next scheduled meetings are:
 - Technical Executive Committee (TEC) Consultations and Tripartite Industrial Peace Council Consultations in July 2019;
 - Issuance of the Guidelines in August; and
 - Orientation and Learning Sessions in September 2019 onwards.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Civil Service Commission

On January 29, 2019, the Human Resource Relations Office, through its Memorandum No. 97, s. 2019, proposed the creation of a TWG to draft the policy on mental health for the public sector. On February 7, 2019, the Office of the CSC Chairperson issued Office Order No. 108 constituting a TWG on Mental Health.

Several meetings have been held:

- 1st TWG meeting held on February 21, 2019
- 2nd TWG meeting held on March 6, 2019
- 3rd TWG meeting held on March 25, 2019

A consultation on the draft Mental Health Workplace Policy for the Public Sector was held on May 27, 2019.

CSC's key accomplishments include:

- Plan schedules, activities and strategies to draft the policy on mental health for the public sector;
- Consolidated initial inputs and drafted the proposed policy on mental health;
- Reviewed the first draft of the guidelines, the model, the resolution and the Memorandum Circular.

f. For Section 40: Mandate strategic plan for implementation, including a balanced scorecard with indicators. It shall encompass the establishment of a multi-agency and /or multi-sector coordinating mechanism to ensure integrated participation of the regions, provinces, cities/municipalities through regional and local mental health councils or other appropriate bodies

DOH issued a Department Personnel Order for the creation of a TWG for the development of the Strategic Plan for PCMH. DOH, in partnership with WHO, conducted several meetings for the development of this Strategic Plan:

- Stakeholder's Meeting for the Strategic Plan on March 22, 2019
- 1st Technical Working G Meeting on April 12, 2019
- Four (4) consultative meetings:
 - With the Academe and Service Providers on May 10, 2019
 - With DOH, NCMH, and PHIC on May 14, 2019
 - With the Other duty-bearers (government agencies) on May 17, 2019
 - With the People with lived experience on May 18, 2019
- 1st Strategic Planning Workshop on June 18-20, 2019
- Scheduled Activities:
 - 2nd Strategic Planning Workshop on July 9-11, 2019
 - 3rd Strategic Planning Workshop on July 30-August 1, 2019

g. For Section 27: Guidelines on capacity-building, reorientation and training for mental health workers, stakeholders, etc.

A letter addressed to Dr. Kenneth Ronquillo, Director IV of the Health Human Resource and Development Bureau (HHRDB) was sent on April 1, 2019 requesting for technical assistance in the development of the guidelines. The letter is for review and action of the Division Chief as of April 8, 2019. A meeting with Dr. Tolentino and Dr. Bautista of HHRDB was held on May 29, 2019 at the HHRDB Office. Mapping of the existing trainings from the National Mental Health Program was completed.

h. For Section 17: Guidelines in the establishment of community-based mental health care facilities, including drug screening and establishment of psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial services in hospitals

A TWG consisting of mental health specialists was created for this purpose with mental health specialists. There were already two meetings conducted and spearheaded by DOH – Health Facilities and Services Regulation Bureau.

Recommendations

DOH said that all policies/guidelines that will be developed must be subject to public consultations to incorporate inputs from a wide spectrum of stakeholders.

Republic Act 11148: An Act Scaling Up the National and Local Health and Nutrition Programs Through a Strengthened Integrated Strategy for Maternal, Neonatal, Child Health and Nutrition

S 1537/H 5777, Approved on November 29, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to refocus interventions in addressing malnutrition among the most nutritionally at-risk, prioritizing women of reproductive age, especially adolescent girls, teen-age mothers, pregnant and lactating women, and children from birth up to 24 months.

Timely immunization, promotion of breastfeeding and complimentary feeding, micronutrient supplementation, and assurance of women and child-friendly spaces during calamities, disasters and other emergencies are some of the program components.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

UPDATE

DOH reported to the Senate that the TWG on the drafting of the IRR of RA 11148 was assembled on January 28, 2019. The IRR was formally approved and launched on May 2, 2019 during the First 1,000 Days Forum. The creation of the IRR was based on a policy framework that anchors the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2017 to 2022 and its future permutations as the strategic framework for planning, operations, and monitoring and evaluation.

Research on drivers of malnutrition

In June 2019, the Public Health Services Team (PHST) commissioned a research exercise with the National Nutrition Council (NNC)—with funding support from UNICEF—to determine the drivers of malnutrition in the Philippines. It also sought to leverage PPAN and PDP as enablers of the efficient implementation of RA 11148.

Results of the study will dictate the strategic framework of RA 11148 by determining where investments on nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions should be focused to produce high-yield results in the reduction of stunting in the country. Stunting is the chronic form of malnutrition, which is a result of poor performance in reaching essential nutrition targets (anemia and malnutrition in women of reproductive age, low birth weight, childhood overweight, exclusive breastfeeding, and wasting).

Review of Results Framework

On July 5, 2019, it was agreed in the NNC Governing Board meeting that to support the efficient implementation of RA 11148, a review of the Results Framework must be conducted to align national government agency roles with the First 1,000 Days Strategy.

This involves coordination with government agencies for nutrition-sensitive interventions. Major consultative meetings with DSWD, DepEd, DA, BFAR, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), and Department of Agrarian Reform were held to underscore agency accountability on the implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions.

Results Mapping Workshop on Health Governance and Leadership Program

In response to increasing the capacity of DOH and NNC nutrition program managers, a Results Mapping Workshop on Health Governance and Leadership Program (HGLP) will be held with support from Zuellig Family

Foundation (ZFF) and UNICEF. This will address the local governance component of RA 11148 and PPAN.

Upcoming events

DOH has allotted funds for a workshop on the formulation of a comprehensive and sustainable strategic implementation plan of RA 11148 for September 2019. In support of updating capacity-building modules, there will be a training on the harmonized infant and young child feeding modules for DOH and NNC trainers for roll-out in 2020. Meanwhile, the release of Manual of Operations for the implementation of RA 11148 is scheduled in November-December 2019.

Issues and challenges

DOH informed the Senate of the following issues and challenges on the implementation of this law:

1. Policy coherence

At the national level, DOH, NNC and other national government agencies have to ensure alignment of all prior policies and laws related to RA 11148. At the local government level, provincial board resolutions and LGU ordinances have to be revisited and realigned as well.

DOH identified the following laws/regulations as “complementary” to RA 11148:

- Republic Act 11223 – Universal Health Care Act;
- Republic Act 10354 – RP RH Law;
- EO 51 and its rIRR;
- Republic Act 10028 – Expanded Promotion of Breastfeeding Act;
- Republic Act 11037 – Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Act;
- Republic Act 11210 – Expanded Maternity Leave Law;
- Republic Act 9710 – Magna Carta of Women;
- Republic Act 9442 – Magna Carta for Persons with Disability;
- Republic Act 10821 – Children Emergency and Relief Protection Act;
- Republic Act 10152 – Mandatory Immunization of Children;
- Republic Act 10410 – Early Years Act;
- Republic Act 8976 – Food Fortification Law;
- Republic Act 8172 – ASIN Law; and
- Republic Act 6972 – Barangay-level Total Development and Protection Act.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

2. Budgetary allocations

- Current approach to budgeting is based on prior budget programming and not aligned with what the law requires;
- Regionalized and localized budgeting and planning for RA 11148 may affect its sustainability and operationalization; and
- Funding for RA 11148 should not be dependent on DOH program budgeting alone, but also on other NGAs and local government units that implement this law, or an independent General Appropriations Act (GAA) item similar to support to poor local governments.

3. Accelerated development of collateral policy instruments and tools

At the national level, DOH said that there is an urgent need to dedicate staff hours and human resources to develop the following:

- Manual of Operations of RA 11148 – “Updating the DOH MNCHN Strategy Manual of Operation”;
- Results framework for nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions;
- Results-based monitoring and evaluation framework and tools; and
- Costed multi-year investment and implementation plan.

4. Current infrastructure status of primary care facilities

AO 2016-0035 on the provision of quality antenatal care is considered an important policy if health of the newborn is to be assured. Its implementation however is challenged by the lack of the necessary infrastructure and other required amenities. This includes a well-equipped primary care level laboratory that will allow the provision of secondary level services required by the policy.

5. Human resources for health, nutrition, etc.

- The master plan for human resources for health, nutrition, other allied health, non-health and social services has to be carefully studied and planned, both at the national and local level;
- The current level of implementation is restrictive because of the limited number of personnel designated for management, technical assistance, and frontline services to oversee and deliver direct and indirect services; and
- Irregular capacity-building of frontline health and nutrition workers affects supply and efficiency of delivery of services.

6. Communication and advocacy

A sustainable and long-term communication plan is needed to ensure that every Filipino and every policy and implementor will know how this law is critical to achieve the National Objectives for Health, the current and subsequent PDPs, AmBisyon Natin 2040, PPAN 2017 to 2022, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Republic Act 11215: An Act Institutionalizing a National Integrated Cancer Control Program and Appropriating Funds Therefor

S 1850/H 8636, Approved on February 14, 2019

SYNOPSIS

Called the National Integrated Cancer Control Act, this law establishes the National Integrated Cancer Control Program to serve as the framework for all cancer-related activities of the government. It creates a National Integrated Cancer Control Council to act as the policy making, planning and coordinating body on cancer control attached DOH. It establishes a Philippine Cancer Center, still under the DOH, to provide for accommodation, facilities and medical treatment of patients suffering from cancer, hold training programs, and conduct research and development activities, among others. Cancer care centers and regional cancer centers will also be established.

Under this law, a Cancer Assistance Fund will support cancer medicine and treatment. Philhealth is also mandated to expand its benefit packages to include primary care screening, detection, diagnosis, treatment assistance, supportive care, survivorship follow-up care rehabilitation, and end-of-life care, for all types and stages of cancer, in both adults and children.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Myrna C. Cabotaje of DOH reported to the Senate that the TWG handling the development of the IRR has held 11 meetings and three public consultations, one each for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao as of July 2019. She said that "all contentious issues in the law are being threshed out and will be finalized in the last TWG meeting." The last meeting was scheduled on July 15, 2019, to be followed by "legal scrubbing." The IRR of this law was finally approved on August 9, 2019.

Republic Act 11223: Act Instituting Universal Health Care for All Filipinos, Prescribing Reforms in the Health Care System, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

S 1896/H 5784, Approved on February 20, 2019

SYNOPSIS

Under this law, all Filipino citizens are automatically enrolled in the new National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) managed by Philhealth. Members are classified as either direct contributors (i.e. paying members), or indirect contributors whose premiums are subsidized by the government. However, population-based services such as mass

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

immunization and health promotion will continue to be the responsibility of DOH.

This law defines the responsibility of city and provincial health systems to oversee health services in their respective localities. It creates a Health Technology and Assessment Council (HTAC) to assess the safety and effectiveness of relevant health technology, medicines, vaccines, and other related tools and procedures. It also requires healthcare providers to maintain a health information system containing the health records of patients, among others.

UPDATE

The DOH through Usec. Rolando Enrique D. Domingo informed the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending.

The DOH official outlined the following milestones in the implementation of this law and the drafting of the IRR:

- Discussion on UHC-IRR Health Financing pillar during the 4th National Health Sector Meeting with the theme “Ensuring Equitable Health Care and Financial Sustainability” on June 25-28, 2019. Participants were DOH execom members; DOH central office and CHD directors ;chiefs of DOH hospitals; special and specialty hospitals and treatment and rehabilitation centers; heads of attached agencies; development partners; and invited guests (280 attendees);
- Regional Public Consultation for the Development of IRR on UHC for Southern Luzon on July 4-5, 2019. Participants were stakeholders from Central Luzon, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Bicol (328 attendees);
- Regional Public Consultation for the Development of IRR on UHC for Visayas Regions. Participants were stakeholders from Western Visayas, Eastern Visayas and Central Visayas (300 attendees);
- Consultation on UHC-IRR Legal Concerns on July 12, 2019. Participants were representatives from DOH offices, PhilHealth, University of the Philippines College of Law, DBM, and DILG; and
- Regional Public Consultation for the Development of IRR on UHC for Mindanao and BARMM on July 18-19, 2019 and July 25-26, 2019 respectively.

