

Headline: Cusi wants power system 'hardened' vs. calamities

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Energy Sec. Alfonso Cusi. FILE PHOTO/JOSEPH VIDAL/PRIB

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The Department of Energy (DOE) wants the local power industry to adapt, improve and be more proactive in ensuring the resiliency of the energy sector in the face of the onslaught of natural calamities like recent typhoons.

In a statement, Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi made the assurance that the country's power infrastructure will be "hardened" as he revealed that the DOE is updating the standard operating procedures and emergency response mechanisms of the sector to mitigate the impact of calamities.

"Disaster risk reduction is always a priority along with immediate restoration of power during outages caused by natural calamities," Cusi said. "We have to live by the new reality that typhoons, in particular, have become far stronger because of the effects of climate change."

He said the best practices in disaster risk reduction being employed by various government agencies including the DOE is being continuously overhauled, tweaked or upgraded to be more responsive in addressing today's challenges.

"On the part of the DOE, we are reviewing the protocols to be followed by energy sector players, especially the measures on climate change adaptation," the Energy chief added.

Cusi said the DOE has been strictly following the measures set forth by the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (Republic Act No. 10121) as implemented by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, of which the DOE chief is a member.

He identified "Task Force Kapatid" as one of the measures employed by the energy family, through the supervision of the National Electrification Administration (NEA).

The task force facilitates the repair and rehabilitation of lines and the restoration of electric service during disasters in coordination with the NDRRMC.

"We constantly convene industry partners to encourage climate change adaptation in order to reduce the vulnerability of our power supply system against future calamities," Cusi said.

"We are constantly on the lookout for better systems and technologies, as well as standard operating procedures and protocols in undertaking repair and rehabilitation of damaged lines and energy facilities," he added.

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