



TAKING IT UP A NOTCH

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



PHILIPPINE
COMPETITION
COMMISSION

Ensuring businesses compete and consumers benefit



BAGONG PILIPINAS

ABOUT THE THEME

Taking It Up a Notch

The Commission intensified its efforts in enforcing competition law and promoting competition policy, reinforcing its commitment to fostering fair market conditions. The PCC Enforcement Office filed charges against onion traders for alleged cartel conduct, accusing them of engaging in anti-competitive agreements in the supply of imported onions in the Philippines. The year 2024 also marked a significant increase in capacity-building and advocacy initiatives, reflecting the PCC’s dedication to empowering stakeholders and raising awareness. By ramping up its activities in pursuit of its mandate, the PCC sustains its momentum in correcting market distortions for the benefit of consumers.

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OUR ROLE

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) is an independent, quasi-judicial body mandated to implement the National Competition Policy and enforce Republic Act No. 10667 or the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), which serves as the primary competition law in the country.

The enactment of the PCA and the creation of the PCC aim to promote economic efficiency and ensure fair and healthy market competition where everyone in the country can contribute to and benefit from economic development.

The PCC fosters a regulatory environment for market competition to:

- ▶ **Protect consumer welfare** by giving consumers access to a wider choice of goods and services at affordable prices; and
- ▶ **Promote a competitive business environment** and encourage market players to be more efficient and innovative.

VISION

The PCC aims to be a well-respected, world-class authority in promoting fair market competition to enhance consumer welfare, advance trade, and foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

MISSION

The PCC shall promote economic development and enhance public welfare through free and fair market competition by prohibiting anti-competitive agreements, abuses of dominant position, and anti-competitive mergers and acquisitions; and by advocating for pro-competition policies.

The PCC has original and primary jurisdiction over the enforcement and implementation of the PCA and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. It is mandated to, among others:

- ▶ Review mergers and acquisitions;
- ▶ Investigate and adjudicate antitrust cases;
- ▶ Impose sanctions and penalties;
- ▶ Monitor competition-relevant government interventions;
- ▶ Conduct, publish, and disseminate studies and reports on competition-related matters;
- ▶ Issue advisory opinions;
- ▶ Promote capacity-building and the sharing of best practices with other competition-related bodies; and
- ▶ Advocate a pro-competition culture in government and among businesses.



►► MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

In 2024, the PCC ramped up its efforts of ensuring fair and open market competition. We strengthened our enforcement efforts, streamlined competition principles in national policy, and enhanced collaboration with stakeholders to promote a level playing field among businesses for the benefit of consumers. As markets continue to evolve, the PCC adopts strategies to address emerging anti-competitive risks, particularly in critical sectors such as agriculture, energy, and digital markets.

A highlight of 2023 that carried over into 2024 was the legal action taken against onion traders engaged in cartelistic activities, a significant step towards addressing the unreasonably high price of onions, which captured global headlines and international attention. In August of last year, the PCC announced it was filing charges against 12

onion traders which were accused of colluding to lessen market competition through sharing information, coordinating distribution and storage schemes, and allocating sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPICs) amongst themselves to limit the onion market in the country.

In line with these developments, the enactment of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act intends to curb smuggling, hoarding, and price manipulation in the agricultural sector through the creation of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council, wherein PCC sits as a member. Further, the PCC enhanced collaboration with other regulatory bodies such as the Energy Regulatory Commission through a joint task force that tackles anti-competitive practices in the power sector. These coordinated efforts demonstrated our commitment to safeguarding competition across various industries.

For mergers and acquisitions, the PCC received 29 notifications worth more than ₱809 billion, bringing the cumulative transaction value to over ₱6 trillion since the Commission's inception. These merger reviews reflected not only our role as regulatory oversight but also the growing trust and cooperation between the PCC and key market players. Notable developments this year include the approval of the joint acquisition by Meralco PowerGen Corp., Therma Natgas Power Inc., and San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp. of a significant stake in several power facilities and a liquefied natural gas terminal—a landmark acquisition in the power sector, accompanied by necessary competition safeguards.

The Commission also elevated merger notification thresholds, reflecting our adherence to Section 19 of the Philippine Competition Act, which requires the Commission to periodically adjust merger thresholds to adapt to evolving economic conditions and maintain our relevance in the regulatory landscape. In 2024, the Commission raised the merger thresholds to ₱7.8 billion for size of party and ₱3.2 billion for size of transaction.

On the policy and research front, the PCC completed four market studies in key sectors: livestock, digital platforms, pharmaceuticals, and water distribution. These research products will serve as the foundation for advocating evidence-based policy recommendations aimed at promoting fair competition. In addition, our competition impact assessments (CIAs) evaluated the effects of regulations in various industries, helping refine government policies to foster competition. Also, the PCC completed two CIAs: one on the fish industry and another on supplemental toll operations agreements.

We also ramped up stakeholder engagement, conducting 54 advocacy activities aimed at raising awareness of competition law and its benefits to businesses and consumers. The PCC contributed to economic policymaking by submitting 33 position papers on legislative proposals, ensuring that competition principles are integrated into broader policy discussions. Our participation in 60 legislative hearings underscored our role in shaping fair market regulation across industries.

On the global front, the PCC successfully concluded text-based negotiations of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition, as well as competition chapters of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement, and the Philippines-United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The PCC also leads the negotiations for the competition chapters of the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement and the Philippines-European Union Free Trade Agreement. These efforts intend to strengthen the Philippines' cross-border cooperation on competition policy matters.

To boost its capabilities, the PCC filled 83% of its plantilla positions, including a robust team of lawyers and economists. Upholding quality management standards remained central to our operations, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Investment in human capital did not let up, with 115 local and international training opportunities made available to PCC staff, offering valuable insights into competition law enforcement and regulatory best practices. These efforts, coupled with international collaboration such as those with competition authorities in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and South Korea, helped refine our merger review processes and enforcement strategies.

As we enter 2025, the PCC is resolute in its mission to promote and protect competition. Our strategic priorities include leveraging data-driven approaches to enhance enforcement and strengthening our ability to respond to shifting business conditions. With the lessons of 2024 in mind, we aim to drive innovation and advocate for consumer welfare in a competitive and inclusive market landscape.

I extend my deepest appreciation to our stakeholders and partners for their unwavering support, and to the PCC team for their commitment to deliver on our mandates. Together, we will continue to champion competition as a vital force for economic development in the Philippines.



MICHAEL G. AGUINALDO

THE COMMISSION



CHAIRPERSON MICHAEL G. AGUINALDO

Atty. Michael G. Aguinaldo is the second Chairperson since the establishment of the PCC in 2016. Prior to his appointment to the PCC, he was Chairperson of the Commission on Audit (COA), the supreme audit institution of the Philippines, from 2015 to 2022, and was concurrently External Auditor of the World Health Organization, the Food & Agriculture Organization, the International Labor Organization, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. He was the Deputy Executive Secretary for Legal Affairs of the Office of the President of the Philippines from 2011 to 2015. Before his foray into public service, he worked as a law practitioner in the private sector from 1992 to 2011, including 17 years with the law firm Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura Sayoc & de los Angeles, where he was a partner and member of the Executive Committee.

Chairperson Aguinaldo obtained his Juris Doctor degree in 1992 from the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law, where he became a member of the faculty from 1994 to 2015. He holds a Master of Laws degree with special concentration in International Economic Law from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



COMMISSIONER MARAH VICTORIA S. QUEROL

Prior to joining the PCC, Commissioner Marah Victoria S. Querol was Senior Deputy Executive Secretary, with the rank of Secretary, at the Office of the President of the Philippines (OP). As a technocrat, she rose through the ranks from being a technical assistant under the OP's Strategic Initiatives Management Office (SIMO) to Undersecretary. Having served under two presidents, she played an instrumental role in crafting key policies of the last two administrations.

Commissioner Querol is backed by experience in economics, business, and law. She obtained her Juris Doctor degree and Master of Business Administration degree at the Ateneo de Manila University, and her Economics degree at the University of the Philippines Diliman. She is a Senior Fellow at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy – National University of Singapore.



COMMISSIONER MICHAEL B. PELOTON

Commissioner Michael B. Peloton joined the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) in March 2022. Prior to joining the PCC, he had 17 years of experience in private law practice. He was a Constitutional Law professor at the Ateneo de Davao University and IT professor at the University of Immaculate Conception.

He previously served the government in various capacities as board director of a government owned or controlled corporation, technical assistant, and consultant at the Office of the President of the Philippines. He was also an overseer of the Insurance Commission.

Commissioner Peloton earned his Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Science in Computer Science degrees at the Ateneo de Davao University.



COMMISSIONER LOLIBETH RAMIT-MEDRANO

Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano has extensive experience in government service with expertise on intellectual property (IP), public policy and administration, international trade negotiations, international cooperation, and legislative affairs. Her 27-year public service record spans different technical and leadership roles, previously as Undersecretary of the Office of the President of the Philippines. Prior to that, she was the Director of the Bureau of Patents at the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) where she received the 2020 Presidential Gawad Career Executive Service (CES) Award for her exemplary performance in government service.

Commissioner Medrano graduated cum laude with a degree in Public Administration from the University of the Philippines Diliman and obtained her Juris Doctor degree from the San Beda University College of Law. She earned her Master's Degree in Politics and Public Policy as an Australian Development Scholar at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, and Master of Laws specializing in intellectual property at the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law. Recently, she obtained her Postgraduate Diploma in EU Competition Law, with Merit, from King's College London.

She completed advanced courses and programs on IP and trade offered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, Switzerland, as well as competition courses at the Barcelona School of Economics and the Competition and Regulation European Summer School in Greece.

Commissioner Medrano served as the first Chairperson of the ASEAN Industrial Design Task Force. She is also a member of the Supreme Court Sub-Committee for the Revision of the Rules of Procedure for the Intellectual Property Rights Cases.

She is a law professor of IP courses at the Ateneo Law School, San Beda Alabang College of Law, and UP Open University, as well as Competition and Governance at the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance Graduate School.



COMMISSIONER FERDINAND M. NEGRE

Prior to joining PCC, Commissioner Negre was the dean of the Manuel L. Quezon University School of Law and chairperson of the Commercial Law and Intellectual Property (IP) Department of the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law. Currently, he is a professor and faculty member of the Ateneo Law School. He is a founding partner of Bengzon-Negre-Untalan Law, where he handled IP cases, and was a member of the Supreme Court Sub-Committee on Special Rules in IP Cases. He also served as an Examiner for Mercantile Law in the 2014 Bar Examinations. Additionally, he was the president of the Licensing Executives Society of the Philippines, corporate secretary of the Philippine Franchise Association, and corporate counsel of the Philippine Retailers Association.

He is backed by expertise in law and business being a certified public accountant, IP law expert, and legal educator.

Commissioner Negre obtained his Bachelor of Science Degree in Commerce, Major in Accounting from the University of Sto. Tomas, Juris Doctor degree from the Ateneo Law School, and Master of Intellectual Property from Pierce University in New Hampshire, USA. He attended a Post-Graduate Scholarship Program on Intellectual Property at the Munich Intellectual Property Law Center in Germany and went to the Queen Mary Intellectual Property Research Institute in London, UK. He also has a Post Graduate Diploma in Economics for Competition Law from King's College London.



2024 AT A GLANCE



Enforcement

- 2 full administrative investigations completed
- 3 verified complaints received and acted on
- 3 *motu proprio* preliminary inquiries commenced
- 10 initial assessments completed
- 3 non-adversarial proceedings commenced
- 2 statements of objections filed
- 414 queries and complaints addressed



Merger Review

- 29 notifications received
- Over ₱809 billion combined worth of transactions received
- 17 transactions approved
- 46 requests for letters of non-coverage received
- 29 pre-notification consultations conducted



Policy and economic research

- 4 market studies completed
- 5 staff research activities completed
- 2 competition impact assessments and full-scale policy reviews completed



Advocacy and capacitating stakeholders

- 54 advocacy and communications activities conducted
- 60 hearings attended
- 33 position papers submitted to the Senate and House of Representatives



Building institutional capacities

- 202 plantilla positions filled
- 115 learning and development events attended
- 2 partnerships forged



COMPETITION ENFORCEMENT

In 2024, the PCC cracked down on anti-competitive behavior across key sectors. The Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) conducted 10 initial assessments, three preliminary inquiries, and two full administrative investigations. It also filed two statements of objections (SOs) and initiated three non-adversarial proceedings.

In the agriculture sector, the CEO filed an SO against traders for engaging in cartel activities that involved allocating the market for imported onions. In the services sector, the PCC accepted a settlement proposal from the Philippine Association of Legitimate Service Contractors to address anti-competitive agreements within its organization. The PCC also approved SM Prime Holdings, Inc.'s (SMPHI) written proposal in response to a show cause order, whereby SMPHI committed to promote fair market competition through the launch of a nationwide information campaign on the PCC and the Philippine Competition Act. These actions demonstrate the PCC's commitment to enforcing competition law and preventing market abuses.

To enhance collaboration and information sharing, the PCC strengthened its partnership with various government agencies. A joint task force with the Energy Regulatory Commission was activated to investigate anti-competitive practices in the power sector. The PCC likewise discussed possible collaboration with the Department of Agriculture to combat price manipulation and market abuses affecting agricultural products. The enactment of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act intends to reinforce these efforts against smuggling, hoarding, price manipulation, and cartel operations in the sector. Additionally, the Commission aligned enforcement strategies with the Department of Justice - Office for Competition.

The PCC embraced digital innovation to improve accessibility and efficiency in handling competition cases. The launch of the E-Complaint Portal offers consumers and businesses a convenient platform to report anti-competitive practices. As a reflection of the public's growing awareness of competition law, the PCC received and responded to 414 queries and complaints over the year. Furthermore, it conducted an introductory session to a Bid Rigging Screening Tool pilot test with the Quezon City local government.



Vegetable traders charged for anti-competitive practices

The Competition Enforcement Office (CEO), the PCC's investigative and prosecutorial arm, has charged a group of vegetable traders for entering into anti-competitive agreements involving the supply of imported onions in the Philippines.

