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MEMORANDUM

No. 44, s. 2016

TO : DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT
COUNCILS AT ALL LEVELS, GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS,
BUREAUS, AGENCIES, OFFICES, UNITS, AND
INSTRUMENTALITIES

SUBJECT : Guidelines on the Mobilization of Incident Management
Teams (IMTs)

1. RATIONALE:

The Philippines, situated along the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Typhoon Belt, is exposed to natural hazards such as typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. Furthermore, human-induced hazards such as crimes, terrorism and bombing also threaten the lives of the Filipinos.

The disaster risk profile of the Philippines necessitates the establishment of an efficient and effective response system that shall help manage the consequences of disasters. Hence, as provided for in the Republic Act (RA) 10121, otherwise known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act of 2010, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) has been mandated to establish the Incident Command System (ICS) in the country.

ICS is an on-scene disaster response mechanism that is used to integrate the complex inter-agency structures of different agencies to work for a common set of objectives during operations. It has been institutionalized as a disaster response mechanism in the Philippine DRRM System by virtue of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Memorandum Circular No. 4 s. 2012 issued on 28 March 2012.

Through years of constant training and practice on ICS, the operations of disaster responders have significantly improved in terms of resource management, reporting and documentation, promoting responders' safety, and efficient utilization of response assets. The success stories in the utilization of ICS have been evident in the past operations for disasters such as Typhoon Ruby and Mt. Apo Fire Incident as well as for planned events such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) hosting in 2015.

However, considering that the Philippines is still in transition when it comes to ICS implementation, there is still much to be improved. There have been recurring gaps and challenges on the operationalization of ICS, particularly on

the mobilization of Incident Management Teams (IMTs). In this regard, this NDRRMC Memorandum is hereby issued to provide guidelines on the mobilization of IMTs.

2. LEGAL BASES:

- 2.1 RA 10121, Section 9 (g): The OCD shall *"Formulate standard operating procedures for the deployment of rapid assessment teams, information sharing among different government agencies, and coordination before and after disasters at all levels."*
- 2.2 RA 10121, Implementing Rules and Regulations, Rule 7 (h): The OCD shall *"Establish an Incident Command System (ICS) as part of the country's existing on-scene disaster response system, to ensure effective consequence management of disasters or emergencies."*
- 2.3 Executive Order No. 82 s. 2012, Section 4D: *"As soon as an incident is declared as approaching crisis level, the Responding Crisis Manager activates the Incident Command System (ICS) and calls on the designated Incident Commander (IC)."*
- 2.4 NDRRMC Memorandum Circular No. 4, s. 2012: Implementing Guidelines on the Use of Incident Command System as an On-Scene Disaster Response and Management Mechanism under the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management System
- 2.5 NDRRMC Memorandum Order No. 23, s. 2014: National Disaster Response Plan for Hydro-meteorological Hazards
- 2.6 National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, Thematic Area 3: *"Disaster Response"*, Outcome 12: *"Well-established ICS in disaster operation."*, Indicator 1: *"Activated functional Incident Command System (ICS) by the first responder on site"*

3. OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this Memorandum is to provide guidelines for the mobilization of IMTs during disaster response operations, management of planned events, and exercises.

4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE:

This Memorandum applies to DRRMCs at all levels, government departments, bureaus, agencies, offices, units, and instrumentalities, including civil society organizations, private sector and other stakeholders.

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

- 5.1 **Check-In:** the process whereby resources report to an incident or

planned event to receive tactical assignment.