During the 4th National Health Sector Meeting at Oriental Hotel, Legaspi City on June 25-28, 2019, the following issues involving capacity and transition plans were raised:

- External collaboration and/or outsourcing of current core functions such as premium collection, counter-fraud, risk management, price negotiations;
- Updating of PhilHealth All Case Rates by using a protocol-based disease costing framework and building consensus among stakeholders to minimize variation in practice protocols, where top burdens of disease are prioritized;

- Scale up implementation of pre-authorization system;
- Institutionalization of in-house training courses to build capacity for timely and accurate actuarial modelling, costing and coding methodologies, monitoring and evaluation for quality of care, among others.

Directives to UHC-IS TWG:

- Generate practical and empirical evidence in the UHC Implementation Sites Program or LGUs (i.e. LGUs to serve as applicable models for national roll-out).

Justice and Human Rights

Republic Act 11055: An Act Establishing the Philippine Identification System

S 1738/H 6221, Approved on August 6, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to establish a single national identification system (PhilSys) for all citizens and resident aliens of the Republic of the Philippines to provide a valid proof of identity as a means of simplifying public and private transactions.

Data to be collected under this system shall be limited to the following:

- a. Demographic Data;
 - Full Name;
 - Sex;
 - Date of Birth;
 - Place of Birth;
 - Blood Type;
 - Address;
 - Filipino or Resident Alien;
 - Marital Status (optional);
 - Mobile Number (optional); and
 - Email Address (optional);
- b. Biometrics Information;
- c. Front Facing Photograph;
- d. Full Set of Fingerprints;
- e. Iris Scan; and
- f. Other Identifiable Features as may be determined by the IRR.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) is the primary implementing agency of this law. It is authorized to issue guidelines and undertake measures to ensure secure, reliable and efficient authentication of PhilSys records upon the request of authorized government and private entities.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

This act also creates the PhilSys Policy and Coordination Council (PSPCC), which is charged with formulating policies and guidelines to ensure effective coordination and implementation of PhilSys.

UPDATE

PSA noted that by simplifying public and private transactions, PhilSys will result in seamless delivery of services, particularly for vulnerable sectors and overseas Filipinos.

The agency reported to the Senate the following milestones in the implementation of this law:

Establishment of institutional governance and mechanisms for PhilSys

In 2018, PSA created PSPCC as the highest policy-making body governing PhilSys. PSPCC has held several meetings to set directions in the formulation of the IRR (approved on October 5, 2018), development of technical specifications for PhilSys Core Technology Infrastructure, crafting of an extensive Information Awareness Campaign Strategy, and the creation of interagency committees for technical support to PhilSys. PSPCC also led the planning of the Proof of Concept (POC), which aims to test the end-to-end system of PhilSys and ensure its efficiency and effectiveness prior to the launch of mass registration. However, initial plans to conduct a POC has not yet materialized. During the year, PSA also created the PhilSys Registry Office as a separate office under PSA dedicated to the implementation and management of PhilSys.

In 2019, PSA created interagency committee sub-groups to provide technical support in the development of strategies and plans. It also approved the PhilSys Implementation Plan for 2019-2022, which serves as the strategic blueprint in operationalizing PhilSys.

Development of PhilSys core technology infrastructure

PSA has finalized the technical specifications for the following technology infrastructure:

- Registration kits;
- Registration center;
- System integrator;
- Automated biometric identification system;
- Card production and personalization; and
- Data center.

An invitation to bid for registration kits was posted on April 9, 2019. The lowest calculated and responsive bidder, followed by the conduct of post-qualification activities to evaluate whether the required technical specifications are met, have been conducted. Moreover, it approved the adoption of a Modular Open Source Identity Platform as the registration system for PhilSys operations.

Information awareness campaign

PSA has signed an agreement with the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) for an information awareness campaign on PhilSys until 2020. A communication plan has been drafted and is pending the approval of the PSA Executive Committee. Meanwhile, **#IDnatin** has been identified as the official campaign handle for PhilSys.

Issues and recommendations

PSA noted the following issues that have caused delays in the implementation of this law:

- Complexity and interdependency of the required technology, causing prolonged technical design and procurement timelines;
- Pre-requisites to registration rollout:
 - Development of a comprehensive PhilSys enterprise architecture within tight timelines as a prerequisite to registration roll-out;
 - Development of technical specifications for automated biometric identification system (ABIS) and system integration (SI) services;
 - Identification of use cases and design of authentication services; and
 - Establishment of PhilSys Data Center;
- Insufficient budget allocation particularly for the following major operational requirements:
 - Card production and personalization;
 - Data center,
 - PhilSys Registry Office plantilla positions; and
 - PhilSys Registry Office operations center;
- Delays in hiring of key technical personnel which impacts the fast-tracking of implementation to meet the targets set by the law (i.e. registration to commence one year after the effectivity of RA 11055).

To address these issues, PSA recommended the following actions:

- Develop technical specifications for major PhilSys system blocks (registration kit, ABIS, SI and card production and personalization) with the entirety of the PhilSys operating system in perspective, to ensure that all possible interdependencies are addressed in the technical design of each block;
- Tap the technical assistance of international development partners and the expertise of the detailed Senior Technical Adviser for PhilSys to lead the development of the PhilSys enterprise architecture and ensure its completion before the target registration roll-out;
- Leverage the support of PhilSys champions in Congress for the approval of full budgetary requirements of PhilSys;
- Facilitate the approval of a Multi-Year Obligational Authority (MYOA) for PhilSys until 2022, considering the complexity and context in which PhilSys operates;
- Coordinate closely with the Human Resource Division of the PSA to prioritize hiring of key technical positions for PhilSys under contract of service status.

PSA outlined the opportunities and threats in the implementation of this law, as well as proposed strategies to address them (next page).

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Table 10: Opportunities, threats and strategies to address them

Opportunities	Strategies
Strong political support in implementing Philsys	Leverage their support for the approval of full budgetary requirements and manpower complement for Philsys
Increasing digitization of the economy	Development of systems to cater for electronic transactions in the use of PhilID
Strong interest in the PhilSys of both the public and the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular coordination and engagement of government partners through the PSPCC - Explore partnership with the private sector for the provision of space for fixed registration centers
Possible amendments to the Civil Registration Law	Initiate dialogues regarding the linking of the Civil Registration Service (CRS) and the Philsys databases for the assigning of Philsys Number (PSN) immediately after birth and the deactivation of such immediately after death of a Philsys registered individual
Threats	Strategies
Demonstrations and strong condemnation from the public due to lack of trust in the Philsys	Conduct of an extensive Philsys information awareness campaign
Malicious propaganda from antigovernment factions and other Philsys opposing groups	Establishment of a crisis communications team within the PSA that will monitor all media platforms and immediately address misinformation
Cybersecurity threats (e.g. Phishing, Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attack, Ransomware, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conduct of the Privacy Impact Assessment during the initial stages of implementation to ensure that gaps on data privacy and security are identified and addressed early on -Regular conduct of external and internal Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing (VAPT) to maintain integrity of the Philsys systems
Occurrence of natural or man-made disasters causing significant damage to the Philsys Data Center	Establishment of Philsys Data Centers, including a back-up, in different locations that meet security requirements

Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development

Republic Act 10970: An Act Declaring the Twenty-Fifth Day of August of Every Year as the National Tech-Voc Day

S 209/H 6136, Approved on February 7, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This act institutes a National Tech-Voc Day every 25th of August and encourages all public and private institutions to organize and participate in related events.

UPDATE

Deputy Director General Rosanna A. Urdaneta of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) informed the Senate in 2018 that the agency issued Circular No. 38 s. 2016 requiring all TESDA regional and provincial offices, TESDA Technology Institutions, and private technical-vocational institutions to hold regular “World Café of Opportunities (WCO)” through Job Linkaging and Networking Services (JoLiNS).

WCO through JoLiNS is a one-stop-shop for technical, vocational education and training (TVET) graduates/alumni to explore possible employment, training and financing opportunities. National government agencies, private companies, “tech-voc” institutions, and financing institutions participate in such events. The first WCO through JoLiNS was held simultaneously in 17 regions during the celebration of the National Tech-Voc Day on August 25, 2018. TESDA plans to hold this event twice a year or once per semester in the coming years.

Other events held on National Tech-Voc Day 2018 included the following:

- National enrollment day and job bridging for construction-related qualifications;
- Walk for the national tech-voc day; and
- Skills demonstrations showcasing TVET programs.

In 2019, more than 1,000 TVET graduates were served during the celebration of the National Tec Voc Day of TESDA-NCR on August 27, 2019 at the Ynares Sports Arena, Pasig City. Like in 2018, WCO through JoLiNS was also held during the event. Various technical vocational institutions put up an exhibit to showcase their capabilities.

TESDA also set up exhibits and skills demonstration events in different offices, including the Senate.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 11230: An Act Instituting a Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program and Free Access to Technical - Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and Appropriating Funds Therefor

S 1431/H 8139, Approved on February 22, 2019

SYNOPSIS

The law creates a fund that finances the scholarship of workers to training programs on skills demanded by industry.

UPDATE

Secretary Isidro S. Lapeña of TESDA informed the Senate in 2018 of the following challenges in implementing this law:

- No budget allocation for 2018;
- Determining the selected training programs as defined under the law;
- Recognizing industry boards/associations qualified to avail of the Tulong Trabaho fund.

Moving forward, TESDA will pursue the following actions to implement this law:

- Issuing the operational guidelines;
- Fund sourcing for the initial implementation of the program;
- Recognition of industry boards/bodies/associations; and
- Identifying selected training programs.

Public Order and Dangerous Drugs

Republic Act 10883: An Act Providing for a New Anti-Carnapping Law of the Philippines

S 2794/H 4544, Approved on July 17, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law imposes penalties on those who commit carnapping, which is defined as “the taking, with intent to gain, of a motor vehicle belonging to another without the latter’s consent, or by means of violence against or intimidation of persons, or by using force upon things”. It also prohibits the concealment of carnapping, defacing or tampering with serial numbers, and the sale of second-hand spare parts taken from a carnapped vehicle, among others.

UPDATE

Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief General Oscar D. Albayalde informed the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending with the Legal Office of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) (as of July 29, 2019). DOTr is still in the process of consolidating inputs from the Land Transportation Office, Philippine Coast Guard, Maritime Industry Authority, Bureau of Customs and the Highway Patrol Group (HPG). Even with the pending approval of

the IRR, he said that the agency has successfully filed “a number of cases” for violation of this law.

The PNP Chief added that the “lack of penal provisions for a number of crimes relating to carnapping” could not be addressed through the IRR and hence, required amendments to the law, specifically, all acts stipulated in Sections 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17. This observation was noted during a joint workshop on the implementation of this law by prosecutors from the National Prosecution Service, DOJ, and investigators from HPG.

Republic Act 10973: An Act Granting the Chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Director and the Deputy Director for Administration of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) the Authority to Administer Oath and to issue Subpoena and Subpoena Duces Tecum

S 1239/H 4863, Approved on March 1, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law gives the Chief of the PNP and the Deputy Director for Administration of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) the power to administer oath, and issue *subpoena* and *subpoena duces tecum* in relation to its investigation.

UPDATE

PNP Chief PDG Oscar D. Albayalde reported to the Senate in 2018 that the provisional guidelines on the implementation of *subpoena duces tecum* and *subpoena ad testificandum* were issued on June 22, 2018. The PNP chief said that such guidelines strictly observe Rules 21 and 71 of the Rules of Court, which apply on subpoenas issued by quasi-judicial entities and other offices outside the judiciary.

Meanwhile, Police Director Roel B. Obusan of CIDG informed the Senate in June 2018 that they have issued six subpoenas. Of this number, five have substantially complied while one requested for additional time.