In a Statement of Objections (SO) filed with the Commission on July 9, the CEO charged Philippine Vieva Group of Companies, Inc. (Phil. Vieva Group); Tian Long Corp. (Tian Long); La Reina Fresh Vegetables & Young Indoor Plants, Inc. (La Reina); Yom Trading Corporation (Yom Trading); Vegetable Importers, Exporters & Vendors Association of the Philippines (VIEVA Phils.); and Golden Shine International Freight Forwarders Corp. (Golden Shine) of the following:

- Allocating the supply of imported onions by assigning among themselves sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) issued by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI) and dividing among themselves the volume of onion allowed to be imported; and
- Colluding to lessen competition by exchanging sensitive business information such as price, suppliers, customers, volume, shipping, distribution, and storage.

According to the complaint, these actions violate Section 14(b)(2) and Section 14(c) of Republic Act No. 10667 or the Philippine Competition Act (PCA).

Also named in the complaint as individual respondents were:

- Lilia Cruz: Vice president of Phil. Vieva Group, chairperson and president of Golden Shine, and chairperson of VIEVA Phils.;
- Eric Pabilona: Board member of Phil. Vieva Group, corporate executive officer of Golden Shine, and corporate secretary of Tian Long;
- Renato Francisco Jr.: Board member of Phil. Vieva Group, president of La Reina, and chairman and president of Yom Trading; and
- Letty Baculando: Board member of Phil. Vieva Group and incorporator of Golden Shine.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (center), Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos (leftmost), and Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi (rightmost) addressed the media at a press conference on the onion case last September 5 at the PCC office.

Likewise implicated were:

- Mark Castro Ocampo: Sole proprietor of Vegefru Producing Store (Vegefru); and
- Nancy Callanta Rosal: Sole proprietor of Rosal Fruit and Vegetable Trading (Rosal).

The CEO claimed that these vegetable traders, despite being competitors, conspired to manipulate the onion market in the Philippines from 2019 to 2023. The traders, who imported onions from China, the Netherlands, and India, allegedly worked together to influence prices and limit competition. Tian Long, Yom Trading, La Reina, Phil. Vieva Group, Rosal and Vegefru were involved in onion trading, while VIEVA Phils. distributed vegetables. Golden Shine provided freight forwarding services.

The CEO said these actions substantially reduced competition, leading to distorted supply and price levels, thereby harming consumers. To gather evidence for this case, the CEO conducted a dawn raid, also called an administrative search and inspection, of the involved entities in September 2023. This was the first dawn raid conducted under the Rules on Administrative Search and Inspection (RASI), which the Supreme Court issued in 2019 to outline the procedures for conducting such inspections in the course of investigating potential violations of the PCA.

During the dawn raid, the CEO collected voluminous documents, records, and electronic data related to the companies' trading activities. Upon receipt of the SO, the Commission en banc is tasked with hearing the case in the exercise of its power as a quasi-judicial body.

Under the PCA, entities found to have engaged in anti-competitive agreements may be fined at least ₱110 million. However, if the violation involves a basic necessity or prime commodity, such as onions, the fine may be tripled, according to Section 41 of the PCA and Section 6.5 of the PCC's Rules of Procedure. In this case, given the duration of the collusive agreement and the involvement of a basic commodity, the CEO recommended approximately ₱2.4 billion in total fines.



Settlement reached to address anti-competitive practices in service contracting

The PCC accepted a ₱1.5-million settlement proposal offered by the Philippine Association of Legitimate Service Contractors (PALSCON) to address potential anti-competitive provisions in the Code of Ethics of the organization.

Following an investigation by the Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) for suspected violations of Section 14 (b)(2) of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), PALSCON opted to submit an undertaking to the Commission for the correction of its behavior.

The PCA prohibits agreements among competitors that aim to limit competition, such as dividing the market based on sales, territory, product or service type, or other factors. PALSCON's Code of Ethics contained provisions which had the effect of limiting competition among its members.

During the CEO's full administrative investigation in 2021, PALSCON initiated settlement discussions pursuant to Section 2.17 of the PCC Rules of Procedure. The Rules allow entities under investigation to offer a settlement to the Commission at any time during the investigation, but before the final decision is made.

After a series of negotiations, PALSCON on July 14, 2023 submitted its Complete Revised Settlement Proposal, which the Commission approved on October 5, 2023.

To address PCC's concerns, PALSCON committed the following undertakings:

- Payment of settlement amounting to ₱ 1,547,079.60.
- Attendance of the PALSCON board of directors and at least two senior officers of each PALSCON member firm to a competition law seminar to be organized by PCC;
- Appointment of a competition law compliance officer who will ensure compliance of PALSCON members with the PCA, PCC issuances, as well as attendance to competition law seminars by identified PALSCON officers;
- Public acknowledgement by PALSCON of the group's inadvertent mistake or failure to properly communicate to members the meaning of Article II, Section 3 of PALSCON's Code of Ethics, and which acknowledgement shall be published on PALSCON's website for two years; and
- Revision of PALSCON's Code of Ethics, particularly, Article II, Section 3, to state: *"PALSCON shall not support, tolerate, or condone anti-competitive practices between and among its members, as well as agreements, conduct, policies or regulations which are anti-competitive in nature"*.



Joint task force formed to tackle competition issues in the energy sector

The PCC and Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) launched a joint task force in February to look into anti-competitive practices in the power sector.

Since the enactment of Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001, the government has opened segments of the power industry supply chain to competition, starting with power generation. Despite this reform, accusations of anti-competitive behavior have hounded the market.

The joint task force operationalized a memorandum of agreement (MOA) that both agencies signed in 2019. Under their MOA, both agencies can conduct joint fact-finding inquiries pertaining to competition matters in the electric power industry, as well as consultations with institutions or firms, such as the Philippine Electricity Market Corporation (PEMC), the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), and generation companies.

The strengthened partnership between the PCC and ERC represents a key step toward promoting competition in the power sector. The PCC's perspective on reviewing agreements and investigating business practices through a competition lens complements the ERC's industry-specific expertise, enabling both agencies to effectively fulfill their respective mandates.

Both ERC and PCC have competition mandates under their respective charters: EPIRA mandates the ERC to address "abuse of market power, cartelization, and anti-competitive or discriminatory behavior by any electric power industry participant" (Section 43(k), EPIRA), while Republic Act No. 10667, or the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) of 2015 empowers the PCC to have "original and primary jurisdiction" to enforce competition law (Section 12, in relation to Section 32, PCA).





PCC Commissioner Ferdinand Negre (third from left), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (sixth from left), Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos (second from left), Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi (third from right), and Executive Assistant John Hubert Guamos (rightmost) with Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary for Inspectorate and Enforcement and Chief of Staff Alvin John Balagbag (fifth from left), Undersecretary for Operations and Agri-Fisheries Mechanization and for Rural Credit Roger Navarro (fourth from left), Director for Inspectorate and Enforcement Felicisimo Madayag, Jr. (second from right), and Atty. Charisma Aclan (leftmost) from the Office of the Secretary of DA.

Partnership with DA to combat unfair competition in agriculture

The PCC and the Department of Agriculture (DA) met in December to explore possible collaboration that would address critical concerns related to anti-competitive practices affecting the sector.

The discussion focused on tackling issues such as price fixing, abuses of dominant market position, and the smuggling of agricultural products, which undermine competition and can lead to higher prices. The dialogue marked an important step in enhancing collaboration between the two agencies as they work towards safeguarding the interests of Filipino farmers, fisherfolk, and consumers.

Key areas of collaboration were identified, such as enhancing transparency and information exchange through data sharing to better understand market dynamics, establishing a specialized task force to tackle specific anti-competitive issues across various agricultural markets, case buildup against violators of competition laws, facilitating training and information sharing to strengthen overall enforcement capabilities, and engaging in visits to monitor compliance and investigate potential infractions.

Attendees from the PCC included Commissioner Ferdinand Negre, Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos and Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi, and Economics Office representatives. Representing DA were Undersecretary for DA Inspectorate and Enforcement and Chief of Staff Alvin John Balagbag, Undersecretary for Operations and Agri-Fisheries Mechanization and for Rural Credit Roger Navarro, Director for Inspectorate and Enforcement Felicisimo Madayag, Jr., and Atty. Charisma Aclan of the Office of the Secretary.

Through this collaborative approach, the PCC and DA aim to foster a competitive market environment that benefits all stakeholders in the sector.



PCC and DOJ-OFC strengthen collaboration on competition enforcement

The PCC and the Department of Justice - Office for Competition (DOJ-OFC) have been working together to bolster enforcement of the country's antitrust laws through a series of collaborative workshops and dialogues.

In a meeting held in April, the PCC, led by Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, met with DOJ Undersecretary and Law Enforcement Cluster Head Jesse Hermogenes Andres and other DOJ officials in Manila. The discussions centered on enhancing coordination between the two agencies, particularly in the investigation and prosecution of cases of cartel conduct, such as price-fixing and bid rigging, under the Philippine Competition Act (PCA). A key outcome of the meeting was DOJ-OFC's proposal to begin collaboration during the case build-up stage, ensuring full cooperation between law enforcement and prosecutors in line with DOJ Circular No. 20.

Following this, the PCC on September 11-12 conducted an inter-agency workshop with representatives from the DOJ, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and Philippine National Police (PNP). The workshop refreshed participants on PCA violations and the PCC's investigation processes, with a focus on practical case build-up exercises.

In November, the collaboration expanded through a series of workshops on market competition fundamentals and bid rigging detection.

Representatives from the PCC's Economics Office (EO) and Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) joined the DOJ-OFC to discuss key topics, including cartel detection and the implementation of the National Competition Policy (NCP). These sessions facilitated knowledge-sharing and strengthened coordination between prosecutors, law enforcement, and local government units.



(Left to right) DOJ Atty. Frances Aira Sy, PCC Competition Enforcement Office Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi, Director Christian Loren De Los Santos, PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, DOJ Undersecretary Jesse Hermogenes Andres, DOJ Assistant Secretary Eliseo Cruz, DOJ-OFC Officer-in-Charge Director Caesar Jose Francisco, DOJ Atty. Kim Espina, and DOJ Atty. Leah Manotok.



(Seated, from left): PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and SMPHI Assistant Vice President for Operations Christian Mathay. (Standing, from left): PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, Commissioners Ferdinand Negre, Michael Peloton, Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano and Marah Victoria Querol, SMPHI Vice President for Legal Operations Josefina Remollo, and Competition Protocol Officer Kevin Charles Balderama.



Major mall operator launches nationwide awareness campaign on fair competition

The PCC has secured a significant boost to its advocacy after SM Prime Holdings, Inc. (SMPHI) committed to promote fair market competition among its stakeholders nationwide.

In September, the PCC and SMPHI signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) signifying the mall operator's commitment to protecting consumer welfare and ensuring a level playing field for businesses.

As part of the MoC, SMPHI launched a nationwide information campaign across its SM Supermalls to educate the public about the PCC's mandate and the benefits of fair competition. The campaign

includes digital platforms such as cinema ads, LED poster boxes and cinema directories, digital mall directories, LFD screens, and in-mall LED screens.

The collaboration follows a previous *motu proprio* investigation by the PCC into alleged tying practices involving bottled water in SM Supermalls. In October 2022, the PCC issued a show cause order to SMPHI, citing potential violations of the Philippine Competition Act. SMPHI addressed the concerns by submitting in March 2024 a written proposal, which outlined several commitments, including the conduct of said campaign.



PCC Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos (front row, third from right) and Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi (front row, second from right) join President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. (center) and other government leaders during the ceremonial signing of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act in Malacañang last September 26.

New law creates inter-agency body against cartels in agri sector

The PCC will form part of a new inter-agency body tasked with going after economic saboteurs in the agricultural sector.

On September 26, the PCC, represented by Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) Director Christian Loren De Los Santos and Assistant Director Genevieve Jusi, participated in the ceremonial signing in Malacañang of Republic Act No. 12022 or the Anti-Agricultural Sabotage Act of 2024.

Under the new law, the PCC will be one of eight agencies comprising the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council, which will pursue entities engaged in acts of economic sabotage in the agricultural sector. Such acts include cartel conduct, hoarding, smuggling and profiteering.

The PCC, through its CEO and Legislative Liaison Office, helped in crafting policies and legislation by providing relevant inputs during congressional deliberations. Through its position papers, the agency emphasized the need for a long-term strategy to curb smuggling by improving domestic agricultural supply and addressing issues such as land use, irrigation, mechanization, research and development, and restrictive policies, among others. In addition, the PCC recommended inputs to provisions on economic sabotage, hoarding, profiteering, cartel, and jurisdiction, aligned with the Philippine Competition Act.