- 5.2 **Close out:** a formal concluding meeting of the response operation to discuss the incident summary and actions taken, major events that may have lasting ramifications, documentation concerns, evaluation and other relevant matters.
- 5.3 **Cluster:** a group of agencies that gather to work together towards common objectives within a particular sector of emergency response.
- 5.4 **Command and Control:** exercise of authority and direction by the Incident Commander over resources checked-in to accomplish the objectives.
- 5.5 **Command Staff:** a group of incident management personnel consisting of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander and may have Assistants, as needed.
- 5.6 **Coordination:** system for gathering information, making decision, and recording action that must be clear and known to all.
- 5.7 **Demobilization:** the release and return of resources that are no longer required for the support of an incident/event.
- 5.8 **Delegation of Authority:** a statement or instruction given to the Incident Commander by the Responsible Official delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority includes objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints and other considerations or guidelines for managing the incident or planned event as needed.
- 5.9 **Disaster:** a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. Disasters are often described as a result of the combination of: the exposure to a hazard; the conditions of vulnerability that are present; and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative consequences. Disaster impacts may include loss of life, injury, disease and other negative effects on human, physical, mental and social well-being, together with damage to property, destruction of assets, loss of services, social and economic disruption and environmental degradation.
- 5.10 **Disaster Response:** the provision of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected. Disaster response is predominantly focused on immediate and short-term needs and is

sometimes called "disaster relief."

- 5.11 **Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM):** the systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster. Prospective disaster risk reduction and management refers to risk reduction and management activities that address and seek to avoid the development of new or increased disaster risks, especially if risk reduction policies are not put in place.
- 5.12 **Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (DRRMC):** organized body of government agencies, to include the civil society organizations and private sector, mandated to undertake DRRM functions from the national to local levels. The composition, powers and functions of the DRRMC are defined in RA 10121.
- 5.13 **Emergency:** unforeseen or sudden occurrence, especially danger, demanding immediate action.
- 5.14 **Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** the facility that serves as repository of information and main hub for coordination of resources to support the management of an incident or planned event.
- 5.15 **Exercise:** a focused practice activity that places the participants in a simulated situation requiring them to function in the capacity that would be expected of them in a real event. Exercise can be discussion-based such as seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises and games or operations-based such as drills, functional exercises and full-scale exercises.
- 5.16 **Facilities:** physical locations that are necessary to support the requirements of the operation such as incident command post, base, camp, staging area, helibase and helispot.
- 5.17 **General Staff:** a group of incident management personnel organized according to function and reporting to the Incident Commander. The General Staff normally consists of the Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief.
- 5.18 **Incident:** an occurrence or event, natural or human-induced, that requires an emergency response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency

response.

- 5.19 **Incident Commander (IC):** the individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.
- 5.20 **Incident Command Post (ICP):** the facility wherein the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed.
- 5.21 **Incident Command System (ICS):** a standard, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept that can be used by all DRRMCs, member agencies and response groups. It allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by agency or jurisdictional boundaries.
- 5.22 **Incident Management Team (IMT):** a team composed of the Incident Commander and appropriate Command and General Staff personnel assigned to an incident or planned event. The IMT members may be expanded as needed.
- 5.23 **Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment-Actions, Programs and Protocols (PDRA-APP):** a process to evaluate a hazard's level of risk given the degree of exposure and vulnerability in a specific area. It presents the possible impacts to the populace and form as a basis to determine the appropriate level of response actions from the national level government agencies down to the local government units. It is hazard-specific, area-focused, and time-bound method of assessment.
- 5.24 **Planned Event:** organized gathering such as parades, fiestas, concerts, conferences, and other events usually characterized by having high-density population of audiences and significant profile of attendees among others.
- 5.25 **Rapid Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (RDANA):** a disaster response mechanism that is used immediately in the early emergency phase to determine the extent of impacts and assess the priority needs of the communities.
- 5.26 **Resources:** personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident or planned event operations and for which status is maintained.
- 5.27 **Response Clusters:** Response Clusters are part of the NDRRMC's strategic action on providing humanitarian assistance and disaster response services. These are organized groups of government agencies that are designated to undertake coordination functions at the

strategic level to provide resource support for tactical response.