Issues and concerns

PDG Albayalde noted that the PNP “is confronted with a generally misplaced notion” that the grant of subpoena powers to the PNP Chief, and the Director and Deputy Director for Administration of CIDG might be abused. The PNP is thus “placed with the burden of proving its case against a recalcitrant witness before the proper court”. To avoid such circumstance, PNP seeks to ensure that every subpoena issued “is pursuant to the established guidelines and to applicable provisions of the Rules of Court”.

Police Director Obusan’s report offered the following details:

“If there is any problem at all at this stage, it is only the generally misplaced notion that is being advanced by some misguided sector/s that this grant of subpoena power might be abused. This is a misplaced

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

and erroneous notion considering that in case of non-compliance/recalcitrant witness, this Group (CIDG) still has to initiate a Petition for Indirect Contempt of Court before the RTCs of Quezon City, the general venue for our petition. Note that neither this group nor the intended witness but only the appropriate branch of the RTC-Quezon City which will determine whether or not the issued subpoena is unreasonable, or irrelevant, or oppressive, or that the disobedience thereof is "without adequate cause". Thus, if and when an unreasonable or irrelevant, or oppressive subpoena was indeed issued by this Group, it will only give us a difficult time to prove our case against the recalcitrant witness, and eventually bring us only into bad light before the RTCs of Quezon City. To be sure, the only way to avoid this is for this Group to ensure that every subpoena is issued pursuant to the guidelines as well as the applicable provisions of the Rules of Court."

Both officials note that the implementation of this law is still in its early stages and thus, any serious legal issues have yet to be encountered.

Public Services

Republic Act 10913: An Act Defining and Penalizing Distracted Driving

S 3211/H 4531, Approved on July 21, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This act prohibits distracted driving by restricting and penalizing the use of handheld mobile phones and other electronic devices while driving on any public road, street or highway. This law covers all public and private vehicles, including agricultural machineries, tractors, construction equipment, as well as bicycles, pedicabs, motorcycles, trolleys, and carts.

The provisions of this act shall not apply to motorists of motor vehicles which are not in motion, except those which are stopped momentarily at a red light, or are pulled over to the side of the road in compliance with a traffic regulation. It shall also not apply to motorists using a mobile phone for emergency purposes.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Thomas M. Orbos of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) informed the Senate in 2018 that the IRR of this law was signed on 4 April 2017. A revised version was issued in June 2017.

Usec. Orbos recommended the following actions to enhance the implementation of this law:

- Consistent enforcement activities;
- Better public awareness;
- Installation of more high-resolution CCTV cameras; and
- Promulgation and implementation of regulations on TINTs.

Republic Act 10916: An Act Requiring the Mandatory Installation of Speed Limiter in Public Utility and Certain Types of Vehicle

S 2999/H 5911, Approved on July 21, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This act calls for the mandatory installation of speed limiters in all covered vehicles. Those who fail to install the device shall not be allowed to ply roads, register with the Land Transportation Office (LTO), or be given a franchise by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Bureau (LTFRB).

UPDATE

Undersecretary Thomas M. Orbos of DOTr informed the Senate in 2018 that the IRR of this law was published on April 12, 2018. Guidelines on the Accreditation of Speed Limiter Installers and Testing Facilities were also released on the same date.

However, he noted the following issues and concerns:

- Limited availability of speed limiter devices in the Philippines; and
- Pending guidelines from DTI on the process of accreditation of speed limiter devices, as well as consideration of vehicles with electronic control units (ECU) compliance with the Philippine National Standard for Speed Limiters, aside from the actual speed limiter devices.

Republic Act 10930: An Act Rationalizing and Strengthening the Policy Regarding Driver's License by Extending the Validity Period of Drivers' Licenses, and Penalizing Acts in Violation of its Issuance and Application

S 1449/H 5648, Approved on August 2, 2017

SYNOPSIS

This law amends Section 23 of the Land Transportation and Tariff Code (RA 4136) to extend the validity period of drivers' licenses.

Under Section 23, stricter rules and guidelines regarding the issuance of licenses will be enforced by LTO to ensure that licenses are issued only to deserving applicants with sufficient driving skills and knowledge of road safety and proper road courtesy.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Thomas M. Orbos of DOTr informed the Senate in 2018 that the IRR of this law has been approved. However, he noted problems with respect to connectivity IT (DERMALOG), as well as the finalization of the merit/demerit system guidelines.

To improve the implementation of this law, Usec. Orbos recommended the following actions:

- Interconnectivity with the database of local government units on apprehensions;
- Distribution of promotional/educational material;

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

- Giving out questionnaires to random driver's license applicants;
- Deployment of exam via touch screen computer;
- Use of biometrics and facial recognition; and
- Establishment of online and walk-in application and payment facilities.

Public Works

Republic Act 10752: An Act Facilitating the Acquisition of Right-Of-Way Site or Location for National Government Infrastructure Projects

S 3004/H 5588, Approved on March 7, 2016

SYNOPSIS

The law states that the government may acquire real property needed as right-of-way (ROW) site or location for any national government infrastructure project through donation, negotiated sale, expropriation or any other mode of acquisition as provided by law.

UPDATE

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) through Assistant Secretary Eduardo S. Ramos, Jr. reported to the Senate the "numerous issues" concerning the implementation of this law. These issues involved "restrictions or loopholes" in some provisions of the law, and insufficient provisions governing important processes in ROW acquisition. These issues are outlined in detail below.

Section 5(a)(1) on current market value of the land as a basis for computing the compensation price for negotiated sales and expropriations

DPWH encountered numerous cases wherein the land's zonal valuation by the BIR increases pending negotiation or expropriation by DPWH. Unfortunately, DPWH could not offer compensation based on the zonal valuation outright "because it is not provided in the law."

The agency relies on the appraisal of the contracted government financial institution (GFI) or independent property appraiser (IPA) to determine the current market value of the land. If the property owner does not accept the offered price based on the current market value (i.e. if it is lower than the BIR zonal valuation), expropriation proceedings are initiated. DPWH noted that "instead of expediting the process of ROW acquisition by directly opting for the zonal value as compensation price, the parties are compelled to unnecessarily go through expropriation proceedings since RA 10752 only provides for current market value as compensation price. Thus, the offer at current market value of the land becomes the reason for the delay in ROW acquisition, and consequently, the purpose of negotiation in the speedy acquisition of ROW is not accomplished."

To expedite ROW acquisition, DPWH recommended that this section be amended to allow either current market valuation or zonal valuation, whichever is higher, as basis for just compensation.

Section 6(a) and (b) on the proper payee of deposit checks for purposes of issuance of the Writ of Possession (WoP)

According to the law, “Upon the filing of the complaint or at any time thereafter, and after due notice to the defendant, the implementing agency shall immediately deposit to the court ***in favor of the owner*** [emphasis added] the amount equivalent to...one hundred percent (100 percent) of the value of the land based on the current relevant zonal valuation of BIR”, as well as the current market value of the improvements, structures, crops and trees located thereon. If the owner could not be found, is unknown or deceased, or there are conflicting claims, the amount shall be for the “benefit of the person to be adjudged...as entitled thereto.”

Asec. Ramos informed the Senate that in expropriation cases, the agency normally issues checks payable to the defendant/s. Checks payable to the court are issued “only if there is a written court order to that effect.” He noted that this process is observed by courts in Metro Manila for other DPWH infrastructure projects.

Recently, DPWH was required by the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) to issue checks payable to the court even without a court order. However, the agency encountered situations wherein checks issued in the name of the executive clerk of court where the expropriation case is being tried led to “problems with the disbursement vouchers and with the Commission on Audit...since the proper payee for them is the owner of the property.” Meanwhile, deposit checks issued in favor of the owner/s were not accepted as sufficient compliance for purposes of WoP issuance “due to conflicting interpretations accorded to Section 6(a) and (b).”

Asec. Ramos remarked that designating the account of the executive clerk of court for this purpose “will allow the processing of checks even prior to raffling of cases”. If the check is for the account of the defendant/s, it “will facilitate the monitoring of payment for the issuance of WoP”

Some courts support the view of OCA; some do not. Nevertheless, the conflicting interpretations of this section of the law “puts DPWH in a difficult position”, causing delays in the acquisition of property and commencement of infrastructure works.

Payment of just compensation for utilities affected by ROW acquisition

Structures or facilities owned by private utility companies affected by ROW acquisition pose a concern for DPWH as these companies tend to demand compensation for expenses related to relocating such structures or facilities. According to Asec. Ramos, DPWH “does not see the purpose of paying for the relocation expenses since it has no basis under the law.”

If DPWH is indeed required to shoulder relocation expenses, determining the basis for compensation – whether relocation cost or functional cost – also requires clarification. The agency defines relocation cost as the “cost computed based on the cost of materials and labor less depreciation,” while functional cost is equivalent to the cost of materials and labor less depreciation plus the “cost of improving the facilities in order for it to function upon relocation.”

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

The DPWH official offered the following illustration:

"Suppose there is a wooden pole owned by a PUD that is affected by ROW acquisition. The relocation cost for said wooden pole would be the cost of materials and labor less depreciation. On the other hand, the functional cost for relocating the wooden pole would be equivalent to the cost of materials and labor less depreciation; but in this case, you would also have to factor in the cost of whatever improvements the wooden pole might undergo due to its relocation. Thus, if the wooden pole is no longer feasible upon relocation to the new area and an upgrade to steel poles are required, functional cost would have to include the cost of steel, which is significantly more costly than the cost of wood. Hence, functional cost is manifestly higher and more disadvantageous for DPWH to pay, and taking into account the fact that the law does not provide as to who should pay for functional costs of relocation, DPWH maintains its view that it should not pay the same."

Summary proceedings in expropriation cases

DPWH is calling for expropriation cases to be governed by summary procedure to expedite ROW acquisition.

Designation of special expropriation court/s

Asec. Ramos said that given the quantity of ROW acquisition projects that DPWH and the Office of the Solicitor General is handling, "it is high time for the creation and assignment of special expropriation courts, whose expertise in handling and disposing of expropriation cases would tremendously aid in the fast resolution of cases and acquisition of ROW." He remarked that such courts can also help declog court dockets.

Section 4(a) on the application of provisions under Commonwealth Act No. 141, as amended, in ROW acquisition of patent lands

DPWH is requesting for more defined guidelines in applying the provisions of Commonwealth Act No. 141, as amended, to lands belonging to an original patent holder or lands acquired through a gratuitous title from the original patent holder.

Entry into and use of subsurface or subterranean portions of private and government lands

According to Section 4 of the law, "When it is necessary to build, construct, or install on the subsurface or subterranean portion of private and government lands owned, occupied, or leased by other persons...the government or any of its authorized representatives shall not be prevented from entry into and use of the subsurface or subterranean portions of such private and government lands by surface owners or occupants, if such entry and use are made more than 50 meters from the surface."

DPWH is requesting to add to this section a clarification that "in the use of subterranean land, payment of just compensation is limited to only 50 meters from the surface" to avoid excessive payment for just compensation.

Curative legislation for Section 6(a)(2) as to who determines the replacement cost for improvements and structures

Section 6(a)(2) states that upon the filing of the complaint, the implementing agency shall deposit to the court in favor of the owner the amount equivalent to “the replacement cost at current market value of the improvements and structures, as determined by (i) the implementing agency; (ii) a government financial institution with adequate experience in property appraisal; **and** (iii) An independent property appraiser accredited by the BSP” [emphasis added].

DPWH is requesting to amend the word **and** emphasized in the previous paragraph to **or**. Asec. Ramos noted that using the word **and** “connotes the requirement of securing the findings of all three persons or entities listed therein, consequently delaying the process of determining the appropriate amount of deposit needed to secure a WoP over the property being expropriated.” The DPWH official further noted that “the pre-enacted, final version of RA 10752 used the word **or** to expedite processes leading to ROW acquisition.”

Availability of GFI personnel to perform property valuation to determine the appropriate price offer for ROW acquisition

Asec. Ramos remarked that Section 6.4 (b) of the IRR of this law requires GFIs to undertake the appraisal by administration using their own in-house manpower and resources. However, they “refuse to be engaged by DPWH due to the lack of manpower and available in-house personnel to determine the appropriate price offer or compensation,” further delaying the ROW acquisition process.