Alongside the PCC, other council members include the Departments of Agriculture, of Justice, of Finance, of the Interior and Local Government, of Transportation, and of Trade and Industry, and the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

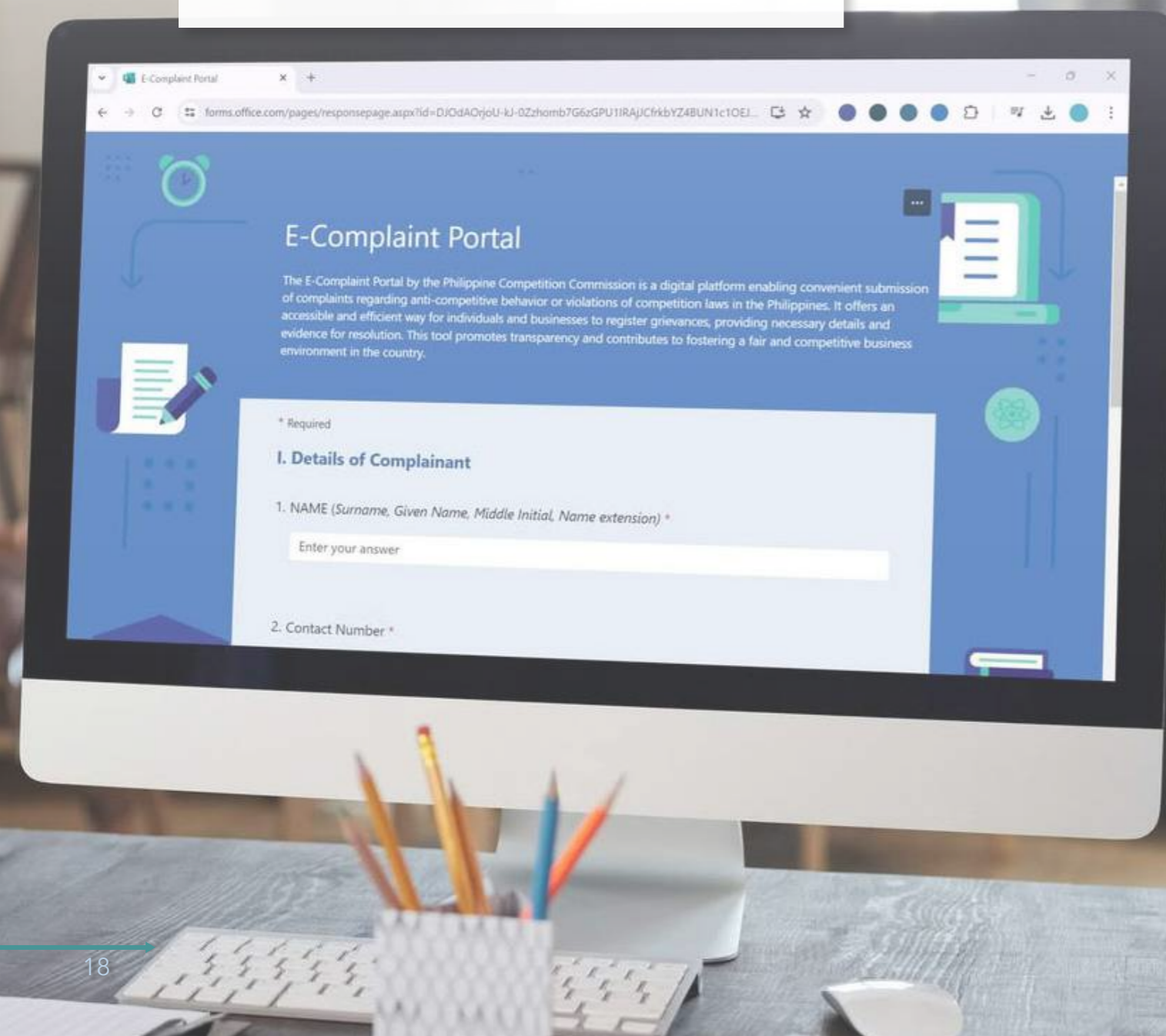


E-Complaint Portal launched

On July 1, the PCC launched its E-Complaint Portal, offering an accessible and streamlined platform for reporting anti-competitive business practices.

This digital platform provides an efficient way for individuals to submit reports and supporting evidence from anywhere in a discreet manner. The portal likewise allows complainants to easily provide essential details, such as the identity of the business involved, the nature of the alleged conduct, and relevant documents.

By launching the E-Complaint Portal, the PCC reinforces its commitment to strengthening enforcement efforts and promoting fair market competition. Leveraging digital tools, the PCC ensures quicker resolution of competition concerns, empowering consumers and businesses alike to take an active role in fostering a level playing field.



PCC collaborates with Quezon City LGU on bid-rigging detection and competition policy

The PCC and the Quezon City local government enhanced their collaboration through two key initiatives aimed at promoting integrity in public procurement and fostering fair competition.

On December 4, the PCC conducted an introductory session for a pilot test of its Bid-Rigging Screening Tool (BiRST) with Quezon City's Price Standardization and Monitoring Division. Developed using insights from the UK Competition and Markets Authority and the Korea Fair Trade Commission, the BiRST is designed to analyze procurement data and flag potential bid-rigging activities. By evaluating procurement details such as bidding dates, budgets, and bidder data, the tool identifies red flags like anomalies in bid prices.

A day earlier, on December 3, the PCC and Quezon City officials held a dialogue at Quezon City Hall to discuss the intersection of competition policy and local governance. PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo emphasized the vital role of local government units (LGUs) in promoting fair competition, highlighting how pro-competitive policies lead to better products, reasonable prices, and innovation. The discussion also focused on the importance of Administrative Order No. 44, which mandates pro-competitive measures across government agencies. Quezon City Mayor Ma. Josefina Belmonte and the city council committed to further collaboration with the PCC to incorporate competition policies in local governance.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and Quezon City Mayor Ma. Josefina Belmonte during the PCC-QC LGU dialogue on the role of competition law and policy in local governance held on December 3.



»» MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS REVIEW

In 2024, the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) received 29 notifications, with a combined transaction value exceeding ₱809 billion. The sectors with the most transactions included transportation and storage, financial and insurance services, electricity, gas, steam, and air-conditioning supply, and wholesale and retail trade (including repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles).

The PCC raised its merger review thresholds in March, setting the size of party (SOP) at ₱7.8 billion and the size of transaction (SOT) at ₱3.2 billion for mandatory notifications. These thresholds are adjusted annually to reflect changes in the economy and the value of business transactions. Despite these thresholds, the PCC retains the authority to conduct a motu proprio review of transactions below the set limits if they may substantially prevent, restrict, or lessen competition.

The PCC reviewed the joint acquisition by Meralco PowerGen Corp., Therma Natgas Power Inc., and San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp. of a significant stake in several power facilities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal. The PCC's approval came with safeguards designed to ensure competition within the energy market. These included conditions on independent operations, enhanced oversight of power supply agreements, and stringent reporting requirements. Such measures aim to balance the need for critical investments in energy infrastructure with the preservation of a competitive market environment.

Last year also saw the introduction of PCC's Guidelines on Merger Remedies, offering clear frameworks for addressing any competition concerns arising from mergers and acquisitions (M&As). These guidelines include both behavioral and structural remedies to ensure that market competition is unharmed post-transaction. In addition, the PCC's continued engagement with stakeholders through pre-notification consultations (PNCs) has proven useful in identifying potential competition issues early on, ensuring a smoother merger review process. These proactive efforts reflected the PCC's commitment to fostering a competitive, transparent market that benefits both businesses and consumers.



Transaction Value and Number of Notifications Received per Sector

Sector	No. of Notifications	Sum of Transaction Value (in ₱)
 Transportation and storage	6	66,519,119,433.63
 Financial and insurance activities	6	63,045,728,961.77
 Electricity, gas, steam, and air-conditioning supply	5	194,780,453,932
 Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	4	120,329,035,133
 Information and communication	3	248,913,567,987
 Real estate activities	3	34,157,615,052
 Mining and quarrying	1	67,350,000,000
 Education	1	14,017,069,287
TOTAL	29	809,112,589,786

Transactions Approved

- Proposed Acquisition by PLDT Inc. of 100% of Sky Cable Corporation's Issued and Outstanding Capital Stock
- Merger Notification of AB Soberano Holdings Corp. Relating to the Proposed Incorporation of a Joint Venture Company by Cebu Landmasters, Inc. and NTT UD Asia Pte. Ltd.
- Proposed Acquisition by Coca-Cola Europacific Partners Plc and Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. of 100% of Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines, Inc.'s Outstanding Shares

- Proposed Sale and Purchase of the 165MW Casecan Hydroelectric Powerplant between Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation and the National Irrigation Administration, as the Sellers, and Fresh River Lakes Corporation, as the Buyer
- Proposed Acquisition of Shares in Joleco Resources Inc. by AHCHI Pharma Ventures, Inc.
- Acquisition by Producers Savings Bank Corporation of 99.98% of PBCOM Rural Bank, Inc.'s Issued and Outstanding Stock
- Proposed Joint Venture among PTCI Holdings Pte. Ltd., Connect Infrastructure (Philippines) Pte. Limited, and Meralco Industrial Engineering Services Corporation, through the Subscription and/or Acquisition of Shares in Pylon Holdings Corp.
- Proposed Acquisition by BlackRock Funding, Inc. of 100% of Global Infrastructure Management Participation LLC
- Proposed Subscription by Meralco PowerGen Corporation and Therma NatGas Power Inc. of 67% Equity Interest in each of South Premiere Power Corp., Excellent Energy Resources, Inc., and Ilijan Primeline Industrial Estate Corp.
- Proposed Acquisition of Shares by Meralco PowerGen Corporation, Therma NatGas Power Inc., and San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp. in Linseed Field Corporation
- Proposed Acquisition of Shares by Dacon Corporation, DMCI Holdings, Inc., and Semirara Mining and Power Corporation in Cemex Asian South East Corporation
- Proposed Joint Venture between Rise Edu Pte. Ltd. ("Kaizen"), Phoenix Investments II Pte. Ltd. ("Phoenix Investments"), and the PHINMA Group through Phoenix Investments and Kaizen's acquisition of Shares in PHINMA Education Holdings, Inc
- Proposed Acquisition by Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd. of 20% of FGEN LNG Corporation
- Proposed Strategic Partnership between Brookfield Corporation and Castlelake L.P. through Castlelake Group TopCo, L.P. and Castlelake Group GP, LLC.
- Proposed Acquisition of 100% of the Issued Shares of Noble Resources Trading Limited by Vitol B.V.
- Proposed Acquisition by Ayala Land, Inc. of 50% of Cebu District Property Enterprise Inc.'s Issued and Outstanding Shares
- Proposed Sale of TotalEnergies Marketing Services' Shareholdings in Total Philippines Corporation, Filoil Logistics Corporation, and La Defense Filipinas Holdings Corporation to Filoil Philippines Corporation

Cumulative Transaction Value and Number of Notifications per Sector (2016-2024)

Sector	No. of Notifications	Sum of Transaction Value (in ₱)
Manufacturing	57	1,708,033,419,660.81
Financial and insurance activities	52	1,091,356,097,898.26
Real estate activities	47	958,748,591,786.02
Electricity, gas, steam, and air-conditioning supply	42	1,082,790,925,828.03
Transportation and storage	30	367,932,270,243.94
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	26	320,826,963,021.64
Information and communication	16	422,496,586,434
Administrative and support services	13	166,647,211,518.48
Human health and social work activities	6	100,286,971,114
Accommodation and food services activities	5	9,680,265,080
Education	5	29,620,105,236.50
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	5	154,737,297,873
Mining and quarrying	5	178,910,711,689.20
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5	9,452,108,205
Construction	3	57,545,013,784
GRAND TOTAL	317	6,659,064,539,372.88

Safeguards set with approval of power sector mega deal

The PCC cleared the joint acquisition of power facilities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal by Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGEN), Therma Natgas Power Inc. (Therma), and San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp. (San Miguel Power). The approval of the deal, which is considered critical to the country's energy supply, came with conditions aimed at ensuring fair competition and promoting transparency.

The transaction involved MGEN and Therma, through their joint venture Chromite Gas Holdings Inc. (Chromite) acquiring a 67% equity interest in South Premiere Power Corp. (SPPC), Excellent Energy Resources Inc. (EERI), and Ilijan Primeline Industrial Estate Corp. In addition, MGEN and Therma, through Chromite, along with San Miguel Power, will jointly acquire 100% of Linseed Field Corp. (LFC), which operates the LNG terminal in Batangas City. As a result of these acquisitions, MGEN and Therma, through their 60/40 ownership of Chromite, will control 67% of SPPC, EERI, and Ilijan Primeline, while San Miguel Power retains a 33% stake in these three entities and gains a corresponding interest in LFC.

During the review process, the PCC identified potential competition concerns, including risks of coordination in the national power generation market and foreclosure in power supply deals with distribution utility companies (DUs). In response, the ultimate parent companies—Pilipinas Enterprise Management Holdings Inc. (PEMHI), Aboitiz & Company Inc., and Top Frontier Investment Holdings Inc.—submitted voluntary commitments to address these issues. In reviewing these commitments, PCC sought insights from industry players, stakeholders, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

In clearing the transaction, the PCC said it supports the country's energy security, even as it imposed conditions, since stabilizing the country's energy supply is vital to maintaining a competitive market. Key safeguards include having PCC oversee the competitive selection process (CSP) to ensure power supply agreements are awarded through a transparent and competitive bidding process. This is expected to prevent collusion or unfair practices during the CSP. The following measures will be put in place to prevent coordination or undue influence: (a) acquired companies are to operate independently of their parent companies, with strict measures to separate IT systems, offices, and management; (b) boards of directors should include independent members; and (c) internal trading units are to operate independently of affiliates.

Further, the following measures are expected to promote transparency: (a) power plants are to submit reports on unplanned outages to the PCC within seven days of reporting to the DOE; and (b) Competitive Retail Electricity Market (CREM) reports are to be shared with the PCC.

The parent companies are required to appoint a competition compliance officer to monitor the fulfillment of these commitments. The PCC will communicate to DOE and ERC the conditions imposed, as well as coordinate the alignment of existing guidelines and policies with competition law and policy to curb competition concerns that may arise from similar transactions.

The conditions will remain in effect for five years, with possible extensions depending on market conditions. Violations could result in daily fines of up to ₱2 million per infraction, until the entity fully complies, in addition to other penalties and sanctions.

The PCC noted that these safeguards strike a balance between encouraging investments in critical energy infrastructure and ensuring a fair and competitive market that benefits consumers, businesses, and the broader economy. By addressing potential competition issues while supporting energy security, the approved transaction represents a key step toward bolstering the Philippines' energy landscape.



Merger review thresholds adjusted to align with economic conditions

Thresholds for compulsory notification of merger transactions were increased starting March of last year. Parties to mergers and acquisitions (M&As) that surpass a size of party (SOP) of ₱7.8 billion and a size of transaction (SOT) of ₱3.2 billion are required to inform the PCC before proceeding with their transactions. The annual adjustment is based on nominal gross domestic product (GDP) growth, which saw a 10.3 percent increase from 2023.

SOP refers to the aggregate value of assets or revenues of the ultimate parent entity of either

party, while SOT pertains to the total value of assets or revenues of the acquired entity and its controlled entities. These changes do not affect transactions that the PCC had been notified of before March 1, or those already under review or decided by the Commission.

Since its inception, the Commission has reviewed 317 transactions valued at over ₱6.659 trillion.

New guidelines on merger remedies issued

In May, the Guidelines on Merger Remedies were introduced providing a framework for addressing competition concerns arising from merger and acquisition (M&A) transactions. The Guidelines offer guidance on designing, selecting, and implementing remedies to ensure mergers do not harm market competition.

