



March 1, 2023

## MEMORANDUM

**FOR** : The Regional Executive Director  
MIMAROPA Region  
1515 DENR by the Bay Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila

**THRU** : The ARD for Technical Services

**FROM** : The OIC, PENR Officer  
Oriental Mindoro

**SUBJECT** : **REPORT ON THE PARTICIPATION TO THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING WITH AGENDA REGARDING THE OIL SPILLAGE INCIDENT FROM THE SUBMERGED FUEL TANKER MT PRINCESS EMPRESS IN BALINGAWAN POINT, NAUJAN, ORIENTAL MINDORO**

Respectfully submitted is the report of this Office on the participation to the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Provincial DRRMO Council Meeting chaired by the Provincial Governor Humerlito 'Bonz' A. Dolor on March 1, 2023, via Zoom. One of the priority agenda discussed was the Oil Spill incident on the submerged fuel tanker MT Princess Empress in Balingawan Point, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

The meeting was participated by the DENR Key Officials namely Chief of Staff and Supervising Undersecretary for Strategic Communications Marilou G. Erni, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Atty. Jonas R. Leones, OIC Assistant Secretary for Field Operations for Luzon and Visayas Gilbert C. Gonzales, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Foreign Assisted and Special Projects, Biodiversity Management Bureau Director in concurrent Marcial C. Amaro, Jr., MIMAROPA Regional Executive Director Lormelyn E. Claudio, EMB Regional Director Atty. Joe Amil Salino, OIC, PENR Officer Alan L. Valle, and CENR Officer, Socorro Rodel M. Boyles. The meeting was a follow up update on the conducted organizational meeting with the DENR Key Officials and the related and concerned agencies and stakeholders regarding the incident.

During the meeting, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) have presented their updates on the on-going operations. Based on their report, the tanker ship is still unlocated, hence only waster testing and sampling is done to ensure that the spillage is still the crude oil from the tanker and not the intermediate fuel oil (IFO). It was then confirmed that the gasoline that leaked from the ship is not as destructive and harmful as the IFO, since this gas evaporates in the water and the spread is slow. As of the moment, PCG's commuter vessels and tug boats are on board and currently monitoring and overseeing the situation. Further, the Coast Guard Aviation Team was currently conducting an aerial surveillance to overlook the extent of the spillage and possible location of the tanker ship. Moreover, the Marine Environmental Protection Force is also conducting their operations along with the PCG. They also presented



the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) which is a necessary information in the action plan to be prepared.

The representative of the vessel MT Princess Empress was also present in the meeting. Ms. Reia Cabral was asked questions regarding the plans or on-going operations on the assistance to the incident. Ms. Cabral, however, expressed their utmost participation on the on-going operations and committed to support in the efforts in containing the oil spillage. She also stated that the possible salvaging of the motor tanker is not the priority of the company but the to help in the possible effect of the oil spillage in the marine environment. The company expressed their willingness to pay for the environmental damage that the incident may cause in the long run and also to provide the task force all necessary documents they have in order to address possible anticipated issues that will arise and to be able to plan out the next steps.

Meanwhile, the DENR Biodiversity Management Bureau thru Asec Marcial Amaro provided additional information on the possible damage in the marine ecosystem based on their data. He presented that based from the last location of the ship, the 5-10km radius of the spillage is not much destructive since there is no habitat within the area, however, if it reaches the 15-20km radius, there will be 55% damage on the coral reefs, and if it exceeds the 20-km radius, all marine habitat such as coral reef, sea grass and mangrove will be affected by the spillage. Per record, the last location of the vessel is 30kms from the Verde Island Passage which is a key biodiversity area and is a critical area.

The discussion ended with the agreements made from the participating and concerned stakeholders. Agreements made are listed below, to wit;

- The MEPFO and the MT Princess Empress shall provide the DENR and the PCG the Safety Data Sheet for the additional information and appropriate action to be taken.
- The Provincial Government of Oriental Mindoro shall create an Executive Order for the Incident Command/Task Force for Oil Spill in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.
- The DENR shall provide the PGOM the Special Order for the inclusion in the of the DENR Task Force in the Executive Order.
- DENR Undersecretary for Strategic Communications Marilou G. Erni shall be the Task Force Commander for the DENR and all concerns relating to the incident shall be addressed to the USec.
- The DENR and the PCG shall closely coordinate with each other regarding the necessary assistance and next steps to be taken.
- The MT Princess Empress company shall be liable in all the environmental damage that the incident has or may cause.
- The DENR EMB together with the PCG shall conduct water sampling and testing to verify the contamination in the water and shall provide report to the task force.
- The field offices shall monitor the progress of the incident and prepare situational reports as needed.

For information, record and reference.

  
**ALAN L. VALLE**