Thus, DPWH is requesting to add a provision allowing authorized GFI personnel, regardless of whether they are in-house or outsourced personnel, to perform property valuation for ROW acquisition, as long as they are under the control and supervision of the GFI.

Section 6(b) on cases where the property owner could not be found, is unknown, deceased, or there are conflicting claims involving the property

A portion of Section 6(b) states that “in case the owner of the property cannot be found, **if unknown**, or deceased in cases where the estate has not been settled, after exerting due diligence, or there are conflicting claims over the ownership of the property and improvements and structures thereon, the implementing agency shall deposit the amount equivalent to the sum under subparagraphs (a)(1) to (a)(3) of this section to the court for the benefit of the person to be adjudged in the same proceeding as entitled thereto” [emphasis added].

According to Asec. Ramos, the phrase **if unknown** poses a problem as some construe it as qualifying the phrase it precedes. “Instead of the originally intended, four (4) circumstances in which the implementing agency should make the deposit with the court, the first circumstance is mistakenly interpreted and applied as constituting the first two circumstances – that the property owner cannot be found and must be unknown – due to the term **if**.” The DPWH official thus requested to replace

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

if unknown to **or unknown** “to clarify that the second circumstance stands on its own and constitutes one of the instances where the implementing agency must make the deposit in favor of the court.”

Guidelines providing for the acquisition of orphaned lots

Asec. Ramos observed that there is no express provision in the law providing for the acquisition of lands, improvements and structures partially affected by ROW acquisition. “In some cases, owners of these lands stand to lose more than 20 percent of their property to ROW acquisition in favor of the government, and there are also those where the remaining part of their property is rendered useless or no longer viable for their continued use or occupancy.

The agency therefore views the full acquisition of these “orphaned” lots by the government as justified. The DPWH official is asking Congress to provide “guidelines and criteria for the classification of orphaned lots and procedure for its declaration” to provide the owners with just compensation. He suggested the following criteria for the classification of “orphaned” lots affected by ROW acquisition:

- The property loses its structural integrity;
- Claimant/owner loses ingress and egress to their property;
- The property is left irregular in shape;
- The property is left in a state where it can no longer be used in accordance with the purpose to which it is (originally) intended; or
- Other similar or analogous circumstances.

Republic Act 11239: An Act Abolishing the Road Board and Providing for the Disposition of the Motor Vehicle Users Charge Collections

S 1620/H 7436, Approved on March 8, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law mandates the DPWH to assume the functions, powers, and obligations of the Road Board and absorb the needed employees. Aside from DPWH, the DBM and the DOTR are also directed to promulgate the rules and regulations for the implementation of this law.

UPDATE

Assistant Secretary Eduardo S. Ramos of DPWH informed the Senate that the IRR of this law is pending the comments of DBM (as of July 20, 2019).

He noted that due to the abolition of the Road Board, all of its “records, property, assets, equipment and funds, including unexpended appropriations or allocations, were transferred to DPWH.” This also includes the Road Board’s obligations and liabilities. The upcoming IRR will clarify the transition period for the transfer, including the inventory and documentation on the operations of the Road Board.

According to the law, motor vehicle users’ charge (MVUC) collections shall “be earmarked solely for the construction, upgrading, repair, and rehabilitation of roads, bridges, and road drainage to be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.” Thus, “a system for the proper

identification and prioritization essential to facilitate the evaluation or vetting of projects to be funded and implemented through the MVUC Fund will also be formulated by DPWH," said Asec. Ramos.

Meanwhile, employees of the Road Board secretariat and those with existing plantilla positions prior to abolition have been transferred and assigned to different offices in DPWH.

Science and Technology

Republic Act 10692: An Act Providing for the Modernization of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), Providing Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes

S 2834/H 4397, November 3, 2015

SYNOPSIS

This law mandates PAGASA to acquire or upgrade its equipment, instruments, facilities and systems on weather and flood monitoring and warning system; enhance research and development capabilities; strengthen linkages and cooperation at the national level; and enhance public information.

The PhP 3 billion allocation to implement this law shall be taken from the share of the National Government in the gross income of PAGCOR. For two years after the effectivity of this act, PhP 1.5 billion per year shall be released to PAGASA to fund its capital outlay.

PAGASA's income can come from its Specialized Products and Services and Cost Recovery Program provided under Section 11 of this act. It can also accept or enter into loans, grants, bequests, and donations, whether from local or foreign sources, subject to certain requirements.

UPDATE

PAGASA administrator Vicente B. Malano reported to the Senate the following updates on the implementation of this law:

Modernization of physical resources and operational techniques

Some PhP 1.5 billion and PhP 567 million were appropriated for capital outlay (equipment and infrastructure) in the General Appropriations Act for FY 2018 and 2019, respectively. The agency has acquired, or is in the process of acquiring, "high-end, high performance computing systems and weather data collection platforms". These include:

- Four additional doppler radars;
- Six additional x-band rain gauge radars;
- High-frequency coastal radar network (for wave and ocean current forecasting);
- Disdrometers;
- Lightning detection network;
- Airport automatic weather observation system; and

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

- Climate monitoring and prediction services for climate change adaptation and mitigation activities.

Enhancement of R&D capability

PAGASA's R&D activities focused on improving its operations, such as a better warning scheme for heavy rainfall, thunderstorm and lightning. One of the products of R&D is a "more appropriate storm surge forecasting and warning scheme." It also maintained R&D activities on flood risk analysis, as well as storm surge hazard mapping activities.

Establishment of regional weather services centers and PAGASA data center

PAGASA Regional Services Centers (PRSD) for Southern Luzon in Legaspi, Albay, and Northwestern Luzon in San Fernando, La Union, are currently under construction. Meanwhile, the unified PAGASA data and information center is already in place and should be operational by the end of 2019.

Weather data collection and information dissemination services

Weather data collection is being enhanced by establishing additional automatic weather stations and/or sensors and integrating and optimizing other weather data collection platforms through data-sharing or partnership with government and non-government organizations. Meanwhile, the agency has held several events to disseminate information, such as the monthly Climate Outlook Forum and seminar-workshop for the media.

Strengthening the human resource development program

Dr. Malano noted that PAGASA has submitted to DBM its proposed organizational structure and staffing pattern (OSSP), which includes:

- Revised organizational structure;
- New salary scale for PAGASA technical personnel;
- Personnel retention incentive for qualified PAGASA personnel; and
- Additional personnel or staffing pattern and funding requirements due to increased number of weather data information centers, flood forecasting and warning centers (for the remaining 14 major river basins), and establishment of additional PRSDs.

Moreover, the PAGASA modernization program, which has also been endorsed to DBM, indicated the following:

- PAGASA's requirements in terms of organizational structure; staffing modifications; upgrading of positions; additional personnel, equipment and facilities during the various stages of modernization;
- Modernization projects indicating the equipment and technology acquisitions, as well as construction or upgrading of facilities and its associated objectives and components; and
- Priorities, timeline and estimated cost of the modernization project.

The agency is awaiting feedback from DBM regarding these submissions.

The tables in the following pages provide updates on the upgrading of PAGASA's physical resources and operational techniques as of July 5, 2019.

Table 11: Update on modernization of PAGASA's physical resources and operational techniques (as of July 5, 2019)

Particulars	2018		2019	
	Amount	Status	Amount	Status
Establishment of new PAGASA field office				
1. La Union	13,739	Notice to Proceed		
Establishment and Upgrading of Weather Stations				
Purely Synoptic				
1. Aklan	7,777	Ongoing bidding process		
2. Marinduque	4,440	No prospective bidders		
3. Bataan	7,935	Construction ongoing		
4. Biliran		Notice to Proceed		
5. Siquijor	4,440	No prospective bidders		
6. Quirino			4,252	
7. Apayao			5,000	Ongoing bidding process
8. Bulacan			5,000	
Synoptic / International Airport				
1. Panglao	8,868	Notice to Proceed		
2. Laguindingan		Notice to Proceed		
3. Kalibo			5,000	
4. Calbayog			5,000	
Synoptic / Local Airport				
1. Camiguin	4,430	Notice to Proceed		

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Table 11 (cont'd): Update on modernization of PAGASA's physical resources and operational techniques (as of July 5, 2019)

Particulars	2018		2019	
	Amount	Status	Amount	Status
Synoptic / Agromet				
1. Isabel				
2. La Carlota			5,000	Ongoing bidding process
Regional Instrumentation Center / Calibration Facility			5,000	
1. Cebu	22,566	Notice to Proceed		
2. RIC-Manila				
3. Davao				
4. Tuguegarao				
Establishment of Planetarium				
1. Cebu			88,159	Ongoing bidding process
2. El Salvador (Mindanao)	65,021	Designs and drawings for evaluation/examination of project proponent		
PAGASA Meteorological-Hydrological Telecommunication Network	450,000	Bidding process		
Upgrading of Interactive Data Processing System (IDPS)	74,281	Completed		
Upgrading of Advanced Forecast Computing Facilities			Ongoing installation	
Backup Supercomputing Facility (Cebu)	400,000	Obligated (with appeal)		
High Frequency Radar (HFR)	169,980	Ongoing installation		

Republic Act 11035: An Act Institutionalizing the Balik Scientist Program

S 1533/H 5792, Approved on June 15, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law mandates the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) to award short-term, medium-term and long-term engagements to Balik Scientists. These are science, technology or innovation experts or professionals accorded with benefits and incentives to undertake science and technology activities with a host institution in the Philippines. Both Filipino citizens and foreigners of Filipino descent are eligible to be Balik Scientists.

Benefits accorded to Balik Scientists include the following:

- Exemption from licensing or permitting requirements of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC);
- Accident and medical insurance;
- Tax and duty exemption in the importation of professional equipment, instruments, and materials;
- For non-Filipino citizens, exemption from renouncing their oath of allegiance to the country where they took the oath; and
- Grants and allowances, depending on the length of their participation in the program.

UPDATE

From 2007 to May 2018, the Balik Scientist Program has attracted 236 scientists deployed in 348 engagements, according to a statement by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) (www.pchrd.dost.gov.ph/index.php/news/6455-balik-scientist-program-bsp-balik-puso-balik-pilipinas).

The three DOST councils are responsible for the engagements of the awardees: the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARD), Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology Research and Development (PCIEERD), and PCHRD.

Here are suggestions to improve the program, according to some Balik Scientists interviewed for this report:

- Establishment of a startup research and development grant for the research and development projects of Balik Scientists. Some Balik Scientists encounter difficulties in availing research grants from government agencies due to a mismatch in the expertise of the scientists and the R&D priorities of the funding institution.
- Establishment of a collective health insurance package for Balik Scientists. Currently, the Balik Scientists are responsible for finding and selecting their own health insurance packages. While DOST has committed to fund their health insurance subject to certain conditions, finding available providers with appropriate insurance packages takes significant time and effort. Moreover, the cost of insuring the scientists could be lower if plans or packages are pooled instead of individualized.

Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development

Republic Act 11310: An Act Institutionalizing the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)

S 2117/H 7773, Approved on April 17, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law institutionalizes the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), which seeks to reduce poverty and invest in human capital by providing conditional cash transfer to poor households for a maximum of seven years. To avail of the benefits under this law, grantees need to meet specific conditionalities with respect to school attendance, health check-ups and vaccination.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Luzviminda C. Ilagan of DSWD informed the Senate that the Pantawid NPMO (Pantawid Pamilya Program Division) is still finalizing the schedule of consultation activities for the drafting of the IRR.

Sports

Republic Act 11214: An Act Establishing a Sports Complex Known as the National Sports Training Center

S 1716/H 5615, Approved on February 14, 2019

SYNOPSIS

The law seeks to establish a “world standard” and “highly scientific” Philippine Sports Training Center (PSTC). The PSTC will include sports facilities and amenities for Olympic sports and other sports activities deemed significant and necessary by the PSTC. It also gives the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) the authority to administer, manage, operate, and maintain the PSTC, including the administration of incidental income, security of the complex, assignment of personnel and hiring of managers, specialists, and other administrative staff.