The Guidelines also outline behavioral and structural remedies. Behavioral remedies involve

post-transaction restrictions on the merged firm's business conduct, while structural remedies may include the divestiture or sale of assets. The PCC may impose additional measures to support the implementation and monitoring of these remedies. Additionally, the Guidelines highlight the PCC's ability to cooperate with foreign competition authorities when an M&A is under review in other jurisdictions.

PCC leverages public insight on key transactions

Calls for comments were issued in 2024, inviting stakeholders to share insights on major merger and acquisition (M&A) transactions. This collaborative approach helped the PCC conduct more thorough assessments, particularly in the following transactions:

Acquisition by AHCHI Pharma Ventures Inc. ("Ayala Pharma Ventures") of Joleco Resources Inc. ("Joleco Resources")
Joleco Resources operates St. Joseph's Drugstore, a prominent retail chain in northern Philippines. Stakeholders raised potential concerns in the market, particularly the impact on pricing, market accessibility, quality of service, and product offerings. The PCC used these insights to assess potential risks to competition, especially in areas where consumers rely on affordable medications.

Proposed acquisition by Globe Fintech Innovations, Inc. ("Mynt") of shares in Electronic Commerce Payments (ECPay), Inc.
This transaction impacts the digital payment services and merchant solutions markets, critical to the country's digital economy. Stakeholders raised concerns about potential risks to competition, particularly access to payment processing services and the exclusion of smaller players.



►►► POLICY AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Market research is essential in strengthening the agency's enforcement and policy reform initiatives, providing crucial insights for both public education and advising government agencies on the competitive implications of their actions, policies, and programs. In 2024, the Economics Office (EO) conducted four market studies, focusing on food and agriculture, digital platforms, pharmaceuticals, and water. These studies examined key issues such as the challenges posed by non-tariff measures in the agriculture sector, market concentration and data privacy concerns in digital platforms, competition barriers in the pharmaceutical industry, and transparency issues in water distribution. Each study offered actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing market competition and protecting consumer interests.

In addition to market studies, the EO completed five staff research projects that explored a variety of industry dynamics. These included an awareness survey on the Philippine Competition Act and the PCC, a rapid assessment of the Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program, an analysis of labor market concentration and bargaining power, and an experimental study on procurement reserve prices. These research outputs helped deepen understanding of ongoing issues affecting competition and market efficiency, providing valuable data for policy advocacy and regulatory adjustments.

Further, the EO carried out two competition impact assessments, which evaluated the competitive effects of regulations in the fish importation and tollway sectors. These assessments provided critical insights into how government policies may affect competition, offering evidence-based recommendations for better regulatory frameworks.

The EO also facilitated four strategic policy dialogues with key government agencies, including the National Telecommunications Commission, Insurance Commission, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, and National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council. These dialogues served as platforms for discussing market study findings and considering competition policy reforms.

To build institutional capacity, the EO organized a high-level capacity-building workshop on mainstreaming CIAs for pro-competitive government policies, along with several technical workshops for PCC staff. These initiatives were aimed at enhancing internal capabilities and fostering a deeper understanding of competition dynamics, ensuring that the PCC remains well-equipped in driving pro-competitive reforms and advocating for policies that benefit both consumers and businesses.



Market Studies



Sector Brief on Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) in the Livestock and Poultry Subsectors

The study emphasizes that the Philippine livestock and poultry subsectors are subject to various trade regulations, including non-tariff measures (NTMs), which are policy tools beyond tariffs and tariff-rate quotas that influence the price and volume of traded goods. The sector brief identifies institutional and procedural inefficiencies—such as excessive compliance requirements or discriminatory practices—as challenges in NTM implementation. These issues can hinder import growth and market entry, effectively turning NTMs into non-tariff barriers (NTBs). To address these concerns, the brief recommends adopting international best practices, streamlining NTM processes, incorporating NTMs into free trade agreements, and enhancing inter-agency coordination to promote pro-competitive trade policies in the agriculture sector.



Competition Policy and Data Privacy in Social Media and Search Platforms

This study examined the interplay between the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) and Data Privacy Act (DPA) in digital platforms, with special emphasis on search and social media platforms, and their effects on market competition and consumers. The study shows that the digital platform ecosystem is highly concentrated, with a limited number of firms, such as Facebook and Google, emerging as dominant entities in the social media and search markets, respectively. This concentration allows these companies to collect and process vast amounts of user data, thereby raising significant data privacy concerns. The study concludes by recommending the following: (a) inclusion of data privacy considerations in the PCA, (b) further research on data portability and interoperability mechanisms, (c) international cooperation among competition authorities regarding data mobility and cross-border data flow issues, and (d) stronger cooperation with regulatory bodies such as the National Privacy Commission (NPC).



Inquiry on the Philippine Pharmaceutical Sector: Distribution and Retail

The sector inquiry investigated the competitive dynamics in the Philippine pharmaceutical industry, focusing on both the distribution and retail segments. The sector exhibits concentration, potentially influencing pricing and limiting competition. The study examines possible anti-competitive practices such as abuse of market dominance, exclusive dealing, and vertical integration, highlighting the challenges posed by the country's self-paying market structure. Recommendations for the PCC include strengthening policy reviews and enhancing enforcement of competition laws.



Water Distribution Market Study

The study examines the dynamics of water service provider (WSP) selection and identifies possible competition issues, such as limitations on consumer choice and switching costs. To mitigate these issues, the study recommends instituting measures geared towards improving transparency, minimizing household level exclusivity clauses, and developing a centralized online platform to enhance consumer choice and competition in the water distribution sector.

Staff Research



Key Results of the 2023 Firm Awareness Survey on the PCC and the Philippine Competition Act (PCA)

The awareness survey is used to gauge firms' knowledge of the PCC and PCA. For 2023, about 23.66% and 9.28% of the surveyed firms said that they were knowledgeable on PCC and the PCA, respectively. Awareness of the PCC has increased since 2021, consistently meeting targets. However, with only about a quarter of firms reporting knowledge of the PCC, there remains significant opportunity to enhance awareness and engagement. Among the sources of local news, television (42.11%) remains the top preference, followed by Facebook (34.85%), highlighting the importance of both traditional and digital media in information dissemination.



Rapid Assessment of the Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP)

While the PUVMP reflects the government's attempt to deliver a comfortable, accessible, sustainable, and affordable public transport system, the assessment suggests that changes and lack of clarity in the guidelines supporting the PUVMP implementation triggered regulatory uncertainty and strong pushback from stakeholders. Further, the increasing cost of PUV units over time indicates inadequate market competition.



Concentration, Representation, and Bargaining in Philippine Labor Markets

The manuscript is a collection of four standalone chapters: (a) a descriptive analysis of unionization and collective bargaining in the Philippines; (b) the relationship between labor market concentration and collective bargaining outcomes; (c) workers' bargaining responses to insufficient family policies, which refer to the presence of paternity and maternity leaves; and (d) tracking the collective bargaining process in the Philippines.



Dynamic Reserve Prices in Procurement: An Experiment

Using a controlled environment, the study shows how dynamics in reserve price setting influence bid shading and entry in multi-round auctions with persistent costs. Authors find that, without a bid cap, dampened competition does lead to higher prices after bidders exit. Imposing a dynamic bid cap solves this issue of higher prices but knocks more people out of markets, leading to widespread failure of auctions. Surprisingly, bidding behavior remains similar across bid cap institutions during the first round. In subsequent rounds, bidding becomes deceptively more competitive in auctions with bid caps but unexpectedly resulting in destroying markets.

Competition Impact Assessments



Economic Analysis of Fish Importation Regulations Related to the Ban on Imported Fish Sales in Wet Markets Using the Competition Impact Assessment (CIA) Framework

This CIA aims to evaluate the impact of Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) No.195 and other fish importation regulations from a competition standpoint. The findings highlight two significant competition issues that require careful consideration. First, there is a potential limiting of consumer choice, which could conflict with the goals of ensuring food security and adapting to the evolving Philippine fishery industry. Second, the exemption that allows institutional buyers to sell imported fish to restaurants and hotels raises questions about equitable access.



Economic Analysis of Laws and Regulations on the Grant of Supplemental Toll Operation Agreements (STOA) using the Competition Impact Assessment (CIA) Framework

This CIA focuses on the grant of STOAs to existing players in the market for tollway construction, operation, and maintenance. Motivated by the four STOAs granted in 2022, the CIA provides a comparative analysis of the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) and Build-Operate-and-Transfer (BOT) laws with an introduction to the recently signed Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code.

Strategic Policy Dialogues



National Telecommunications Commission (NTC)

The SPD with NTC focused on regulations concerning block timing practices in the Philippine free TV industry. The dialogue delved into NTC Memorandum Order No. 004-06-2022, which regulates leasable network airtime by capping at 50 percent the total airtime and requiring radio and television broadcasting firms to submit their block time agreements to the NTC for review and approval. Potential challenges posed by this regulation may include barriers to market entry, increased costs, regulatory uncertainties, and potential distortions in competition.



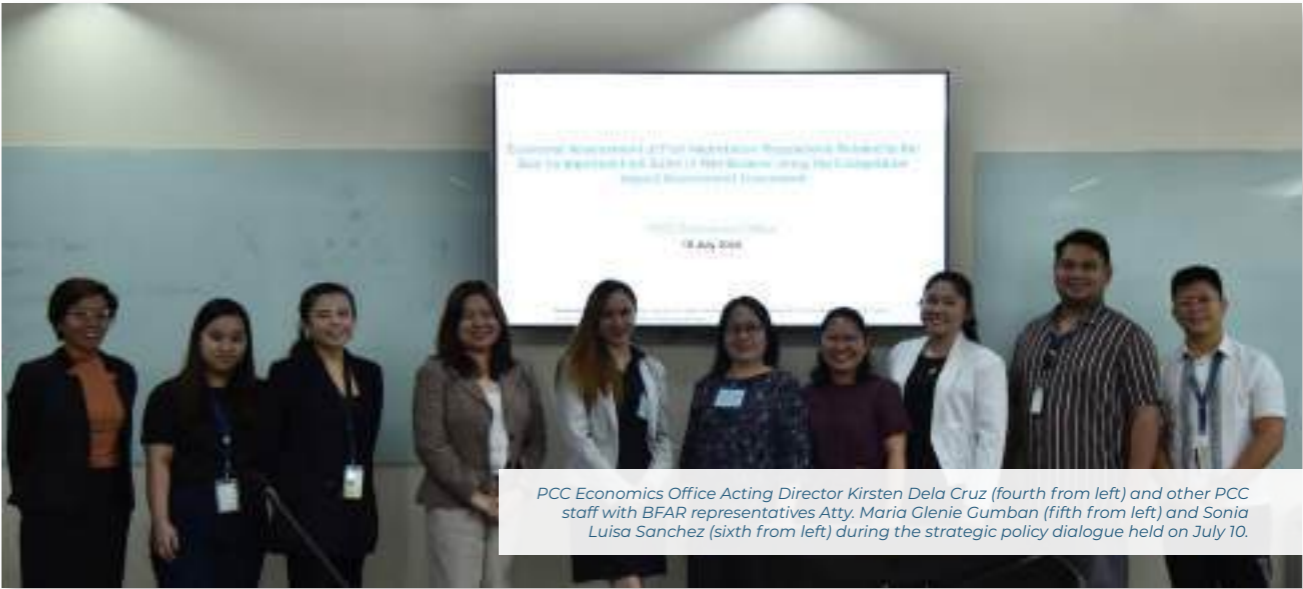
Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) and the National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC)

The SPD with DA-BFAR and NFARMC focused on the regulatory frameworks governing the importation of fresh, chilled, or frozen fish, including for canning, processing, institutional buyers, and sales in wet markets during closed fishing seasons or times of calamity. The study raised concerns that restrictive importation rules could reduce supply, limit consumer choices, and create an uneven playing field that favors institutional buyers over smaller market players.



Insurance Commission (IC)

The SPD with IC focused on competition concerns in the health maintenance organization (HMO) industry, including potential barriers to entry for new HMO participants and the higher tax and regulatory burdens faced by HMOs compared to insurance companies offering similar products.



PCC Economics Office Acting Director Kirsten Dela Cruz (fourth from left) and other PCC staff with BFAR representatives Atty. Maria Glenie Gumban (fifth from left) and Sonia Luisa Sanchez (sixth from left) during the strategic policy dialogue held on July 10.



DA Undersecretary for Fisheries and NFARMC Chairperson Drusila Esther Bayate (left), together with PCC Commissioners Marah Victoria Querol (center) and Ferdinand Negre (right), during the strategic policy dialogue held on October 2 in Quezon City.



PCC economist Hadassah May Cordero presented CIA findings on fish importation regulations during the SPD with NFARMC held on October 2 in Quezon City.



PCC Economics Office Acting Director Kirsten Dela Cruz (fifth from right), Acting Assistant Director Carlos Juan Paolo Vega (second from left), and other PCC staff with IC representatives Dr. Ronald Paguirigan (sixth from left) and Lucky Ace Villanueva (center) during the strategic policy dialogue held on August 13 in Quezon City.



»» ADVOCACY AND CAPACITATING STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder engagement and other advocacy efforts were stepped up last year. In 2024, the PCC conducted 54 advocacy and communications activities with various sectors, including businesses, government agencies, the academe, and the media.

Implementation of PCC's Champions of Competition (COC) Program entered its second year. One of the strategic initiatives of the agency's Communications and Knowledge Management Office (CKMO), the COC leverages on partnerships with stakeholder groups to raise the profile of competition law and policy and promote compliance in pursuit of key deliverables under the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028. The program's two component projects, the Competition Advocacy Pledge (CAP) and the Competition Local Advocacy Network (CLAN), marked milestones in the PCC's quest to expand the footprint of its advocacy efforts.

The CAP project aims to create a network of competition champions among businesses and trade associations (TAs). By signing the pledge, representatives from these groups commit to upholding fair market competition, serving as 'force multipliers' in raising awareness and encouraging compliance with competition law. The CLAN, which involves partnerships with state universities across the country, aims to extend competition advocacy beyond Metro Manila by harnessing the stature and reach of these schools in their respective localities.

