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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 941

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RECENT COA AUDIT REPORT THAT DUE TO INADEQUATE PLANNING, THE OFFICE OF CIVIL DEFENSE ONLY UTILIZED A MINIMAL AMOUNT OF THE TOTAL AVAILABLE QUICK RESPONSE FUND FOR CY 2013 FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA THAT DEPRIVED THE DISASTER/CALAMITY VICTIMS OF THEIR BASIC SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

WHEREAS, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) acts as the implementing arm of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and has the primary mission of administering a comprehensive national civil defense and disaster risk reduction and management program; it provides leadership in the continuous development of strategic and systematic approaches and measures to reduce the vulnerabilities and risks to hazards and manage the consequences of disasters;

WHEREAS, the General Appropriations Act of 2013, Special Provisions for OCD, No. 1, provides: "the Quick Response Fund (QRF) shall serve as stand-by to be used for relief and rehabilitation programs in order that the situation and living conditions of people living in communities or areas stricken by calamities, epidemics, crises, and catastrophes occurring during the year may be normalized as quickly as possible;"

WHEREAS, OCD Memorandum No. 505 dated 23 August 2012 also provides for the Guidelines governing the OCD QRF; the Memorandum, Item III.2 states:

2. The QRF is provisioned during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected. The said fund shall be used for the following purposes:

- a. Aid, relief and respond services to communities/areas affected by natural and human-induced calamities (including epidemics as declared by the DOH, crises resulting from armed conflicts, insurgency, terrorism and other catastrophes) such as, but not limited to:
  - Gasoline for response vehicle/rescue equipment
  - Subsistence allowance for rescuing/responding units (e.g., food expense, travelling expense, etc.)
  - Supplies for disaster responding activities
    - Ropes, flashlight, empty sacks, shovel, POL, chainsaw, hard hat, etc.

- Non-food relief supplies for the victims of the disaster as relief operations (response) such as, but not limited to:
  - Items in evacuation/refuge areas: tent, shelter, supply, kitchen utensils, cookwares, pail, dipper, folding beds, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, blankets, pillows, personal hygiene kit, first-aid kit, etc.;

WHEREAS, according to the 2014 Report on the Audit of Typhoon Yolanda Relief Operations, for CY 2013, due to inadequate planning, the OCD only utilized 17% of ₱121,182,550.00 of the total available QRF of ₱692,766,612.00 for Typhoon Yolanda, thus depriving the disaster/calamity victims of their basic subsistence needs;

WHEREAS, gaps in the allocation of the QRF to OCD and fund restriction also reportedly contributed to the low utilization of the funds;

WHEREAS, the audit report stated that for CY 2011, OCD's QRF appropriation was ₱530 million in addition to the CY 2012 continuing appropriation of ₱162, 766,612.00; thus, a total of ₱692,766,612.00 was available for OCD's operations for last year;

WHEREAS, the funds were reportedly spent for the requirements of the Operations Centers and petroleum, oil, and lubricant (POL), while nothing was reported for the basic subsistence needs of calamity victims despite the existence of guidelines and other issuances on the matter;

WHEREAS, the management of OCD reportedly justified that the Operations Centers are where the Disaster Risk reduction and Management (DRRM) Council Members gather together before and during an emergency it is also where coordination, sharing of information and resources takes place and management decisions are facilitated; thus, food and other expenses were incurred;

WHEREAS, according to the COA audit report, the evaluation showed that the reasons for OCD's low QRF disbursement rate are as follows:

- The absence of projected plans/program of Expenditures by the Central Office officials for the unforeseen requirements of the disaster victims;
- Restriction on the use of the fund;
- Gaps in the allocation of fund to OCD;

WHEREAS, a Department of Budget and Management (DBM) study reportedly showed that OCD was able to fully utilize its QRF prior to CY 2012; however, its QRF utilization from 2012 to 2013 allegedly declined because of the restriction on the use of the fund;

WHEREAS, it appears that before 2012, QRF can be used for pre-disaster activities, but starting 2012, QRF was designated as standby fund; thus, it can only be used at the onset of disasters or for response activities;

WHEREAS, the COA audit report provides that fund allocation is based on the mandates of the concerned agencies;

WHEREAS, in terms of financial resources, the COA observed that OCD's budget has declined significantly from ₱1 billion in 2012 to ₱650 million in CY 2013 due to the deletion in 2013 of the usual yearly allocation for DRRM operations, but retained in its QRF budget allocation;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10121, aka the “Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010”, enumerates the functions of the OCD; however, it appears that relief and rehabilitation activities supposed to be funded out of the QRF are not included among OCD’s functions; thus, the COA recommends revisiting OCD Memorandum Order No. 505 and all issuances pertaining to QRF and disaster operations especially response activities and align them with R.A. No. 10121;

WHEREAS, the COA also recommends to the OCD to coordinate with the DBM to revisit its QRF allocation; the COA audit report states that since most of OCD’s functions consist of pre-disaster activities, such as support to DRRMC’s functions, funds for DRRM Operations are more appropriate;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the recent COA audit report that due to inadequate planning, the Office of Civil Defense only utilized a minimal amount of the total available Quick Response Fund for CY 2013 for typhoon Yolanda that deprived the disaster/calamity victims of their basic subsistence needs.

Adopted,

*acs.*   
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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