UPDATE

PSC chairperson William I. Ramirez reported to the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending. In the meantime, PSC has been actively looking for a viable area for PSTC. The commission is negotiating with prospective donors of land, including the Province of Rizal, Bases Conversion and Development Authority, and the Province of Pangasinan, among others.

Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Republic Act 10693: An Act Strengthening Nongovernment Organizations (NGOs) Engaged in Microfinance Operations for the Poor

S 2752/H 5217, Approved on November 3, 2015

SYNOPSIS

The Microfinance NGOs Act grants accredited Microfinance NGOs the privilege of paying only a two percent tax based on its gross receipts from microfinance operations in lieu of all national taxes, subject to certain conditions. They can also access special government programs and projects, as well as receive technical assistance from the government, donors and other support organizations.

UPDATE

Chairperson Emilio B. Aquino of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) reported to the Senate that following the signing of the IRR on August 16, 2016, the Microfinance NGO Regulatory Council (MNRC) issued an advisory on the transitional accreditation of microfinance NGOs (MF-NGOs) on March 31, 2017. It is pursuant to Section 2, Rule 11 of the IRR and Section 5 of BIR Revenue Regulations No. 3-2017.

Chairperson Aquino cited the following “notable” memorandum circulars related to MF-NGOs that were issued by the council:

- MNRC-MC No. 1, s. 2017, dated July 7, 2017: Rules on Capital Contribution and Trade Names of MF-NGOs;
- MNRC-MC No. 2, s. 2017, dated November 29, 2017: Clarification of the Three Year Consecutive Microfinance Operations Requirement;
- MNRC-MC No. 1, s. 2018, dated February 20, 2018: Accreditation of Microfinance NGOs; and
- MNRC-MC No. 4, s. 2018, dated December 13, 2018: Revised Guidelines for the Accreditation of MF-NGOs.

He noted that the council accredited 32 MF-NGOs in 2018 whose accreditations were valid until March 31, 2018. Pursuant to MC No. 4, the accreditation of MF-NGOs issued in 2019 “will receive incorporation and secondary registration applications from such investment houses.”

For its part, BIR issued Revenue Memorandum Order No. 2-2018 on January 10, 2018 stating that MF-NGOs are eligible to avail of the two percent gross receipt tax on income from microfinance operations in lieu of all national taxes. The preferential tax rate is given “only to NGOs whose

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

primary purpose is microfinance and only on their microfinance operations catering to the poor and low-income individuals." It clarified, however, that income not generated from lending activities and insurance commissions "shall be subject to all applicable taxes."

Republic Act 10744: An Act Providing for the Creation and Organization of Credit Surety Fund (CSF) Cooperatives

S 2909/H 6007, Approved on February 6, 2016

SYNOPSIS

The law defines CSF cooperatives as a local government unit-partnered cooperative "comprised of well-capitalized and well-managed member-cooperatives or NGOs" that make financial contributions to the CSF. The CSF, which is administered by a CSF cooperative, serves "as a security for loans obtained by qualified borrowers from lending banks by way of a surety cover" issued by the CSF cooperative's Board of Directors. The surety cover is issued in lieu of hard collaterals.

The CSF Cooperative shall be organized as an LGU-partnered cooperative and may be established in a province or city.

UPDATE

Atty. Teofilo R. Ragadio, officer-in-charge of the Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services of BSP, reported to the Senate that the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) created its Credit Surety Fund Department in June 2018. As of December 2018, its 57 plantilla positions had been filled up. Moreover, in January 2019, the CDA issued a Memorandum Circular "relaxing" the documentary requirements for the registration of CSF cooperatives. As of July 19, 2019, 54 CSFs had been established, of which 46 were in the process of submitting their application for registration with CDA. For the BSP's part, it conducted CSF orientation to CDA-CSF personnel across the country in February 2019.

Republic Act 10909: An Act Prohibiting Business Establishments From Giving Insufficient or No Change to Consumers and Providing Penalties Therefor

S 1618/H 4730, Approved on July 21, 2016

SYNOPSIS

Under this act, all business establishments, including sari-sari stores and government-owned and controlled corporations and government agencies performing proprietary functions, are mandated to give exact change to consumers and are prohibited from giving other forms of change like candy in lieu of monetary change.

UPDATE

The IRR of this law was signed on December 21, 2016, as DTI Department Administrative Order No. 16-03, Series of 2016.

DTI Undersecretary for Consumer Protection Ruth B. Castelo reported to the Senate in 2018 that the agency's Fair Trade and Enforcement Bureau (FTEB)-Mediation Division received six complaints in 2017 and 12 complaints as of July 2018, of which one has been resolved. Meanwhile, FTEB-Enforcement Division received 15 complaints in 2017, of which four were resolved while the rest were archived. As of July 2018 it had received seven complaints.

Usec. Castelo noted the following problems with respect to the implementation of this law:

- Cases were archived due to failure of complainants to submit a verified complaint with supporting documents to DTI;
- Insufficient details about informal and unregistered business establishments;
- Reported lack of coins or denominations at the point-of-sale;
- Reported non-acceptance of small denomination coins by some business establishments; and
- Non-response and non-appearance of concerned parties during investigation.

Republic Act 10962: An Act Regulating the Issuances, Use and Redemption of Gift Checks

S 1466/H 6016, Approved on December 19, 2017

SYNOPSIS

This law prohibits the imposition of expiration dates on gift certificates, checks, cards, vouchers or other similar instruments. Such instruments shall be redeemable until all the monetary value or equivalent goods or services has been used up by the bearer. However, those issued under loyalty, rewards or promotional programs, as determined by DTI, are not covered by this law.

UPDATE

DTI Assistant Secretary Mary Jean T. Pacheco and Director Domingo R. Tolentino, Jr. reported to the Senate in 2018 the following challenges in implementing this law:

- Shift from paper GCs to digital GCs;
- Shift from paper vouchers to digital passes;
- Establishing a mechanism to monitor balances;
- Establishing a venue for the return/receipt of GCs that are subject for revalidation or conversion.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 11032: An Act Promoting Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9485 Otherwise Known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007

S 1311/H 6579, Approved on May 28, 2018

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to streamline the delivery of government services by:

- a. Prescribing the processing time;
- b. Streamlining procedures for issuing licenses, clearances, permits or authorizations;
- c. Automatically approving applications not acted upon within the prescribed processing time;
- d. Mandating a “zero contact policy” concerning an application or request, except during submission of documents; and
- e. Establishing a central business portal to receive and capture application data on business-related transactions, and provide links to online registration of national government agencies.

It creates a new cabinet-level department – the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) – to implement and oversee the implementation of this law. ARTA can initiate an investigation *motu proprio*, or upon receipt of a complaint, or file cases for violations. It is also mandated to review proposed major regulations of government agencies using regulatory impact assessment (RIA).

UPDATE

ARTA Deputy Director-General Ernesto V. Perez informed the Senate of the following milestones in the implementation of this law:

ARTA budget

In 2018, DBM, through DTI granted ARTA its initial budget of Php 110 million to start operationalizing the agency. Since then, ARTA is able to start up its operation with the hiring of technical and non-technical staff, implemented programs and activities (PAPs) related to regulatory management systems, stock taking of agencies' citizens charter, and referred complaints to concerned agencies. As of March 2019, 50 percent of the initial budget granted has been obligated and utilized.

Moving forward, ARTA will pursue the granting of organization code, propose supplemental budget for 2019 to continue with the

implementation of its current PAPs, and prepare for the 2020 budget proposal.

Project repeal

a. Guidebook

Project Repeal is a government-initiated project implemented by the Competitiveness Bureau (CB) and the National Competitiveness Council (NCC) as part of its mandate in providing an enabling environment for the private sector and businesses to invest and thrive in the Philippines, and in line with its advocacy of ease of doing business.

Project Repeal is committed to make doing business easier and accessible to both local and foreign investors and to promote better delivery of public services. It specifically aims:

- To lower the cost of compliance for business and cost of enforcement for government by repealing or amending unnecessary, costly, burdensome, out-of-date, confusing rules;
- To institutionalize an evidence-based repeal system towards coherent and better regulations.

In accordance with the signing of this law, all NGAs, LGUs, and GOCCs are mandated to reengineer systems and procedures including cutting unnecessary rules and regulations, thus further reinforcing Project Repeal's objectives.

Last 2018, the Project Repeal Guidebook: A Guidebook on Regulatory Reform for National Government Agencies was developed with the technical assistance from the British Embassy. This was an initiative to institutionalize and embed the Project Repeal Process for all government agencies covered under RA 11032. The ARTA was also assisted by the two project consultants provided by British Embassy in the development of the guidebook. This guidebook will serve as a tool for government agencies undergoing regulatory review as prescribed under the Project Repeal Process.

Last March 13 to 15, 2019, the roll-out of the Project Repeal Guidebook was conducted. It aims to train and capacitate the 35 government agencies who have participated in the project and provide a platform for the ways forward in view of the signing of RA 11032. The 35 government agencies were trained on the use, application, and implementation of the Project Repeal Guidebook for their respective agencies. Furthermore, the Capacity Building Workshop will give the 35 agencies the capacity to conduct their own regulatory review process in accordance with the law.

A total of 80 participants from 32 agencies participated in the roll-out.

b. Turnover of laws

Last 2018, Project Repeal has requested from selected government agencies of the laws that they recommend for repeal and amendment. The agencies submitted a total of 31 laws recommended to be repealed or amended. This year, ARTA is coordinating with the House of Representatives Committee on Revision of Laws and the Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes regarding the turnover of the 31 laws for action in the 18th Congress.

c. Philippine Business Regulations Information System

Pursuant to Section 17(k), the ARTA shall ensure the dissemination of and public access to information on regulatory management system and changes in laws and regulations relevant to the public by establishing the Philippine Business Regulations Information System (PBRIS). During the 4th Repeal Day last 2018, the alpha version of PBRIS was launched.

The PBRIS shall serve as the online repository of all business-related regulations and regulations affecting businesses issued by NGAs, GOCCs, LGUs, which is accessible to the public free of charge.

Information on business regulations are limited given the siloed approach of government agencies in providing access. The PBRIS provides businesses with the pertinent information in a format that is easily accessible and understood. All regulations uploaded to the PBRIS are in text-readable format which allows for innovative features such as advanced searching and indexing, hyperlinking to other relevant laws/issuances, and easier sharing to other users.

At present, the PBRIS has 283 uploaded regulations from 35 government agencies. ARTA is engaging with the 35 government agencies on the inventory of business regulations for uploading. Future developments of the website are as follows:

- Proposed regulations to be reviewed by the ARTA. Through registered accounts, the public may view proposed regulations and provide their comments for consideration. Furthermore, an interactive dashboard for easier tracking of regulations and public consultations will also be provided;
- Advanced user-interface wherein regulations will be categorized per industry sector;
- Dashboard for regulations under review;
- Feedback mechanism for proposed regulations and regulations under review.

d. Bilateral and multilateral partnerships

Currently, the ARTA is coordinating with international development partners such as the UK Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (UK BEIS) through the British Embassy, the World Bank – International Finance Corporation and USAID to develop ARTA's capacity to

implement the law and institutionalize regulation reduction initiatives in the bureaucracy, some of which are as follows:

- Development of a whole-of-government regulatory governance framework;
- Development and institutionalization of the regulatory management system and its corresponding institutional arrangement, coordination mechanisms, processes, and guidelines;
- Formulation of a monitoring and evaluation process of ARTA;
- Building capacity of ARTA on better regulation techniques;
- Regulatory mapping; and
- Advocacy campaign on the Philippine Business Portal and the Philippine Business Databank.

Last April 22, 2019, British Ambassador to the Philippines, HMA Daniel Pruce and OIC Ernesto Perez signed the Letter of Intent between ARTA and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office to jumpstart the technical assistance for ARTA towards the pursuit of regulatory reform.