In 2024, roundtable discussions were held in Cebu and Metro Manila through the CAP project, engaging TAs and businesses to pledge their commitment in adopting pro-competition measures. Under the CLAN, orientations on competition law and policy were conducted by 10 partner universities. Additionally, a Refresher Course on Competition Law and Policy upskilled university trainers to lead future competition advocacy efforts.

Alongside the Champions Program, the PCC also launched its Fair Business Forums, a new activity designed to promote competition compliance programs among business chambers and TAs—another agency deliverable under the current administration's PDP 2023-2028.

Last year likewise saw the PCC branch out into targeted advocacy efforts for the legal community, with the debut of its Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program, a strategic initiative of the agency's Legal Services Division (LSD). Efforts to develop a cadre of future competition law practitioners through a partnership with the Legal Education Board (LEB) also made some progress.

The PCC also sustained its online advocacy through, among others, its Competition Orientation Outreach Program (COOP), which provides orientations on the Philippine Competition Act to various stakeholders, be they cooperatives, corporations, or other covered entities. This Citizens Charter-enrolled facility also addressed demand from entities seeking orientations as part of their compliance requirements.



List of advocacy and communications activities

Event

Competition Orientation Outreach Program (COOP) for ROCKWOOL Building Materials (Philippines) Ltd.	February 8
Posting on PCC's social media pages (Facebook and LinkedIn) a YouTube snippet of the Kenyan TV network interview with Executive Director Kenneth Tanate during the International Competition Network (ICN) Advocacy Workshop on February 22-23 in Nairobi, Kenya	February 28
Conduct of the Orientation on the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) for the Bases Conversion and Development Authority	March 1
Leveling the Playing Field through NCP: Online Training for the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development	March 4
COOP for Kapit-Bisig Uganyan Multipurpose Cooperative	March 18
ABS-CBN-ANC interview with Executive Director Kenneth Tanate on opportunities and challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence during the RTD "Introduction to AI and Emerging Technologies", hosted by PCC and the National Economic and Development Authority, and supported by the USAID on April 11, 2024, in Quezon City	April 11
Best Advocates of Competition Network (BACON) Project with the Office of Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian	April 17
BACON Project with the Municipal Government of Taytay	May 2
2024 ICN Annual Conference: AWG Plenary Session on Conducting Market Studies to Understand Competition in Emerging Markets	May 16
Multisectoral Forum (MSF) on the PCA and the National Competition Policy (NCP)	May 23
BACON Project with the Governance Commission for GOCCs	May 24
Junior Philippine Economics Society National Convention 2024	May 25
Competition Local Advocacy Network (CLAN) Orientation on the PCA and NCP by Bulacan State University (BuSU) (First Run)	June 5
BACON Project with the Department of Budget and Management	June 5
Competition Advocacy Pledge (CAP) Round Table Discussion (RTD) - Cebu	June 19
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Bukidnon State University (BukSU) (First Run)	July 2
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with BukSU (Second Run)	July 3
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Batangas State University (BatStateU) (First Run)	July 5
Fair Business Forum (FBF): Competition Compliance in Focus (Parañaque)	July 10
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with University of the Eastern Philippines (UEP) (First Run)	July 15
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with UEP (Second Run)	July 16
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Palawan State University (PSU)	July 18
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) (First Run)	July 23
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Negros Oriental State University (NorSU)	July 24
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with West Visayas State University (WVSU) (First Run)	July 26
FBF: Competition Compliance in Focus (Ortigas)	July 31
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with WVSU (Second Run)	August 2

Presidential Broadcast Service - Radyo Pilipinas Zoom Interview with Communications and Knowledge Management Office (CKMO) Director Arnold Roy Tenorio on behalf of Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo, following the release of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism's report on Grab	August 5
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU)	August 8
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with MMSU (Second Run)	August 15
COOP for St. Rafael Development Corporation	August 20
Press Conference on PCC Competition Enforcement Office's (CEO) Onion Cartel Investigation	September 5
Presidential Broadcast Service - PTV4 Phone Patch Interview with CEO Director Christian Loren De Los Santos on the Onion Cartel Investigation	September 6
Eagle Broadcasting-Net25 Phone Patch Interview with CEO Director Christian Loren De Los Santos on the Onion Cartel Investigation	September 9
COOP for P5 Driving School	September 9
COOP for Cablelink Holdings	September 11
Presidential Broadcast Service - Radyo Pilipinas Zoom Interview with CEO Director Christian Loren De Los Santos on the Onion Cartel Investigation	September 14
Press Conference on PCC Enforcement Initiative in conjunction with the Signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation as part of the Commission-approved Final Written Proposal of SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	September 17
CAP RTD with Trade Associations - Metro Manila	September 19
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with BuSU (Second Run)	September 24
DWPM Radyo 630 Interview with CEO Director Christian Loren De Los Santos on Onion Cartel Investigation	September 25
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with BatStateU (Second Run)	September 26
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with NorSU (Second Run)	September 27
DZBB Interview (via Viber) on the Department of Trade and Industry's block time program, Konsumer at Iba Pa, with CKMO Director Arnold Roy Tenorio on behalf of Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo	September 28
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with PSU (Second Run)	September 30
Refresher Course on Competition Law and Policy (CLP) for CLAN Training Teams of Partner State Universities and Colleges	November 11-15
Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program on Competition Law: Introduction to Competition and Key Procedures	November 20
MCLE Program on Competition Law: Evidence, Compliance, and Intellectual Property	November 28
MCLE Program on Competition Law: Mergers, Competition Enforcement, Confidential Information, and Digital Markets	November 29
Public Consultation for the Specialized Academic Track and Post-Graduate Certificate Program on Competition Law	December 2
MCLE Program on Competition Law: Legal Ethics, Procurement, Labor Markets, Mergers and Competition Enforcement	December 5
MCLE Program on Competition Law: Alternative Dispute Resolution, Legal Ethics, and International Law on Competition	December 6
COOP for Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corporation	December 9
CLAN Orientation on the PCA and NCP with Mindanao State University	December 17

Campaign to promote competition compliance kicks off

The PCC conducted two runs of its “Fair Business Forum: Competition Compliance in Focus” in July to encourage businesses in adopting compliance programs for the prevention of anti-competitive practices.

During the inaugural run, PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo called on participants to consider adopting compliance programs to help in cultivating a culture of competition in the business community. Under the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, the PCC is tasked with raising awareness about the Philippine Competition Act through the promotion of competition compliance programs among business chambers and trade associations.

The forums featured compliance advocates from other jurisdictions who shared their insights on developing and implementing competition compliance programs, highlighting the impact these programs can have on businesses. The forum also provided a sneak peek into the compliance toolkit that the PCC is developing.

The following business chambers and trade associations attended the Fair Business Forum:

- Association of International Shipping Lines Incorporated
- Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc.
- Confederation of Truckers Association of the Philippines Inc.
- Federation of Philippine Industries
- Federation of the International Cable TV and Telecommunications Association of the Philippines
- German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Glass Manufacturers Association of the Philippines
- Healthcare Information Management Association of the Philippines
- National Association of Independent Travel Agencies
- Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc.
- Philippine Association Of Legitimate Service Contractors Inc.
- Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment
- Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Philippine Electricity Market Corporation
- Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc.
- Philippine Homestyle and Holiday Decor Association, Inc.
- Philippine Iron and Steel Institute
- Philippine Tour Operators Association, Inc.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (fifth from left), Commissioner Ferdinand Negre (third from left), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (second from left), and Knowledge Management Division Officer-in-Charge Paul Andrew Lucena (leftmost), with representatives from business chambers and trade associations during the Fair Business Forum held in Ortigas Center in July.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (center), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (fourth from left), Knowledge Management Division Officer-in-Charge Paul Andrew Lucena (fifth from left), Baker McKenzie's Hong Kong lawyer Stephen Crosswell (left), and Samsung Electronics Principal Legal Counsel Hee-Eun Kim (second from left) served as speakers at the Fair Business Forum held in Paranaque City in July.

Trade associations pledge to champion fair competition

The PCC hosted two roundtable discussions (RTDs) for the business community in Mandaue City on June 19, and in Quezon City on September 19. During both sessions, PCC representatives provided an overview of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) and shared insights into the establishment of the PCC.

The events drew participation from various business chambers, cooperatives, and trade associations. Attendees pledged their commitment to advocating for fair business practices and promoting the principles and provisions of the PCA. Among the organizations present were:

- Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc.
- Cebu People's Multi-Purpose Cooperative
- Central Visayas Multi-Purpose Agricultural Cooperative
- CVCCO Multi-Purpose Cooperative

- El Pardo Transport Cooperative
- Elite Jinzai Marketing Services Inc.
- Federation of Philippine Industries
- Healthcare Information Management Association of the Philippines
- Integrated Bar of the Philippines - Cebu City Chapter
- Islas Tankers Seatransport Corp.
- Legal Alternatives for Women Center, Inc.
- Oud Cebu Agriculture Cooperative
- Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Visayas
- Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc. - Cebu
- Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers Inc.
- Philippine Inter-Island Shipping Association
- Philippine Liner Shipping Association
- Saint Vincent de Paul Multipurpose Cooperative
- SyCip Gorres Velayo & Co.
- USC and Community Multipurpose Cooperative
- University of San Jose-Recoletos School of Law Bar Operations



(Seated, from left) PCC Commissioner Michael Peloton, Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo, and Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos were joined by (standing, from right) Capacity Building and Advocacy Division Chief Inah Geneve Mangilin, Communications and Knowledge Management Office Acting Director Arnold Roy Tenorio and Acting Assistant Director Ferdinand Paguia, together with representatives from participating state universities, during the refresher course on CLP held on November 11-15.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate welcomed participants on the first day of the refresher course on November 11.



PCC Commissioner Michael Peloton addressed partner SUCs at a fellowship dinner on November 13.

State universities take cudgels for CLP

Organized by the CKMO's Capacity Building and Advocacy Division, the PCC's Competition Local Advocacy Network (CLAN) project concluded 2024 with the training teams from the partner state universities and colleges (SUCs) completing their first-year work plans of conducting orientation seminars on the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) and the National Competition Policy (NCP) in their respective localities.

The CLAN Project is part of the Champions of Competition (CoC) Program, one of PCC's strategic initiatives for engaging various stakeholders to help raise awareness on competition policy and law.

Partner SUCs include Batangas State University, Bukidnon State University, Bulacan State University, Mariano Marcos State University, Mindanao State University, Negros Oriental State University, Palawan State University, Sultan Kudarat State University, University of Eastern Philippines, and West Visayas State University.

Under the CLAN, a total of 18 seminars were conducted by PCC-trained teams nominated by the participating SUCs. Each team from partner

SUC is composed of a project convenor, a training coordinator, and resource persons hailing from either the law, economics, or business faculties of the school.

The seminars covered the basics of market competition, the PCA, and the NCP, and targeted government agencies, businesses, and the academe in the localities where these SUCs operate.

To assess the CLAN training teams' performance and equip them for the succeeding year's activities, the PCC held a refresher course in November. The course prepared the teams for expanded outreach in 2025, during which competition compliance for businesses will be introduced.

At the close of the refresher course, PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo highlighted the importance of the CLAN in fostering a competitive environment, emphasizing that collaboration is key to ensuring that everyone benefits from fair competition.



Development of specialized academic programs for competition law begins

Members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) from the PCC and the Legal Education Board (LEB) convened on October 3 to discuss the creation of the proposed Post-Graduate Certificate Program and Juris Doctor Academic Track for Competition Law. This initiative aims to elevate the competence and proficiency of legal practitioners and compliance officers on competition law.

PCC Commissioner Michael Peloton and LEB Commissioner Lorenzo Reyes serve as co-chairs of the TWG. Members from the PCC include Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano, Legal Services Division (LSD) Chief Michelle Diana Maniwang-Basa, Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) lawyer Mario Rosete III, and Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) Monitoring and Investigation Division Chief Alyssa Carmelli Castillo. LEB Commissioner Salex Alibogha also serves on the TWG, along with University of the Philippines Competition Law and Policy Program (UPCLPP) Director Gwen Grecia-De Vera, and lawyers Paolo Emmanuel Tamase and James Daniel Donato.

In December, the PCC, LEB, and UP CLPP held a public consultation to gather feedback on the proposed specialized academic track and post-graduate certificate program in competition law. Representatives of legal education institutions attended the event to review and provide inputs for the proposed programs, which are envisioned to be rolled out starting 2025.

During the consultation, Commissioner Medrano highlighted the importance of incorporating competition law into legal education and the need to equip future lawyers with the knowledge and skills to navigate complex legal and economic landscapes—especially in the era of rapid technological advancements and evolving business models.



PCC Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano delivered her opening remarks during the public consultation for competition law courses in December.



Members of the TWG from the PCC, LEB, and UP CLPP with representatives from various legal education institutions during a public consultation on the proposed specialized academic track and post-graduate certificate program in competition law held on December 2.

Pilot MCLE program on competition law launched

The PCC successfully completed its first Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Program on Competition Law, aimed at deepening legal practitioners' understanding of competition law and its application in the Philippine legal framework.

The PCC's inaugural MCLE lecture-series was conducted on November 20, 28, and 29, and December 5 and 6 at the University of the Philippines Bonifacio Global City campus. Over five days, subject matter experts from the PCC, the academe, and the private sector discussed various aspects of competition law, including economic theories, procedural rules, and emerging trends and developments.

In her closing remarks, Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano emphasized the PCC's commitment to making competition education accessible to practitioners and stakeholders. She added that the program would help elevate the quality of legal practice in competition law.

The MCLE program aligns with the PCC's goal under the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 to strengthen the skills of competition specialists throughout the plan period.



PCC Commissioners Marah Victoria Querol (front row, second from left) and Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano (front row, third from left) with participating lecturers and lawyers during Day 1 of the PCC MCLE Program held on November 20 at the UP BGC.



PCC Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano delivered her closing remarks during the MCLE Program held in UP BGC in December.



Apart from its regular advocacy programs for stakeholders, the PCC in 2024 also organized special capacity-building activities for other government entities to boost enforcement and policy reform efforts.

These special initiatives ranged from joint activities with existing partner agencies like the National Economic and Development Authority, to dialogues with potential partners, such as the Professional Regulatory Commission.