5.28 **Responsible Official (RO):** the overall in charge of an agency, organization or institution who has the full authority for making decisions and providing directions to manage an incident or planned event within his/her jurisdiction. The RO is usually the Chairperson of the DRRMC, the Crisis Manager of the Crisis Management Committee, the head of an agency or organization, or any individual vested with authority as mandated by law according to his/her respective jurisdiction.

5.29 **Transfer of Command:** the process of moving the responsibility of command and control from one Incident Commander to another Incident Commander.

6. **GUIDELINES:**

6.1 **Duties and Responsibilities of the IMT:** The IMT shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

6.1.1 Overall in-charge of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and managing on-scene response decisions;

6.1.2 Manages all resources checked-in for disaster response operation by the member agencies of the DRRMCs, government departments, bureaus, agencies, offices, units, and instrumentalities, including civil society organizations, private sector and other stakeholders;

6.1.3 Receives and implements the directives of the RO to respond to the incident;

6.1.4 Ensures the safety of all personnel and other resources deployed for operations;

6.1.5 Manages the provision of logistical requirements to support the conduct of the operations;

6.1.6 Documents and reports all situation updates and actions taken to the RO through the EOC;

6.1.7 Requests for additional resources from the RO through the EOC; and

6.1.8 Facilitates the complete process on demobilization of resources.

6.2 **Selection of an IMT Member:**

6.2.1 The criteria for the selection of any IMT member are as follows:

- 6.2.1.1 Must come from a government agency/ office, local government unit, civil society organization or private sector, or a private individual with authorization to operate in the area;
 - 6.2.1.2 Preferably must have completed the ICS training requirements and standards set by the OCD; and
 - 6.2.1.3 Must be allowed by the sending agency/ office/ unit/ organization to be deployed as an IMT member immediately even on short notice from the RO.
- 6.2.2 The RO shall have the primary responsibility to select the IC through delegation of authority. Once designated, the IC shall select the appropriate members of the Command and General Staff to compose the whole IMT; and
- 6.2.3 All selected IMT members shall temporarily be relieved from their regular office duties and responsibilities to perform in full-time the expected functions of their respective IMT positions.

6.3 Activation of the IMT:

- 6.3.1 For disasters or incidents, the criteria for the activation of the IMT according to levels shall be as follows:

IMT Level	Criteria
Barangay IMT	Incident affects one barangay
Municipal/City IMT	Incident affects two or more barangays
Provincial IMT	Incident affects two or more municipalities/ component cities
Regional IMT	Incident affects two or more provinces/ chartered cities
National IMT	Incident affects two or more regions/ incident has corresponding national impacts

- 6.3.2 For management of planned events, all relevant IMTs shall be activated in response to the worst case disaster or incident scenario. Higher level IMTs shall be on stand-by and be activated as the need arises;
- 6.3.3 The RO shall decide for the activation of the IMT based on any of the following:
- 6.3.3.1 Recommendation from PDRA-APP;
 - 6.3.3.2 Recommendation from RDANA;

- 6.3.3.3 Recommendation from intelligence reports;
 - 6.3.3.4 Official request for higher-level IMT assistance from another RO;
 - 6.3.3.5 Absence of report or contact from the DRRMC/ agency/ organization/ office/ local government unit presumed to be affected;
 - 6.3.3.6 Occurrence of sudden-onset of disasters with immediate great impact; or
 - 6.3.3.7 Recommendation from other relevant sources of information.
- 6.3.4 The RO shall issue a formal memorandum to officially activate the IMT for dissemination to all relevant stakeholders. The said memorandum shall clearly specify the names and affiliations of the members for the IMT;
- 6.3.5 Once activated, all IMT members shall report to the designated assembly area by the RO for briefing; and
- 6.3.6 In the event that there is already initial IMT that is activated, transfer of command shall take place to the higher IMT level, when deemed as necessary;
- 6.4 Concept of Operation:**
- 6.4.1 After the conduct of briefing by the RO, the IMT shall proceed to the designated area of operation, establish the ICP and other appropriate ICS facilities;
- 6.4.2 All resources of assisting DRRMCs, government departments, bureaus, agencies, offices, units, and instrumentalities, including civil society organizations, private sector and other stakeholders shall be required to check-in to the IMT. Once checked-in, the said resources shall work under the command and control of the IMT;
- 6.4.3 The IMT shall request for additional resources to the RO through the EOC to be provided by the Response Clusters;
- 6.4.4 The RO shall communicate directives and guidance to the IMT through the EOC for implementation;
- 6.4.5 All status updates and actions taken shall be documented by the IMT to be reported to the EOC for inclusion in the official periodic