ARTA also met with the Embassy of Malaysia in the Philippines last April 22, 2019 to learn more about Malaysia's best practices of the Malaysian Productivity Commission and PEMUDAH in creating a better regulatory environment and explore how these can be adopted by ARTA.

e. Future planned activities

The ARTA Better Regulations Office once fully created shall:

- Recommend and institutionalize policies, processes and systems to improve regulatory management to increase the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of all government offices and agencies covered by the law for both business and non-business transactions in government services;
- Review proposed major regulations of government agencies, using submitted RIA, subject to proportionality rules to be determined by ARTA;
- Conduct of regulatory management training programs to capacitate NGAs and LGUs to comply with sound regulatory management practices, and prepare regulatory management manuals for all government agencies and/or instrumentalities including LGUs;
- Ensure the dissemination of and public access to information on regulatory management system and changes in laws and regulations relevant to the public through PBRIS.

ARTA regulatory management and training division

The Regulatory Management Training Division (RMTD) conducted three Trainer's Training on RIA in partnership with the World Bank - International Finance Corporation last December 3-7, 2018 at the Eastwood Richmonde Hotel, Quezon City. The activity aimed to capacitate Government Training Institutions, state universities and colleges academic centers, and ARTA Staff with regulatory management practices and establish partnerships in order to roll out RIA among the stakeholders of partner agencies.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

ARTA was able to train a total of 80 participants from the following agencies: (1) UP-National College of Public Administration and Governance; (2) DILG-Local Government Academy; (3) DepEd-National Educators Academy of the Philippines; (4) DILG-Region 3; (5) DILG-Region 4B; (6) DILG-Region 6; (7) DILG-Region 7; (8) DILG-Region 11; (9) DILG-Region 12; (10) DILG-NCR; and (11) Batangas State University.

The Trainer's Training also provided a Special Lecture on Private Sector Engagement for the following departments/divisions of ARTA: (1) Project Repeal; (2) Doing Business Team; (3) Monitoring and Evaluation; and (4) Complaints and Action Center.

ARTA through DTI entered in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) to conduct Capability Development Assistance on RIA Training with Priority Agencies. The project has a total budget of some PhP 6 million which shall cover course fees, reproduction of training materials, and administrative costs such as venue and food.

As of June 2019, RMTD has already conducted its first three batches of User's Training for Basic RIA. This basic RIA training aimed to capacitate the agencies with regulatory practices in order to improve their government procedures and to develop effective and efficient government transactions.

The pioneer batch of the RIA training series was joined by 26 participants from SSS, PRC, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), DOJ, Department of National Defense (DND), and DA. Following the success of the first batch, a second training session was held with 29 representatives coming from DOE, DOT, DOST, DSWD, DOF and DepEd. Last June 21, 2019, ARTA was also able to deliver its third batch of RIA training which was attended by 26 participants from Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), DTI, DBM, NEDA, PSA and SEC. Moving forward, planned activities include the following:

- Basic RIA training series, RIA training for trainers and legislative staff;
- Advanced RIA training for 35 priority agencies;
- Better regulation techniques training for ARTA staff;
- Drafting of ARTA RIA manual;
- RIA dissemination/advocacy and promotion (national and sub-national);
- Online RIA forum and training course.

Compliance, monitoring and evaluation division

The Compliance Monitoring and Evaluation Division monitors and evaluates the compliance of agencies covered under Sec. 3 of RA 11032, and issue notice of warning to erring and/or noncomplying government employees or officials.

a. Accomplishments

From February to April 2019, all 17 LGUs of Metro Manila have already been visited by ARTA for the conduct of the process tour in their respective

Business Permits and Licensing Offices (BPLO) and Offices of the Building Official (OBO). This is with the intent to observe the current practices and initial efforts of the LGUs to comply with the mandates of RA 11032.

12 out of the 17 LGUs have already established their year-round Business One-Stop Shops (BOSS) and implemented the collocation of regulatory and local government offices involved in the issuance of business permits such as the Bureau of Fire Protection and Sanitation Office. These 12 LGUs are Parañaque City, Quezon City, Navotas City, Malabon City, Valenzuela City, Taguig City, Makati City, Muntinlupa City, Las Piñas City, San Juan City, Caloocan City, and Marikina City. Marikina City, instead of a physical business one-stop shop, has set up an online business portal.

ARTA will consolidate the identified best BPLO practices for recommendation to other BPLOs. ARTA will also come up with recommendations to help address common bottlenecks and challenges in the processes involved in getting business permits and licenses. Going forward, the agency intends to conduct a series of process tours in the Business Permit and Licensing Offices of the key cities of Visayas and Mindanao.

ARTA, in partnership with the World Bank – International Finance Corporation (WB-IFC), has conducted Pre-Working Sessions to nurture partnerships with government agencies and to facilitate an in-depth discussion of their respective initiatives related to the Reengineering of Government Systems and Procedures; the Report Card Survey; and the Citizen's Charters to comply with the mandates of RA 11032. These sessions served as a venue for ARTA to learn from the challenges, issues, and concerns encountered by government agencies during the roll-out of said initiatives under the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007. This engagement also helped ARTA gauge its role in the implementation of RA 11032 as deemed from the perspective of the government agencies. Ultimately, findings from the three working sessions will be utilized in the crafting of the implementing guidelines on the provisions of the Act. While the working session on the Report Card Survey was only held between ARTA and CSC, the other two sessions were attended with a more diverse set of audience with 8 participating agencies for the working session on reengineering and 31 agencies for that on the Citizen's Charter, apart from ARTA.

b. Ongoing activities

Beginning July 2018, ARTA created a comprehensive list of government agencies based on the following references: (1) the Philippine Government Directory of Agencies and Officials released by DBM for year 2018, (2) the list of government owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) under the Governance Commission for GOCCs, (3) and the official websites of the different government agencies.

The comprehensive list created by ARTA comprise a total of 2,887 agencies including national government agencies, GOCCs, SUCs, water districts, and

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

LGUs. This list was used as the reference for identifying government agencies for Citizen's Charter stocktaking.

ARTA also conducted stocktaking of 22,152 government services from 838 government agencies. Stocktaking is the process of listing the services offered by the different government agencies, GOCCs, SUCs, water districts, and LGUs as reflected in their Citizen's Charters to create a comprehensive list of government services, that detail the following:

- Type of transaction whether business or non-business related;
- The number of documentary requirements;
- The number of steps to complete the service;
- The maximum processing time;
- Classification of services whether simple, complex, or highly technical; and
- The processing fee to be paid.

For government agencies that have no available Citizen's Charter online, ARTA has requested a copy of their Citizen's Charter through a formal letter. To date, 838 of the 2,887 agencies have completed stocktaking data, while stocktaking of those that have submitted a copy of their Citizen's Charters to ARTA is on-going.

The stocktaking data will be analyzed to serve as basis for tracking changes in the number of documentary requirements, the number of steps to complete the service, the prescribed maximum processing time, and the processing fee to be paid could be tracked as government agencies comply with the provisions of RA 11032.

Meanwhile, pursuant to Section 6 of the law, all government agencies including departments, bureaus, offices, instrumentalities, or government-owned and/or controlled corporations, or local government units shall set up their most current and updated service standards to be known as the Citizen's Charter in the form of information billboards which shall be posted at the main entrance of offices or at the most conspicuous place, in their respective websites and in the form of published materials written either in English, Filipino, or in the local dialect. In line with this, ARTA sent 37 letters of request to head agencies, including their attached agencies, bureaus, and field offices such as the DILG for local government units, DOH for government hospitals, CHED for state universities and colleges, GCG for government owned and controlled corporations and another 37 to government owned and controlled corporations not under GCG, to submit a copy of their Citizen's Charter, photo showing that the same has been posted at the main entrance or the most conspicuous place, the website link where the Citizen's Charter could be accessed, and an updated contact information.

To date, 929 government agencies submitted to ARTA a copy of their Citizen's Charters, 595 submitted photos showing that their Citizen's Charters have already been posted at the main entrance or at the most

conspicuous place in their office, 730 provided the website link where the Citizen's Charter could be accessed, and 442 provided us an updated contact information of their office. Meanwhile, 141 agencies have already submitted a list of their services classified into Simple, Complex, and Highly Technical.

As a matter of good regulatory practice, consultations of the Draft Guidelines and Guidebook to be issued by ARTA will be conducted to solicit comments/suggestions from stakeholders prior to roll-out or implementation. The first draft of the Guidelines has already been prepared, while the drafting of the Guidebook is ongoing. The target completion for both the Guidelines and Guidebook is set by the first quarter of year 2020. Guidelines on the following are currently being developed:

- Reengineering/Streamlining of Government Services
 - Simple, Complex and Highly Technical Transactions
 - Multi-Stage Processing
 - Time and Motion Study
 - Cost Compliance Analysis
- Three-signatory Limit
- Zero Contact Policy
- Citizen's Charter
 - Automatic Approval/Renewal of Licenses, Permits, etc.
 - Denial of Request for Access to Government Service
 - Client Satisfactory and Report Card Survey
 - Electronic Versions of Licenses, Permits, Certifications & Authorizations
 - Citizen's Charter
 - Automatic Approval/Renewal of Licenses, Permits, etc.
 - Denial of Request for Access to Government Service
 - Client Satisfactory and Report Card Survey
 - Electronic Versions of Licenses, Permits, Certifications, & Authorizations

Complaints action center

ARTA received its first official complaint on July 3, 2018 thru a phone call regarding an alleged slow processing of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on application for license of medication. As of June 25, 2019, ARTA already received a total of 161 complaints on both business and non-business related transactions.

Of the 86 ARTA-related complaints that requires government agency response, 72.09 percent responded to their respective complaints while 9.30 percent has not responded. ARTA is still waiting for a response from 18.60 percent of the complaints, which were sent on the third week of June 2019. ARTA noted that its response rate has increased by 14 percent as of June 25, 2019 compared to the end of first quarter of this year.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Table 12: Complaints received by ARTA, by complainant (as of June 25, 2019)

Complainant	Example	Number	Percentage
Individual	SSS benefit, birth certificate, transcript of records	68	42.24%
Business	Business permits, license to operate	77	47.83%
NGO	Regulation, policies	15	9.32%
NGA	Exemptions on 3-7-20 rule	1	0.62%
	Total	161	100.00%

Table 13: Types of complaints received by ARTA (as of June 25, 2019)

Type of complaint	Count
Failed to process on time	80
Imposed additional cost	1
Imposed additional requirements	5
Others	75
Total	161

Table 14: Status of agency responses to complaints (as of June 25, 2019)

Response status	Count	Percentage
Responded	62	72.09%
Not responded	8	9.30%
Pending	16	18.60%

Table 15: Agencies with the highest number of complaints (as of June 25, 2019)

Rank	Agency	Number
1	BIR	17
2	LGU	7
3	FDA	5
4	DENR	5

BIR takes the top spot in the number of ARTA-related complaints. Most complaints were on alleged delays in the processing of applications for tax delinquencies and tax audit, or imposition of additional requirements. BIR is followed by LGUs with 7 complaints, which were mostly allegations of delays in the processing of business, sanitary, and building permits. FDA and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) take the third spot with 5 complaints each, with allegations such as delays in the registration of medications and delays in the issuance of exploratory permits, respectively.

Table 16: ARTA action on received complaints (as of June 25, 2019)

Status	Percentage
Resolved	52.63%
Pending	40.60%
For investigation	6.77%

Table 17: ARTA response speed (as of June 25, 2019)

ARTA response speed	Percentage
Within 3 days	76.67%
Within 5 days	23.33%

As of June 25, 2019, ARTA has already achieved 52.63 percent resolution of the 161 complaints received, while 40.60 percent were pending resolution from the respondent government agencies. ARTA has not received a response from 6.77 percent of the respondent government agencies. ARTA responded to 100 percent of complaints received.