In line with continuing efforts to promote the National Competition Policy, the PCC also conducted orientations for the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, and for the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development. These sessions focused on ensuring that regulatory policies align with pro-competition principles.

Agencies trained on use of competition impact assessment

In partnership with the National Economic and Development Authority, the PCC conducted a capacity-building workshop titled “Mainstreaming Competition Impact Assessment (CIA) for Pro-Competitive Government Policies” from October 16 to 17. This workshop was aimed at equipping high-level government officials with the skills to identify and assess existing laws, regulations, and proposed policies that may potentially restrict market competition.

During the event, PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo highlighted the vital role of CIAs in policymaking, noting that even well-meaning regulations can unintentionally hinder competition. He emphasized that CIAs are essential to preventing such consequences.

CIAs are tools for ensuring that regulations achieve public goals without stifling competition. In addition to enhancing participants’ analytical capabilities, the workshop also promoted inter-agency collaboration and explored ways of fully integrating CIAs into the policy and regulatory development, and review processes of government agencies.

Supported by the Asian Development Bank through the Capacity-Building to Foster Competition Project, the workshop featured lectures, breakout sessions, and hands-on activities. Participants from various



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (third from left), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (fifth from left) and representatives from the PCC, National Economic and Development Authority, Anti-Red Tape Authority, and other government agencies attended the “Mainstreaming Competition Impact Assessment for Pro-Competitive Government Policies” workshop held in Quezon City in October.

sectors—including food and agriculture, trade and industry, health and pharmaceuticals, and water—engaged in practical exercises to incorporate CIAs into their policy processes and evaluate the impact of selected policies on competition.

Participants came from key agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, of Health, and of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Customs, Fiscal Incentives Review Board, Laguna Lake Development Authority, Local Water Utilities Administration, National Water Resources Board, Philippine Fisheries Development Authority, and Tariff Commission.

The conduct of CIAs has been institutionalized under the National Competition Policy, whose full implementation is a key strategy under the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028. The CIA is also part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment framework mandated under the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act.

Dialogue on competition issues in professional services sector held

On August 6, a roundtable discussion was held between the PCC and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) to promote awareness of competition law and policy in the professional services sector and to discuss competition-related issues arising from sector regulations.

The PCC proposed a partnership with the PRC through a memorandum of agreement (MOA), which would formalize collaborative efforts between the two agencies, establish a clear framework for ongoing cooperation, and enhance their joint capacity to address competition-related matters within the professional services sector.

Leading the roundtable discussion were PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo, Commissioners Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano and Ferdinand Negre, and PRC Chairperson Charito Zamora, Commissioners Jose Cueto, Jr. and Erwin Enad, along with other officers of the PCC and PRC.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (12th from left), Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano (11th from left), Commissioner Ferdinand Negre (10th from left), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (ninth from left), PRC Chairperson Charito Zamora (13th from left), Commissioner Jose Cueto Jr. (14th from left), and Commissioner Erwin Enad (15th from left), along with other officers of the PCC and PRC during the roundtable discussion held in Quezon City in August.



(From left to right) Insurance Commission (IC) Regulation, Enforcement, and Prosecution Division Manager Brian Gale Sibuyan, Claims Adjudication Division Manager David Cagahastian, Anti-Money Laundering and Corporate Governance Division Officer-in-Charge Jan Laurence Gatchallan, PCC economist Emmanuel Viktor Guiam, DOJ-OPC Officer-in-Charge Director Caesar Jose Francisco, PCC Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos, PCC Mergers and Acquisitions Office lawyer Franzine Foronda, IC Management Support Services Group Deputy Insurance Commissioner Martin John Yasay, and Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association (PIRA) Executive Director Michael Relloso during the PIRA's seminar on competition law last October 22.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo delivered his keynote speech at the launch of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) campaign "I Stand for Integrity" campaign held in BGC, Taguig City in July.

Helping shape policy reforms

The PCC helped shape policy reforms in 2024 by providing expert insights on legislative proposals and regulatory frameworks. Through its Legislative Liaison Office (LLO), the PCC participated in 60 hearings and submitted 33 position papers to the Senate and House of Representatives, advocating for the inclusion of a competition perspective in proposed legislation.

The Commission also strengthened inter-agency collaboration through the Best Advocates of Competition Network initiative, fostering a unified and strategic approach to competition policy advocacy across government offices. As part of this initiative, the LLO provided briefings on competition law and enforcement to the Office of Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, the Municipal Government of Taytay, the Governance Commission for Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations, and the Department of Budget and Management.



Position Paper	Requesting Party	Date Released
Government Procurement Reform Act: Senate Bill (SB) Nos. 556, 590, 2272, and 2466	Senate Committee on Finance	January 24
Energy Advocacy Counsel Act: House Bill (HB) Nos. 2152 and 6327	House Committee on Energy	February 27
Philippine Downstream Natural Gas Industry Development Act: SB Nos. 152, 1944, 1991, 2247	Senate Committee on Energy	March 3
Rice Industry Development Act: HB No. 405, and An Act Instituting a Rice Incentivization, Self Sufficiency, and Enterprise (RISE) Programs and Appropriating Funds Therefore: HB No. 9020	House Committee on Agriculture and Food	March 21
Yellow Corn Industry Development Act: SB No. 120	Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food	March 21
Motorcycles-for-Hire (Supplemental): HB Nos. 128, 307, 360, 781, 1344, 1641, and 1668	House Committee on Transportation	March 25
Downstream Natural Gas (Supplemental): SB Nos. 152, 1944, 1991, and 2247	Senate Committee on Energy	April 12
Revised Cooperative Code: SB Nos. 418, 2378, 2480	Senate Committee on Cooperatives	April 12
Konektadong Pinoy: SB Nos. 183, 864, 1383, 1611, 1845, 815, 1876, and 1213	Senate Committee on Science and Technology [submitted through NEDA]	April 26
Second Supplemental Position Paper on Philippine Downstream Natural Gas Industry: SB Nos. 152, 1944, 1991, and 2247	Senate Committee on Energy	May 9
Rice Tariffication Law Amendments: HB Nos. 212, 404, 1562, 9030, and 9547	House Committee on Agriculture	May 9
National Water Act: SB Nos. 87, 1244, 1395, 2412, 102, 1021, 2013, 1428, 185, and 268	Senate Committee on Public Services	May 15
Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) Amendments: HB Nos. 174, 2153, 3430, 3432, 3601, 4263, 6075, 6167, 7742, 7837, 8079, 8151, 8154, 9695, 9922, 28, 2054, 5003, and 6423	House Committee on Energy	May 21

Rice Tariffication Law Amendments: SB Nos. 1203 and 2601	Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform	June 5
Legislative franchise bills for different distribution utilities: HB Nos. 1084, 3145, 5077, 6740, 7047, 6995, 5204, 6145, 9402, 6484, 8897, 8947, 8966, 9147, 9310, 9805, 9339, 9355, 9429, 9684, 9528, 9553, 9551, 9577, 9696, 9775, 9838, 9793, 9813, 9820, 9833, 9961, 9962, and 10013	House Committee on Legislative Franchises	July 9
Legislative franchise bills for different telecom and broadcasting entities: HB Nos. 431, 1218, 4202, 4290, 649, 1319, 2379, 2987, 3785, 4106, 7169, 9155, 4750, 4897, 4899, 5053, 9426, 5602, 5909, 5910, 5980, 6231, 6356, 6505, 6617, 9002, 6719, 7055, 7071, 7146, 7955, 7509, 7703, 7910, 9829, 8118, 8271, 8418, 8467, 8445, 8544, 8562, 9029, 9271, 9544, 9798, 9959, and 9995		
EPIRA Amendments: HB Nos. 174, 2153, 3430, 3432, 3601, 4263, 6075, 6167, 7742, 7837, 8079, 8151, 8154, 9695, 9922, 28, 2054, 5003, and 6423	House Committee on Energy	August 20
Free Trade Agreement between Korea and the Philippines	Senate Committee on Foreign Relations	September 4
Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act Enrolled Bill: SB No. 2432 and HB Nos. 3917 and 9284	Legislative Office, Office of the President	September 5
Water Act (Supplemental): SB Nos. 87, 1244, 1395, 2412, 102, 1021, 2013, 1428, 185, and 268	Senate Committee on Public Services	September 5
Konektadong Pinoy (Supplemental): SB Nos. 183, 864, 1383, 1611, 1845, 815, 1876, 1213	Senate Committee on Science and Technology	September 5
Protected Geographical Indications Act: SB Nos. 1868, 2387	Senate Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship	September 5
Investor's Lease Act: HB Nos. 10750, 10755, 10802	House Committee on Trade and Industry	September 17
EPIRA Amendments (Supplemental): HB Nos. 174, 2153, 3430, 3432, 3601, 4263, 6075, 6167, 7742, 7837, 8079, 8151, 8154, 9695, 9922, 28, 2054, 5003, and 6423	House Committee on Energy	September 18
Yellow Corn Industry Act of 2023: HB No. 8783	House Committee on Agriculture and Food	October 3
Complementarity in Education Act of 2024	Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2)	October 7
House Resolution No. 1912	House Committee on Trade and Industry	October 15
Electronic Cigarette Manufacturing: HB No. 9866	House Committee on Trade and Industry	October 28
EPIRA: SB Nos. 217, 486, 487, 1612, and 2348	Senate Committee on Energy	October 31
Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises: Maximize	Fiscal Incentives Review Board	November 12
Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy (CREATE MORE): SB No. 27962		
Philippine Natural Gas Industry Development Act: SB No. 2793, HB No. 8456	Office of the Deputy Executive Secretary for Legal Affairs	December 17
EPIRA (Supplemental): draft Republic Act No. 9136	Senate Committee on Energy	December 17
Meralco Franchise: SB Nos. 2876 and 2824	Senate Committee on Public Services	December 18
e-Botika Act: HB No. 8554	House Committee on Trade and Industry	December 20

Amplifying PCC's mission through media

To extend the reach of its advocacy, media efforts played a pivotal role in amplifying the PCC's message. The CKMO spearheaded efforts to increase public awareness by facilitating interviews with PCC officials on various news outlets and radio stations, conducting press conferences, and publishing press releases. These efforts, shared across the official PCC website and social media platforms, helped explain competition issues in simple terms and brought them to public attention, ensuring the PCC's mission reaches a wider audience.

The CKMO-Public Affairs and Research Division facilitated these media engagements, publishing 49 press releases in 2024 to keep stakeholders informed of the latest developments in market competition, and the PCC's enforcement and advocacy efforts. The PCC also maintained an active presence on social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and X.

These media initiatives are aligned with the PCC's mandate to publish and disseminate reports on competition cases, guiding both industry players and consumers.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (center), Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos (leftmost) and Assistant Director Genevieve Juli (rightmost) addressed the media at a press conference on the onion case last September 5 at the PCC office.

Alongside its local advocacy efforts, the PCC also strengthened its relationship with international partners in 2024 to align enforcement and advocacy efforts with global best practices. By engaging with competition authorities and experts worldwide, the PCC likewise took part in shaping international competition policy and fostered cross-border cooperation.

Through its leadership in the Advocacy Working Group of the International Competition Network, as well as participation in key global conferences—such as those organized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—the PCC shared its expertise on competition law enforcement and emerging issues in digital markets, merger review, and cartel investigations. These engagements reflect the PCC's commitment to ensuring that the Philippines learns from the best practices in enforcement and advocacy offered by other jurisdictions.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate discussed the role of the Advocacy Working Group of the International Competition Network (ICN) in an interview with KTN News in Nairobi, Kenya, in February.



(Left to right) PCC Commissioner Ferdinand Negre, Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano, and Mergers and Acquisitions Office Director Lianne Ivy Medina during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Competition Policy and Law Group (CPLG) Meeting held in Lima, Peru in March.



PCC Economics Office Acting Director Kirsten Dela Cruz (fourth from left) joined a policy dialogue that explored the intersection between competition and gender at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Competition Policy and Law Group (CPLG) Meeting held in Lima, Peru in March.



(Left to right) PCC Capacity Building and Advocacy Division Chief Inah Geneve Mangilin, Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, and Office of the Commission Clerk and Sheriff Director Sheryl Fortune Supapo-Sandigan at the ICN Annual Conference in Saupe, Brazil on May 14-17.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (2nd from left) presents the Philippines' best practices in merger control at the 19th East Asia Top Level Officials' Meeting on Competition Policy (EATOP) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on July 23. Photo courtesy of MyCC.



(Left to right) OECD competition expert Despina Pachnou, CNMC President Cani Fernandez, US-DOJ Antitrust Division Deputy Assistant Attorney General Manish Kumar, EU Directorate-General for Competition and Director of Cartels Maria Jaspers, UK-CMA Competition Enforcement Senior Director Lucilla Falsarella Pereira, and PCC Competition Enforcement Office Monitoring and Investigation Division Chief Alyssa Carmelli Castillo.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo joined fellow delegates from East Asian countries during the 19th East Asia Top Level Officials' Meeting on Competition Policy (EATOP) held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in July.



PCC Competition Enforcement Office Director Christian Loren De Los Santos (sixth from left) joined competition enforcers from China, Hong Kong, and Japan in sharing insights and strategies on navigating enforcement challenges in the wake of the pandemic during the "Asia-Pacific Enforcers: Post-Pandemic Update" session at the American Bar Association (ABA) 72nd Antitrust Law Spring Meeting held in Washington, D.C. in April.



PCC Commissioner Marah Victoria Querol (rightmost) joined various meetings and working sessions on competition enforcement conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) held in Paris, France in June.

Final round of AFAC negotiations hosted in PH

The PCC hosted the concluding negotiation for the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition (AFAC) on June 13-14, with Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano presiding over the talks.

The AFAC serves as a regional agreement that facilitates cross-border cooperation and coordination on matters concerning competition policy and law among Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states. It seeks to integrate a competition lens into regional and domestic economic policies and implement effective measures for addressing competition-related challenges.

The AFAC negotiations were launched in September 2022, during the 54th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in Cambodia.



PCC Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano leads the conclusion of the negotiations during the AFAC in June.