situation report;

6.4.6 The IMT, with clearance from the RO, shall have the decision to expand or downsize the response organization depending on the size and complexity of the incident. For this purpose, resources that are no longer needed for the operation shall be demobilized; and

6.4.7 The maximum duration of the operation of the IMT shall be up to fifteen (15) days. Afterwards, the RO shall designate new members of the IMT.

6.5 Termination of the Operation:

6.5.1 The decision to terminate the operation of the IMT shall be recommended by the IC, for the approval of the RO, based on any of the following conditions:

6.5.1.1 For disasters or incidents:

6.5.1.1.1 The emergency phase has been lifted on the ground, as indicated by decreased need for response activities and tactical resources, and the situation is proceeding to early recovery; or

6.5.1.1.2 The lower level IMT can already handle the management of the disaster or incident.

6.5.1.2 For planned events:

6.5.1.2.1 The conduct of the planned event has ended and resources are ready to proceed for demobilization; or

6.5.1.2.2 The lower level IMT can already handle the management of the planned event.

6.5.2 During the termination process:

6.5.2.1 The IMT shall facilitate the demobilization of all resources as appropriate;

6.5.2.2 For planned events, resources shall be demobilized within five days after the conduct of the event except for cases in which longer duration for the operation is required; and

6.5.2.3 The IMT shall transfer the command to the lower level

IMT and turnover all the necessary reports, tools and other response documents.

6.5.3 Upon termination of operation, the IC shall organize a team close out meeting with the Command Staff and General Staff to discuss the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations for the operation. There shall also be the conduct of Critical Incidents Stress Debriefing/ Psychosocial Debriefing for the IMT members and key service providers. The output of the team close out meeting is the After Action Review that shall contain the consolidated evaluation of the IMT's performance as well as lessons learned for future operations.

6.5.4 The IMT shall participate in the close out meeting to be organized by the RO. During the meeting, the IMT shall endorse the necessary reports, tools and other response documents, to include the After Action Review.

6.6 **Funding:** Funding for all the activities of the IMT during the operation shall be charged against the funds of the agency/organization/office of the RO in charge.

7. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS:

7.8.1 The OCD shall:

7.8.1.1 Develop and implement the appropriate ICS training design and standards as part of the requirements for the constitution of the IMT;

7.8.1.2 Maintain the database of the pool of IMT members organized by the DRRMCs;

7.8.1.3 Document lessons learned, best practice, and success stories on the mobilization of IMTs for dissemination to various stakeholders through information and education campaigns; and

7.8.1.4 Work with the member agencies of the NDRRMC for the continued development, enhancement and updating of all ICS guidelines, standards, procedures, and other related tools.

7.8.2 DRRMCs at all levels, government departments, bureaus, agencies, offices, units, and instrumentalities shall:

7.8.2.1 Provide inputs and recommendations to the OCD for the continued development, enhancement and updating of all ICS related guidelines, standards, procedures, and other related tools; and

7.8.2.2 Facilitate the widest dissemination of this Memorandum to all concerned stakeholders

8. **REPEALING CLAUSE:**

All existing issuances inconsistent in this Memorandum are hereby superseded.

9. **EFFECTIVITY:**

This Memorandum shall take effect immediately.



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Secretary, DND
and
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SECRETARY OF
NATIONAL DEFENSE



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