ARTA has set a high standard in terms of efficiency by aiming to respond to all communications within 3 days from receipt (RA 6713 standard is 15 days). As of June 2019, ARTA's efficiency in acknowledging written communication has increased to 77 percent compared to 59 percent from 2018. The goal of ARTA is to achieve 100 percent efficiency in sending all written responses by the end of the year.

Information and communication

ARTA also implemented several information and communication activities, including interviews with mainstream media, issuing press releases that were covered by major news outlets, establishing social media accounts, conducting awareness campaigns, and developing IEC materials and audiovisual presentations. Moving forward, ARTA will pursue partnerships with other government agencies to expand its communication outreach and conduct regional roadshows.

Administrative and finance office

a. On-going Development of ARTA Intranet Portal

The Intranet Portal is an internal website within ARTA office. It is a useful tool to communicate important messages within the organization such as information, document tracking system, links, forms and other internal office applications accessible via an official office account. Databases can also be linked to the setup of the intranet in order to provide further access to ARTA records subject to Data Privacy rules and regulations.

b. ARTA Website

ARTA is continuously monitoring, updating and uploading website contents at www.arta.gov.ph which is closely linked to other ARTA Social Media networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube.

c. Acquisition of ARTA Microsoft Office 365 License and other Equipment

d. Creation of Position Qualification Standards and Preparation of Personnel Services Budget

The Qualification Standards (QS) was finalized by HR on May 14, 2019, based on the CSC Qualification Standards of 1997 and all related DBM-CSC Memorandum Circulars. To complement the approved plantilla positions, a finalized Personnel Services (PS) budget was submitted on May 7, 2019,

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

for final review of the Planning & Budget team. The PS budget includes basic compensation and mandatory benefits due to all employees respective of their position and salary grade.

e. Initial Set-up of Performance Management System

The HR team spearheaded a collaborative meeting with Team Leaders to have an in-depth understanding of ARTA Operations and devised a performance tool on how to gauge individual performance in accordance with the Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS) framework. Further, there was an HR initiative to propose a performance system and matrix, independent of DTI's personnel dashboard.

f. Training and Organizational Development Programs

In line with ARTA's 2019 Workplan, the HR team coordinated with internal and external training providers to strengthen ARTA staff technical and non-technical skills. The training and OD programs aim to address performance issues, foster cooperation and teamwork, develop individual capacities, and inculcate the agency's mission, vision, and values. The 2019 training calendar was drafted on May 15, 2019, but due to technical restrictions, an exemption letter along with the calendar will be submitted to fully realize this initiative.

Other accomplishments

ARTA recently conducted "ARTA 365: Smarter Initiatives, Better Philippines" attended by 434 participants including Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, Ambassador Daniel Pruce of United Kingdom and Ambassador Jan Top Christensen of Denmark, as well as other heads of agencies to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the act. The event was an avenue for the agency to report to its stakeholders and to the public its accomplishments and planned initiatives moving forward.

Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement

Republic Act 11201: Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board

S 1578/H 6775, Approved on February 14, 2019

SYNOPSIS

This law creates the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) by merging the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) and the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). This new agency shall be the sole and main planning and policy-making, regulatory, program coordination and performance monitoring entity for all housing, human settlement and urban development concerns, primarily focusing on the access to and affordability of basic needs. The National Housing Authority (NHA),

National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. (NHMFC), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF) and Social Housing Finance Corp. (SHFC) shall be attached to DHSUD.

UPDATE

Secretary Eduardo D. Del Rosario, Chairperson of HUDCC, informed the Senate that their current main concern is the transition of HUDCC and the HLURB into DHSUD and the Human Settlements Adjudication Commission (HSAC) by January 1, 2020. It centers on the formulation of the organizational structures of both offices, placement of current personnel, and recruitment of new personnel to fill the vacant positions. He noted that “regular functions and activities will also have to continue even as the agencies reorganize physically and institutionally to respond to the new mandates.” The agency is working closely with DBM regarding their budget proposal for 2020. Sec. Del Rosario is hoping “that the Senate will give due consideration and support to the needs of our reorganization in the coming budget deliberations.”

The IRR of this law was published on July 31, 2019. Sec. Del Rosario reported that a signing event was held on July 19, 2019, attended by the heads of the agencies identified by the law to prepare and issue the IRR: HUDCC, HLURB, DBM, and the Civil Service Commission. Heads of the key shelter agencies attached to the new DHSUD also signed the IRR to express their support, namely Home Development Mutual Fund, National Housing Authority, Social Housing Finance Corporation, and National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation.

According to Sec. Del Rosario, prior to the signing and publication of the IRR, major consultations were held on May 2-3, 2019 with representatives of the key shelter agencies and other government agencies, academic institutions, non-government organizations, and private sector housing developers. Special consultations were also held for civil sector organizations, urban poor groups, and people’s organizations on April 30, 2019 and May 21, 2019 in coordination with the Committee on Housing and Urban Development of the House of Representatives.

Ways and Means

Republic Act 10708: An Act Enhancing Transparency in the Management and Accounting of Tax Incentives, Administered by Investment Promotion Agencies

S 2669/H 5831, Approved on December 9, 2015

SYNOPSIS

This law requires BIR and Bureau of Customs (BOC) to submit to DOF:

- Tax and duty incentives of registered business entities as reflected in their filed tax returns and import entries; and
- Actual tax and duty incentives as evaluated and determined by the BIR and the BOC.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

For purposes of monitoring and transparency, the DOF shall submit to the DBM aggregate data on a sectoral and per industry basis of:

- Amount of tax incentives availed by registered business entities;
- Estimate claims of tax incentives immediately preceding the current year;
- Programmed tax incentives for the current year; and
- Projected tax incentives for the following year.

Data shall be reflected by the DBM in the annual Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing (BESF).

Moreover, NEDA is mandated to conduct cost-benefit analysis on the investment incentives to determine the impact of tax incentives on the Philippine economy. For this purpose, all heads of investment promotion agencies shall submit to NEDA data on the aggregate tax incentives, and aggregate investment-related data, both on a sectoral or per industry basis.

UPDATE

DOF and DTI issued Joint Administrative Order No. 1-2016 and Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1-2016 to implement this law. A microsite on this law (<https://www.dof.gov.ph/index.php/timta>) currently hosted by DOF contains information on the IRR and its annexes, as well as frequently asked questions.

Republic Act 10754: An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons with Disability

S 2890/H 1039, Approved on March 23, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law expands the benefits and privileges given to PWDs, to wit:

1. VAT exemption and 20 percent discount on specific goods and services;
 - a. Discount on fees and charges relative to the utilization of all services in hotels and similar lodging establishments; restaurants and recreation centers;
 - b. Discount on admission fees charged by theaters, cinema houses, concert halls, circuses, carnivals and other similar places of culture, leisure and amusement;
 - c. Discount on the purchase of medicines in all drugstores;
 - d. Discount on medical and dental services including diagnostic and laboratory fees such as, but not limited to, x-rays, computerized tomography scans and blood tests, and professional fees of attending doctors in all government facilities, subject to the guidelines to be issued by DOH, in coordination with Philhealth;
 - e. Discount on medical and dental services including diagnostic and laboratory fees, and professional fees of attending doctors in all private hospitals and medical facilities;
 - f. Discount on fare for domestic air and sea travel;

- g. Discount on actual fare for land transportation travel such as, but not limited to, public utility buses or jeepneys (PUBs/PUJs), taxis, Asian utility vehicles (AUVs), shuttle services and public railways, including Light Rail Transit (LRT), Metro Rail Transit (MRT) and Philippine National Railways (PNR); and
 - h. Discount on funeral and burial services for the death of the PWD.
2. Educational assistance for all levels through the provision of scholarships, grants, financial aids, subsidies and other incentives to qualified PWD, including support for books, learning materials, and uniform allowance to the extent feasible, and social insurance thru GSIS, SSS, and PAG-IBIG;
 3. To the extent practicable and feasible, the continuance of the same benefits and privileges given by GSIS, SSS, and Pag-IBIG;
 4. To the extent possible, the government may grant special discounts in special programs for PWD on purchase of basic commodities; and
 5. Provision of express lanes for PWD in all commercial and government establishments.

UPDATE

In 2018, Undersecretary Luzviminda C. Ilagan of DSWD reported to the Senate the following issues related to the implementation of this law:

1. The National Council on Disability Affairs received the following complaints on the implementation of 20 percent discount and value added tax (VAT) exemption of PWDs:
 - Section 32 (a): PWDs were denied discount privileges on the purchase of medicine because the disability category indicated in the disability card is the “medical condition” of the cardholder instead of his/her functional limitation resulting from the impairment. There are also complaints that PWD IDs are not honored in small drugstores and establishments;
 - Section 32 (a): The Civil Aeronautics Board issued Resolution No. 41 (Guidelines Requiring Domestic Airlines to Apply Senior Citizen and PWD Discount on Air Transportation Tickets Purchased Online). There were complaints on compliance to these guidelines; and
 - Section 33: The Bureau of Internal Revenue issued Revenue Regulation No. 5-2017 on tax privileges for PWDs and tax incentives for establishments. There were complaints on the voluminous and tedious requirements to avail of such privileges and incentives;
2. Varying interpretations of this law by duty bearers (LGU issuing facility) and stakeholders (PWDs and their families, business establishments, service providers, etc.) is a key implementation challenge. One of the most frequently asked questions is the assignment of appropriate disability category on medical conditions such as psoriasis, kidney failure and other chronic illnesses. Usec. Ilagan claims that such varying interpretations have resulted in “heated debates”; and

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

3. Some disability cardholders and their families misuse or demand more than what is provided in the law and the IRR. Examples include discounts for room accommodation for the family of a disabled deceased person as part of funeral services, as well as the transfer of privileges to other family members.

The DSWD official recommended the following actions to improve the implementation of this law:

- Closer monitoring of implementation;
- DOH review of current disability categories;
- DOH orientation on issuance of disability certificates and the different types of disabilities for city and municipal health officers;
- Orientation on the standardized application of discounts and privileges for business establishments and service providers.

The IRR of this law was signed on December 1, 2016, and took effect on April 8, 2017.

Republic Act 10863: An Act Modernizing the Customs and Tariff Administration

S 2968/H 5525, Approved on May 30, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law takes into consideration the mandatory standards of the Revised Kyoto Convention and other international agreements, as well as best practices in customs administration. It raises the tax exemption ceiling of balikbayan boxes to PhP 150,000 from PhP 10,000, and raises the de minimis value to PhP 10,000 from PhP 10. It also paves the way for the implementation of reforms to streamline processes in the Bureau of Customs (BoC).

UPDATE

DOF created a microsite to serve as a clearinghouse of information on the drafting of the IRR: http://www.dof.gov.ph/cmta_irr. The microsite contains background information on the law, invites and notices, draft documents and templates, and contact information.

The agency said in a press statement dated November 29, 2017 that the IRR will be “fleshed out” in 42 orders to be issued by the BOC (www.dof.gov.ph/index.php/irr-of-customs-modernization-law-fleshed-out-in-about-42-boc-orders/). As of August 21, 2019, 15 Customs Administrative Orders and four Customs Memorandum Orders have been signed and posted on the website.

Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender

Republic Act 10821: An Act Mandating the Provision of Emergency Relief and Protection for Children Before, During, and After Disasters and Other Emergency Situations

S 3034/H 5285, Approved on May 18, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law seeks to ensure the protection of children in times of calamity, disaster and other emergencies. It calls for a comprehensive emergency program for government to respond to the needs, rights and protection of the children, pregnant and lactating mothers during emergencies.

Components of the program include standards on the establishment of evacuation centers, delivery of basic necessities and services, safety and security of affected children, as well as provisions for education, health and sanitation.

UPDATE

In June 2018, Undersecretary Luzviminda C. Ilagan of DSWD informed the Senate that the IRR of this law was approved on February 28, 2017. DSWD also launched the Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children (CEPC) on April 16, 2018, to support the implementation of this law. However, Usec. Ilagan lamented that DSWD's budget proposal for the implementation of this law and the CEPC was not approved by DBM in 2018. In July 2019, Usec. Ilagan said that DSWD will again follow up its request for funding from DBM.