Delegates from ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat with PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (eighth from left), Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano (seventh from left), Commissioner Ferdinand Negre (center), Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (13th from left), and Economics Office Acting Director Kirsten Dela Cruz (16th from left) during the welcome dinner for the 12th and final negotiation round for the AFAC held in Quezon City in June.



PCC Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano (seventh from left, front row) and Economics Office Acting Director Kirsten Dela Cruz (eighth from left) join other members of the PCC delegation, as well as representatives from the ASEAN member-states at the 12th and final AFAC negotiations in Quezon City last June 13-14.

Competition authorities learn from international experts at 'Competition in Digital Markets' workshop

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development-Korea Policy Centre and the PCC co-hosted the "Workshop on Competition in Digital Markets" on November 18-19 in Quezon City. The event brought together international experts to guide competition authorities in understanding the digital market landscape through discussions and practical exercises, including team-based hypothetical casework.

Hosting the workshop underscored what Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo described as the PCC's commitment to learning from global experts to enhance the agency's efforts of promoting fair competition amid the rapidly changing digital landscape.

Participants gained insights into key topics, including anti-competitive practices through the *US vs. Google* case and an abuse of dominance example from the Korea Fair Trade Commission. They also explored digital mergers, with discussions on theories of harm and an analysis of the *US vs. Sabre* case. Experts from Australia, the EU, and the Philippines provided perspectives on market studies and regulations, underscoring the importance of robust competition policies in the digital economy.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo delivers his welcome remarks during the PCC-OECD/KPC's Workshop on Competition in Digital Markets on November 18 in Quezon City.



Antitrust partnership forged with Australia

The Philippine and Australian antitrust agencies formalized their long-standing partnership on February 28 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) headquarters in Canberra.

PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and ACCC Chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb signed the agreement, aimed at facilitating information exchange, promoting best practices in competition law and policy, and enhancing technical assistance and capacity-building efforts between the two agencies. Additionally, the MOU outlines provisions for coordination and cooperation on cases of mutual interest, adhering to both nations' confidentiality and legal requirements.

During the signing ceremony, Aguinaldo expressed appreciation for ACCC's support to the PCC since its inception in 2016, including help extended in finalizing the rules and regulations under the Philippine Competition Act, secondments of officials and staff through the Competition Law Implementation Program, and regular conduct of capacity-building activities.

Cass-Gottlieb commended the PCC for its remarkable strides in promoting fair and competitive markets in the Philippines, adding that the ACCC takes pride in partnering with the PCC to advance common goals of consumer welfare and economic development. She said the MOU will foster closer and more productive collaboration between the two agencies, thereby enhancing their ability to ensure fair competition and protect consumer interest.



The PCC, NEDA, and USAID teamed up to host a learning session on AI for select policymakers and media stakeholders to pursue the modernization of existing ICT laws held in Quezon City in April.

AI for policy takes spotlight in roundtable series

In April, the PCC co-presented a series of roundtable discussions on artificial intelligence (AI) alongside the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in order to explore its impact on policy development, economic growth, and social inclusion. These sessions provided a platform for experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to exchange insights on managing AI's potential while addressing its associated risks.

The first session introduced participants to AI's foundational concepts and emphasized the need to modernize ICT laws to keep pace with emerging technologies. The second roundtable tackled policy challenges in rapidly evolving digital landscapes, with experts urging a balanced regulatory approach that enables innovation without stifling progress.

In the third session, discussions centered on ensuring women's participation in AI-driven industries to promote fairness, workforce diversity, and economic opportunity. The fourth roundtable explored international approaches to AI governance and underlined the importance of aligning local policies with global best practices.

This series reflects the PCC, NEDA, and USAID's shared commitment to fostering informed, future-ready legislation that safeguards public welfare while maximizing AI's potential. The agencies aim to build a policy environment that supports innovation, economic empowerment, and inclusive digital growth.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and ACCC Chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb hold up copies of the signed MOU in ACCC's office in Canberra.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate, in his opening remarks, expressed hope that the roundtable discussions would enhance understanding of the opportunities and challenges posed by AI.



NEDA Undersecretary Krystal Uy gave the closing remarks of the learning session on AI held in Quezon City in April.



►►► BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES

As effective competition enforcement and advocacy rely on a strong institution, the PCC has sustained its efforts in building up competencies and in optimizing resources. This includes prioritizing staff development and upholding high standards in management practices.

By the end of 2024, the PCC has employed 323 personnel, including 63 lawyers and 39 economists who are at the forefront of competition enforcement. The total headcount represented 83% of the agency's approved plantilla positions, underscoring its commitment to ensuring it has the numbers to fulfill its mandate.

PCC staff participated in 115 learning and development programs throughout the year. These programs included a wide range of in-house, local, and international training sessions, workshops, and certifications focused on competition law enforcement, investigative techniques, merger review and control, and economic analysis. In addition to competition-related subjects, staff members received training on office operations such as procurement, human resource management, records management, and monitoring and evaluation—all of which contributed to a holistic approach in institutional development.

Alongside these efforts, the PCC has initiated various programs aimed at improving staff expertise and learning from international partners. These include secondment programs with other competition authorities, advanced study opportunities through the Government Staff Development Program for Competition Law and Policy, and workshops designed to elevate skills in competition enforcement and advocacy.



Secondment, advanced studies to boost competition competencies

In 2024, the PCC undertook several initiatives to enhance the skills and knowledge of its staff and those of other government agencies. These initiatives, which include secondment programs with foreign competition authorities and opportunities for advanced studies through the Government Staff Development Program for Competition Law and Policy (GSDPC), are crucial to building the expertise needed for effective competition enforcement and policy development in the Philippines.

Last year, two sets of PCC staff participated in international secondment programs, which are temporary assignments that allowed them to immerse in the work of other competition authorities, gaining insights into how more mature competition agencies enforce the law.

From February 16 to March 30, lawyers Sophia Patrice Velasco of the Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) and Katherine Ann Baldos of the Mergers and Acquisitions Office joined the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's Competition Law Implementation Program and were deployed to the New Zealand Commerce Commission's (NZCC) cartels and mergers teams, respectively. Velasco trained in investigative interviews, search warrants, and emerging issues such as digital platforms and artificial intelligence in forensics, while Baldos learned from NZCC's merger review processes, observing both voluntary and non-notified merger reviews.

From July 15 to October 4, the Economics Office's Jose Miguel Villamor and CEO Litigation Division Officer-in-Charge Jasmine Rose Maquiling participated in the Hong Kong Competition Commission-PCC Secondment Program. Villamor delivered a lecture on the PCC's role in conducting competition impact assessments to advocate for pro-competitive policies, while Maquiling gained insights into prosecuting competition law violations in Hong Kong and shared best practices from the Philippine experience.

Parallel to these secondment opportunities, the PCC also facilitated scholarships through the Asian Development Bank-funded GSDPC. The GSDPC provides scholarships to government staff wanting to pursue advanced studies in competition law, economics, and related fields.

Under the program, six government personnel in 2024 embarked on graduate programs in law, economics, and development.

The following PCC personnel successfully completed their respective programs under the GSDPC in 2024:

	Name	Program	University
Philippine Competition Commission	Roxanne Ballo	<i>Master's Degree in Data Science Methodology</i>	Barcelona Graduate School of Economics
	Franzine Foronda	<i>Master of Laws in International Business and Economic Law</i>	Georgetown University Law Center
	Antonio Miguel Ventura	<i>Master's in Public Administration in International Development</i>	Harvard University - John F. Kennedy School of Government
	Carlos Juan Paolo Vega	<i>Doctor of Philosophy in Economics</i>	University of East Anglia

Several PCC employees also benefited from the Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS), a program designed to equip individuals with the skills to lead change and contribute to national development.

	Name	Program/Short Course	University
Degree Program	Danna Jean Ingaran	<i>Master of Laws</i>	University of Melbourne
Non-Degree Programs (Short Courses)	Jeson de la Torre	<i>Agile Leadership Program</i>	
	Paul Jeffrey Ballentos	<i>Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Short Course</i>	
	Renze Carlo Santos	<i>Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Short Course</i>	

The year 2024 also saw the completion of the following personnel of their respective programs under the AAS:

	Name	Program	University
	Warren Paul Nicdao	<i>Master of Information Technology</i>	University of Newcastle
	Alvin Bosque	<i>Master of Cybersecurity</i>	Griffith University
	Aileen Mae San Jose	<i>Master of Laws</i>	University of Melbourne

Various PCC staff and officials also participated in academic and secondment programs related to competition law and policy through the assistance of different organizations.

	Name	Program and Institution	Funder
	Commissioner Marah Victoria Querol	<i>Lee Kuan Yew Senior Fellowship in Public Service (SFPS Programme), National University of Singapore</i>	Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
	Michael Kris Ben Herrera	<i>External Visitors' Scheme (EVS) for Officials from Competition Authorities Outside the European Union, European Commission (EC)</i>	EC, GSDPC
	Samantha Louise Nepomuceno	<i>Master's Program of Public Policy (MP1), National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)</i>	Asian Development Bank-Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP)

	Name	Program	University
Philippine Competition Commission	Commissioner Lolibeth Ramit-Medrano	<i>Master of Arts in EU Competition Law (distance learning)</i>	King's College London
	Jumel Capurcos	<i>Interuniversity Certificate in Competition Law (LL.M.)</i>	Brussels School of Competition
National Economic and Development Authority	Flora Sherry Basquinez-Samaniego	<i>Master of Laws in International Business Law</i>	Panthéon-Assas Université Paris
	David Carlo Mangalindan	<i>Master of Science in International Finance and Economics</i>	University of Sussex
	Marina Irene Karana Ferrer	<i>Master of Science in Urban Management and Development</i>	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Office of the Solicitor General	Michael Pio Cua	<i>Master of Laws in International Business and Economic Law</i>	Georgetown University



Atty. Inna Camille Andres (eighth from left), economist Mailyn Lagundino (ninth from left), and Atty. Reiniel Honrubia (12th from left) during the CLIP VI Remedies Workshop held in Cambodia in May.

Learning from global best practices on competition through ICN, CLIP workshops

Personnel from the PCC participated in a number of international workshops aimed at enhancing their technical skills and knowledge in competition enforcement and merger analysis. These events provided valuable insights and best practices that align with the PCC's mandate to promote fair market competition.

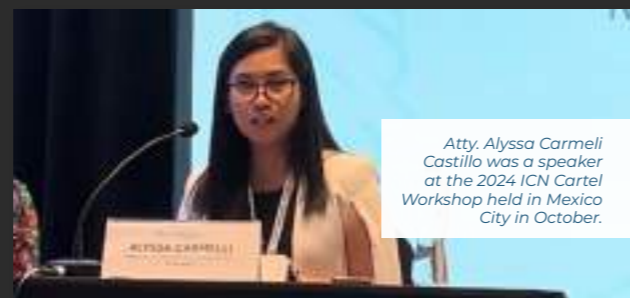
Atty. Alyssa Carmeli Castillo and Desiree Joy Lagrimas of the Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) attended the 2024 International Competition Network (ICN) Cartel Workshop in Mexico City, themed "The Future of the Fight Against Cartel Agreements." The workshop, held on October 2-4, explored emerging trends in cartel enforcement and facilitated the exchange of best practices among ICN's Cartel Working Group members.

Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) lawyers Lawrence Jericho Ortiz and Patrick Joshua Baldovino attended the Competition Law Implementation Program (CLIP) IV Merger Hypothetical Workshop in Indonesia on February 28-29. The activity provided foundational training to support effective merger reviews and analyses. Baldovino, alongside fellow MAO lawyer Mario Rosete III, also participated in the ICN Merger Workshop in Taipei on November 13-15, wherein contemporary merger issues such as potential and dynamic competition, and innovation theories of harm were addressed.

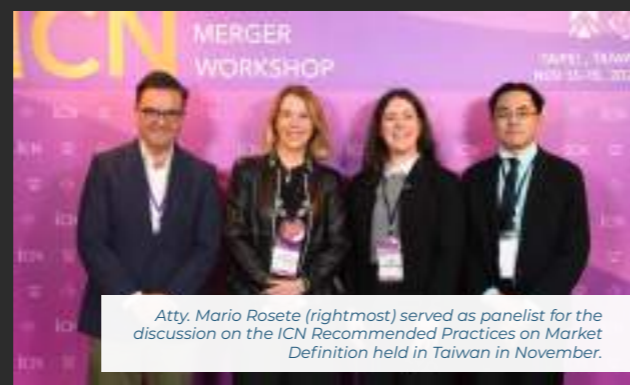
In addition, Atty. Inna Camille Andres of the Office of the Commission Clerk and Sheriff, and Reiniel Honrubia of MAO, together with Mailyn Lagundino of the Economics Office (EO), attended the CLIP VI Remedies for Competition Law Infringement Workshop in Cambodia on May 7-9. This enhanced their expertise in developing effective remedies for competition violations. Lastly, training specialist

Anne Victoria Alcala of the Communications and Knowledge Management Office, MAO lawyer Michelle Anne Esquivias, and Carlos Tolentino II of EO joined the CLIP VI Digital Markets Workshop in Hanoi on June 5-7, where they gained insights on building data and intelligence teams to support competition investigations.

These learning engagements reflect the PCC's commitment to strengthening its capabilities in line with global best practices.



Atty. Alyssa Carmeli Castillo was a speaker at the 2024 ICN Cartel Workshop held in Mexico City in October.



Atty. Mario Rosete (rightmost) served as panelist for the discussion on the ICN Recommended Practices on Market Definition held in Taiwan in November.

Foreign expertise tapped to enhance enforcement, merger skills

The PCC has also brought in foreign experts to bolster key competencies in enforcement and merger review. In a significant move to support the PCC, the Korea Fair Trade Commission (KFTC) dispatched two of its competition experts to assist in the PCC's capacity-building efforts. Through the KFTC Expert Dispatch Program, Dongbin Shin, KFTC's Director for Deliberation Management, provided guidance to the PCC's Competition Enforcement Office (CEO), while Jihoon Park of KFTC's International M&A Division lent his expertise to the Mergers and Acquisitions Office. Their deployment, from July 18 to August 22, focused on helping the PCC develop and refine its operational guidelines, improving its ability to tackle competition law enforcement and merger reviews.