In 2018, DSWD committed to pursue the development of a Manual of Operations for CEPC and strategic planning, in coordination with the National Inter-Agency Committee (NIAC) and Save the Children Philippines. Meetings and "write-shops" were scheduled in July and August 2018.

It was also scheduled to organize a National Conference on Children Emergencies in partnership with the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) and Save the Children in October 2018. The event is seen as a venue for national government agencies to report the status of implementation of the CEPC. Civil society organizations and children's representatives will also be given the opportunity to participate in the drafting of a national report to be submitted to Congress.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 11188: An Act Providing for the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof

S 2023/H 7442, Approved on January 10, 2019

SYNOPSIS

The law provides specific definition for “children affected by armed conflict,” “children involved in armed conflict,” and “children in situations of armed conflict”. Children are declared as “Zones of Peace”, and would be treated in accordance with what is stipulated in Republic Act 7610 on special protection against child abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

The law also imposes harsher penalties on anyone found guilty of killing, torturing, maiming and raping children and those who would subject them to inhuman and degrading treatment. Any person or group of persons found guilty of the said violations would face life imprisonment and be fined from PhP 2 million to PhP 5 million. The law also listed acts that would fall under grave child rights violations where violators would face imprisonment from 14 to 20 years and be fined from PhP 1 million to PhP 2 million.

UPDATE

CWC through Ms. Aiza Cabrera informed the Senate that following the enactment of the law, the Inter-agency Committee on Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (IAC CSAC) worked on developing the IRR. The consultation process was facilitated with the assistance of UNICEF and Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD). TWG meetings were then held to review/refine the draft IRR in preparation for the regional consultations.

Eight batches of regional consultations were held with government and civil society organizations in the National Capital Region, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao covering both BARMM and non-BARMM areas. Also held were two children's consultation in BARMM and CAR, and a focus group discussion with the Family Court Judges for the legal scrubbing.

Following the adoption of the IRR on June 4, 2019, IAC CSAC is in the process of developing its Inter-Agency Workplan on the implementation of the law.

Meanwhile the United Nations through Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict (CAAC) and Acting Special

Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (VAC) Ms. Virginia Gamba, commended the Philippines for the passage of the IRR. "The adoption of the Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Law is a milestone in closing a protection gap for boys and girls in the Philippines and I welcome the recent implementing steps and commend the commitment of the Government of the Philippines to further protect children. It is crucial that boys and girls receive enhanced protection from grave violations and that all children in the Philippines can feel safe and protected at all times," said Ms. Gamba via a press statement.

Ms. Gamba also "encouraged the authorities to pursue their engagement for the protection of boys and girls, already enshrined in the ratification of international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Children and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC), and the Vancouver Principles, and further encouraged the adoption of the Safe Schools Declaration."

DSWD extended its gratitude to the UN for this recognition.

Republic Act 11222: An Act Allowing the Rectification of Simulated Birth Records and Prescribing Administrative Adoption Proceedings for the Purpose

S 2081/H 5675, Approved on February 21, 2019

SYNOPSIS

Known as the Simulated Birth Rectification Act, this removes criminal, civil or administrative penalties for the act of simulating the birth of a child, provided that the simulation of birth was made for the best interest of the child, and that the child has been consistently considered and treated by such person or persons as her, his, or their own daughter or son. Those who simulated the birth of a child under the conditions provided above may avail of administrative proceedings for the adoption and rectification of the simulated birth record of such child.

UPDATE

Undersecretary Luzviminda C. Ilagan of DSWD informed the Senate that the IRR of this law is still pending. A series of nationwide consultations were scheduled in July 2019 to gather inputs from stakeholders for the IRR.

The DSWD official noted that "there is no provision on the funding requirement for the implementation of this law." She urged Congress to introduce a bill to address this situation.

Youth

Republic Act 10679: An Act Promoting Entrepreneurship and Financial Education Among Filipino Youth

S 2212/H 5603, Approved on August 27, 2015

SYNOPSIS

This law provides the creation of the Entrepreneurship Education Committee (EEC) composed of DepEd as chair, with CHED, TESDA, DTI and National Youth Commission (NYC).

These agencies are tasked to develop and integrate entrepreneurship courses and fiscal literacy in the curriculum of secondary and post-secondary school students, and to facilitate the provision of grants to ensure that schools, teachers, and teaching partners have the capacity to teach these courses. Grants are available to support students who are pursuing studies and projects related to entrepreneurship.

UPDATE

Secretary Isidro S. Lapeña of TESDA informed the Senate that a ceremonial signing of the pledge of commitment to implement this act was held on June 27, 2019 during the Mindanao roadshow of the Youth Entrepreneurship Program in Davao City.

The key issues and concerns identified by TESDA are as follows:

- Lack of funding for setting up and establishing operational systems of enterprise incubation laboratories and creative spaces in schools and communities;
- TESDA does not currently provide loans to youth entrepreneurs (as encouraged in Section 7 of the law). However, it provides scholarship grants to eligible clientele;
- Some roadblocks encountered in partnering with financial institutions in launching small enterprise incubation programs.

Meanwhile, TESDA recommended the following actions moving forward:

- Partner with international organizations to conduct capability training programs for trainers (e.g. International Labor Organization Master Trainers' in Start and Improve Your Business);
- Institutionalize tie-ups with relevant government agencies, industry, academe and financial institutions to address the needs of young existing and would-be entrepreneurs;
- Enrich PQF Level 5 diploma programs with entrepreneurship program learning outcomes to produce highly competent graduates equipped with entrepreneurial skills and mindset;
- Promote utilization of Training Regulations on Agro Entrepreneurship NC II, III and IV;
- Intensify implementation of MOA between TESDA and Landbank for the provision of loans to TESDA graduates intending to pursue entrepreneurship;

- Suggest to DOF to explore the possibility of offering tax incentives to institutions that will participate in entrepreneurship education and relevant programs;
- Setting up of SERBIZ (service for business-related concerns) in TESDA establishments (COROPOTI) to assist clientele (TVET enrollees and graduates) in the following concerns:
 - Determine their readiness and capability to start a business;
 - Recommend suitable business or venture to be established based on the client's profile;
 - Recommend relevant entrepreneurship trainings to equip the client with knowledge and skills in marketing, product development, accounting, etc.;
 - Provide vital information on business registration, intellectual property, marketing of products or service, etc.;
- Link TESDA graduates with mobile apps developers for a portal/app that would serve as a marketing tool to publicize the products and services offered by TVET enrollees and graduates. The app may include the following features:
 - CEO Talk – videos of TVET stakeholder CEO discussing or promoting their business or venture;
 - CEO Stories – success or failure stories of TVET graduates;
 - CEO Tips – tips on marketing, accounting, HR, product development, etc.;
 - Talk to CEO – TVET CEO talks to an audience to answer queries and share inputs live;
 - CEO Videos – how-to videos;
 - Feature product/service of the week/month
 - Forum – online medium for ideas and views on particular issues;
 - News/updates – news and updates on entrepreneurship issues.

The other implementing agencies did not respond to the Senate's request for updates.

Others

Republic Act 10870: An Act Regulating the Philippine Credit Card Industry

H 5417, Approved on July 17, 2016

SYNOPSIS

This law formalizes the authority of BSP to supervise all credit card issuers and acquirers. Supervision involves:

- Issuing rules of conduct or standards of operation;
- Examination and oversight; and
- Determining the reasonableness of fees and charges.

It sets minimum requirements for issuance of credit cards, risk management system of credit card issuers, determination of credit card limits, imposition of charges, information disclosure, collection, and other matters pertaining to the issuance, use and management of credit cards.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

UPDATE

Atty. Teofilo R. Ragadio, officer-in-charge of the Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services of BSP, informed the Senate of some "identified regulatory gaps" on the following:

- Licensing of acquirers;
- Collection of annual supervisory fees;
- Reportorial requirements;
- Examination; and
- Compliance with the Anti-Money Laundering Act and its regulations.

BSP will amend the IRR to address these gaps. It is also proposing to adopt regulations on financial consumer protection for the benefit of credit card owners.

Republic Act 10694: An Act Creating Two (2) Additional Municipal Trial Courts in Cities for Angeles City, One (1) Municipal Trial Court for Magalang, and One (1) Municipal Trial Court in Cities for the City of Mabalacat, all Situated in the Province of Pampanga

H 2409, Approved on November 11, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-05-72-MTCC dated June 14, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (MTCC Branches 4 and 5) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10695: An Act Creating a Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of San Jose Del Monte, Situated in the Province of Bulacan

H 4494, Approved on November 11, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-05-104-RTC dated June 28, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 120) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10696: An Act Creating Two (2) Additional Branches of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities and Two (2) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Baguio

H 2260, Approved on November 11, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-04-46-MTCC dated June 7, 2016 and A.M. No. 17-07-184-RTC dated August 8, 2017 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (MTCC Branches 5 and 6, and RTC Branches 78 and 79) was on hold pending the issuance of Special

Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10700: An Act Creating Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in San Jose City, Situated in the Province of Nueva Ecija

H 1771, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-05-103-RTC dated June 28, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 122) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10701: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed At Initao, Situated in the Province of Misamis Oriental

H 1980, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-06-174-RTC dated June 28, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 49) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM.

Republic Act 10702: An Act Creating An Additional Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Meycauayan, Situated in the Province of Bulacan

H 2094, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-05-105-RTC dated June 28, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 121) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10703: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Guihulngan, Situated in the Province of Negros Oriental

H 2739, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-04-90-RTC dated June 7, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 102) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10704: An Act Creating Nineteen (19) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to Be Stationed in Quezon City, Metro Manila

H 3396, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-03-64-RTC dated April 12, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (RTC Branches 302 to 320) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10705: An Act Converting the Existing 5th Municipal Circuit Trial Court of Carmona-General Mariano Alvarez Into a Municipal Trial Court with Seat At the Municipality of Carmona, and Creating a Separate Municipal Trial Court for the Municipality of General Mariano Alvarez, All Situated in the Province of Cavite

H 2186, Approved on November 20, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-07-83-MCTC dated August 2, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (MTC Carmona and MTC GMA) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10710: An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the Cities of Alaminos, Dagupan and San Carlos, All Situated in the Province of Pangasinan

H 159, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-08-302-RTC dated August 30, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (RTC Branches 75, 76 and 77) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10711: An Act Creating Five (5) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court and Five (5) Additional Branches of the Metropolitan Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to be Stationed in Pasay City, Metro Manila

H 606, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-03-65-RTC dated June 28, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (RTC Branches 297, 298, 299, 300 and 301; MeTC Branches 165, 166, 167, 168 and 169) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10712: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in Sorsogon City, Situated in the Province of Sorsogon

H 2701, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-09-321-RTC dated September 20, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 66) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10713: An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court in the National Capital Judicial Region to Be Stationed in Paranaque City, Metro Manila

H 4483, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-03-63-RTC dated April 12, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (RTC Branches 294, 295 and 296) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS 2019

Republic Act 10714: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Vigan, Situated in the Province of Ilocos Sur

H 4484, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-08-301-RTC dated August 30, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the court (RTC Branch 74) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10715: An Act Creating Three (3) Additional Branches of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the City of Bacolod, Situated in the Province of Negros Occidental

H 4491, Approved on December 9, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the Supreme Court issued resolution A.M. No. 16-07-277-RTC dated August 23, 2016 to implement this law. He said that the organization of the courts (RTC Branches 78, 79 and 80) was on hold pending the issuance of Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation by DBM. The Notice of Organization, Staffing, and Compensation Action has been approved by DBM.

Republic Act 10739: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court to Be Stationed in the Science City of Munoz, Situated in the Province of Nueva Ecija

H 1772, Approved on December 29, 2015

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the formation of RTC Branch 123 is in the agenda preparation stage.

Republic Act 10880: An Act Creating An Additional Branch of the Regional Trial Court with Seat At Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro in the Fourth Judicial Region

H 3145, Approved on July 17, 2016

Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez reported to the Senate that the formation of RTC Branch 176 is in the agenda preparation stage.