Complementing this support, the PCC also organized a workshop to bolster its case management skills. From November 13 to 15, lawyers, investigators, and legal assistants from the CEO participated in an intensive training program led by Harikumar Pillay, principal of Baker McKenzie Wong & Leow's Competition and Antitrust Practice Group. The workshop focused on key areas of competition enforcement, such as investigative powers, evidence handling, penalty calculation, and drafting statements of objection.

The hands-on training provided participants with opportunities to practice their drafting skills and engage in discussions to enhance their case management techniques. By honing their expertise in these critical areas, PCC staff are better equipped to manage and prosecute competition law cases with greater precision and efficiency.



KFTC experts Dongbin Shin (left photo) and Jihoon Park (bottom photo) conduct consultations with PCC staff as part of the KFTC Expert Dispatch Program from July 18 to August 22.





Economics Office conducts refresher on CIA, market studies

The PCC's Economics Office (EO) led a series of workshops to bolster the agency's expertise on competition impact assessments (CIAs), market studies, and economic analysis for enforcement activities. These sessions were aimed at enhancing the staff's ability to apply economic principles in competition cases and regulatory decision-making.

The first set of workshops, held on February 21-22, focused on market studies and outlined the guidelines for conducting them, highlighting the process of formulating research policy questions, collecting and analyzing data, and publishing research findings. This was followed by a workshop on February 26-27, which was dedicated to discussing the importance of CIAs as both a regulatory and advocacy tool. The workshop also covered methodologies for assessing the potential competitive harm of proposed regulations and emphasized policy options—such as replacement,

removal, or retention—following a CIA. Finally, the workshop tackled the conduct of strategic policy dialogues to engage stakeholders in the regulatory process.

In September, the EO facilitated another workshop geared towards the role of economic analysis in investigating cartels, abuse of dominance, and merger reviews. Key topics included measuring market power, defining relevant markets, and applying theories of harm to assess the potential for substantial lessening of competition.

The workshops highlight the crucial role that economic methods play in competition cases, particularly in assessing market behavior, guiding enforcement actions, and measuring the broader economic impact of competition-related reforms.



PCC Economics Office facilitated the CIA workshop held in Quezon City in February.

In line with its core value of excellence, the PCC remains dedicated to maintaining the highest standards in governance. In 2024, the agency achieved several milestones that reflect its commitment to operational excellence and its active role in the nation's digital transformation efforts.

Among these accomplishments is the successful recertification of the PCC's ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System, affirming its adherence to international standards for quality service delivery and continual improvement. Additionally, the PCC received recognition from the Department of Information and Communications Technology for its contributions to the country's digital transformation initiatives, solidifying the Commission's reputation as a forward-thinking agency.

The PCC is also poised for growth, with plans to establish a new office at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus.

PCC maintains ISO certification for 7th straight year

The PCC has successfully retained its ISO 9001:2015 certification for the seventh consecutive year following a recertification audit conducted by TÜV Rheinland on November 13. Initially certified in 2017, this second recertification affirms the PCC's compliance with international standards for quality management, highlighting its commitment to delivering high-quality services and continual improvement.

The audit highlighted eight key areas of achievement, which TÜV Rheinland noted as positive findings:

- 1. Enhancement of the Service Request System Portal** – The PCC made improvements to the Administrative Office's portal to streamline service requests and boost efficiency.
- 2. ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Certification Plans** – The PCC is on track to secure certification for its information security management system by the end of 2024, strengthening its commitment to data security.
- 3. Civil Service Commission PRIME-HRM Recognition** – The PCC received the Bronze Award for the Institutionalized Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management Program, a testament to the agency's commitment to meritocracy and HR excellence.
- 4. Streamlined Processes for Governance and Performance Monitoring** – The PCC optimized the review and approval process for recalibrating its Governance Scorecard, while also enhancing features of the semi-automated Office Performance Scorecard unified monitoring tool.
- 5. Adjudication Services Monitoring and Case File Tracking** – The PCC introduced a Monitoring Tracker and Case File Tracker for its Adjudication Services Division to improve the management of ongoing cases.
- 6. Bid Rigging Screening Tool and Agricultural Cartel Investigations** – The PCC recorded notable achievements in enforcement, including improvements to the Bid Rigging Screening Tool, contributions to the drafting of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, and the efficient investigation of the onion cartel case.
- 7. Procurement and Supplier Evaluation Documentation** – The PCC effectively managed comprehensive records related to procurement and supplier evaluation, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- 8. Media Monitoring and ROI Tracking** – The PCC utilized an external media monitoring service to track media return-on-investment (ROI) value and pick-ups, enabling better assessment of media coverage and communication efforts.

The PCC's sustained implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) enables the agency to consistently provide services that align with its mandate while enhancing stakeholder satisfaction. This achievement supports Administrative Order No. 161, s. 2006, which enjoins all government agencies to establish an ISO-aligned QMS, and Executive Order No. 605, s. 2007, which directs all departments and agencies in the Executive branch to adopt the ISO 9001: 2000 QMS.



Presidential audit office recognizes PCC processes as best practices

In 2024, the Office of the President-Internal Audit Office (OP-IAO) conducted compliance and management audits of the PCC for the period January 1 to December 31, 2023. The audit examined the agency's compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and internal policies across three key areas: capacity-building programs (foreign and local), review of mergers and acquisitions processes, and fund disbursement procedures. Other related processes by the PCC were also covered.

The audit, conducted on a test basis, concluded that the PCC, an attached agency of the OP, demonstrated effective and compliant practices across all audited areas. Specifically, capacity-building programs, merger and acquisition review processes, and fund disbursement procedures were found to be well-managed and in adherence to established guidelines.

Ten favorable observations highlighted the PCC's commitment to operational efficiency and security. These include the development and promotion of iCLP, the PCC's online learning management hub, efforts of the Personnel Development Committee for scholarships and training opportunities, and implementation of strict protocols on confidentiality and conflict

of interest within the Mergers and Acquisitions Office. Other favorable observations include the agency's proactive approach to electronic records management, facilitated by its guidelines on the use of digital and electronic signatures for financial and administrative transactions and the use of Microsoft 365, which reinforces its commitment to secure and efficient operations. The automation efforts in service delivery systems such as the Cash Advance Monitoring System and Payment Processing System were also commended for promoting accountability and streamlining workflows. In addition, the PCC was recognized for maintaining an effective Performance Management System to monitor employee performance, and for its timely submission of all requested documents during the audit, which facilitated timely review and verification. The agency's investments in ICT goods and services such as subscription-based software and equipment, were also noted as contributors to overall productivity.

The OP-IAO also identified three opportunities for improvement for PCC. Ultimately, the OP-IAO stated in their report that the best practices of the PCC have been approved by the Executive Secretary to be used as benchmark for other government institutions.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo (eighth from left), and Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (10th from left) joined PCC officials and OP-IAO representatives during the Compliance and Management Audit.



PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate (center) and Information and Communications Technology Division Chief Allan Roy Mordeno (fifth from left), received a plaque of recognition on behalf of the PCC from DICT Secretary Ivan John Uy (third from left) during the culminating activity of the NICTM 2024 Celebration held in Quezon City in June.

Digital transformation initiatives recognized

The PCC was honored with a plaque of recognition from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) during the National ICT Month (NICTM) 2024 culminating event held on June 28 in Quezon City. PCC Executive Director Kenneth Tanate and Administrative Office-Information and Communications Technology Division Chief Allan Roy Mordeno accepted the award from DICT Secretary Ivan John Uy.

The recognition highlighted the PCC's strong partnership and commitment to supporting the DICT's initiatives for advancing the country's digital transformation.

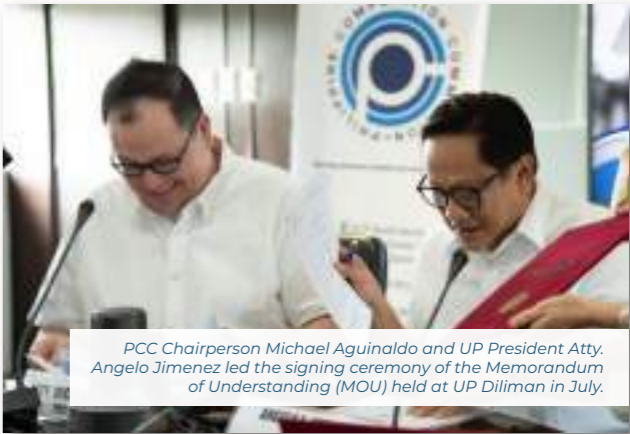
With the theme "Kinabukasang Progresibo, Kaakibat ng ICT," NICTM 2024 celebrated collaborative efforts to harness the power of information and communications technology for national development and economic growth.



New PCC office to rise in UP Diliman

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the PCC and the University of the Philippines (UP) was signed for the establishment of the agency's new office at the premier state university's Diliman campus. PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and UP President Angelo Jimenez led the signing ceremony on July 30 at the Diliman campus.

Under the MoU, UP will lease to PCC a 1,620-square-meter piece of land within the Diliman Campus located along Commonwealth Avenue. The lease will run for 25 years and may be extended thereafter, subject to the terms and conditions that will be discussed in a separate memorandum of agreement between the two parties.



PCC Chairperson Michael Aguinaldo and UP President Atty. Angelo Jimenez led the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) held at UP Diliman in July.



▶▶▶ LOOKING AHEAD

Enforcement

In 2025, the PCC will sustain its enforcement efforts by developing targeted guidelines and advancing personnel capacity. As the regulatory landscape evolves, the PCC recognizes the need for specific guidelines that address small cases and technology transfer agreements. These guidelines will provide clarity for stakeholders involved in smaller-scale transactions, and those navigating agreements related to technology transfers, ensuring that fair competition is maintained across industries and market sizes.

Mergers and acquisitions

The PCC aims to enhance its regulatory framework in 2025 by developing and publishing new guidelines on divestiture and the hiring of third-party monitors during the voluntary commitment period. These guidelines will provide stakeholders with clear and substantive guidance in situations where structural remedies and independent trustees overseeing compliance may be critical during the negotiation and implementation stages. These efforts will build on the PCC's Guidelines on Merger Remedies, which were published in 2024, and are aimed at ensuring transparency and effectiveness in resolving competition concerns.

In line with the continual improvement of its merger review, the PCC plans to revise and update the PCC Rules on Expedited Merger Review in 2025. This update comes as the moratorium on the acceptance of notifications under expedited review draws to a close. The revised rules will allow the PCC to expedite reviews of certain transactions with minimal competitive risks, ensuring the efficient use of its resources while maintaining rigorous oversight of more complex cases.

The Commission is also considering the introduction of fees for certain services provided by the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO). This initiative seeks to optimize the allocation of the agency's limited resources, ensuring that efforts are concentrated on areas of merger control that have a lasting and significant impact on markets and consumers.

Another key initiative for 2025 is the completion of the second phase of the Online Video Training Modules for Law Firms and Businesses - Hypothetical Merger Review Training. This initiative, launched to raise public awareness of the PCC, the Philippine Competition Act, and the MAO's processes, will focus on key concepts from the PCC Merger Review Guidelines and the engagement between MAO and merger parties during Phase I and Phase II reviews. This follows the successful completion of the project's first phase in 2023, which centered on the sufficiency determination stage of the merger review process.

Policy and economic research

In 2025, the PCC will strengthen its policy research and dissemination efforts through a range of strategic initiatives. A key focus will be the ongoing collaboration with government agencies to share the results of market studies and competition impact assessments (CIAs) through a series of strategic policy dialogues. These engagements will allow the PCC to provide valuable insights on competition dynamics in critical industries and foster closer cooperation with other regulatory bodies.

As part of its commitment to regional capacity-building, the PCC will also conduct a series of workshops designed to equip the PCC i-Station staff and other regional government agencies with knowledge on the National Competition Policy (NCP) and CIAs. This initiative, known as the PCC Resource Training for i-Station Staff on National Competition Policy and Competition Impact Assessment Engagements, is a strategic priority for 2025. Through these workshops, the PCC aims to bolster the capacity of regional offices for addressing competition-related issues, ensuring that pro-competition policies are effectively implemented nationwide.

In line with its research mandate, the PCC, through its Economics Office, will continue to conduct and complete ongoing market studies and CIAs in sectors that are vital to the country's economic growth and consumer welfare. These sectors include food and agriculture, government procurement, electricity, digital platforms, financial technology, and telecommunications. By investigating competition issues in these areas, the PCC seeks to promote fair market practices and contribute to evidence-based policymaking that benefits both businesses and consumers.

Advocacy and capacity-building

The PCC continues its proactive efforts in advocacy and capacity-building, reaching key stakeholders across various sectors. A series of seminars, fora, and trainings are planned to promote a deeper understanding of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), the NCP, and their relevance to different industries and communities.

To kick off 2025, the PCC will conduct an orientation on the PCA and its Implementing Rules and Regulations for the Philippine Association of Legitimate Service Contractors in January. This will be followed by the Manila Forum on Competition in Developing Countries in February, a critical platform for fostering dialogue on competition issues in similar economic contexts.

Through the Champions of Competition – Competition Local Advocacy Network project, local orientation seminars will be conducted in collaboration with partner state universities and colleges. These seminars, scheduled throughout the year, will enhance local awareness of competition laws and policies, fostering a culture of fair competition at the regional level.

Additionally, the PCC will organize several multi-sectoral fora in CALABARZON, Davao, Western Visayas, and other regions to engage local stakeholders and encourage their participation in the Competition Advocacy Pledge, ensuring a broad and diverse network of advocates for fair market competition.

Major events such as the Fair Business Forum will serve as platforms for launching important tools like the Competition Compliance Toolkit and engaging the retail sector through organizations such as the Philippine Retailers Association. These initiatives will reinforce the PCC's role in promoting fair business practices across industries.

The Commission will also deliver targeted programs, such as the rollout of post-graduate programs in partnership with the Legal Education Board (LEB) and the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) lecture series. A new MCLE-type capacity-building program for compliance officers will close the year, ensuring that legal practitioners and industry professionals are well-equipped to uphold competition standards.

Building institutional capacities

In 2025, the PCC is set to strengthen its institutional capacities by fostering strategic partnerships and leveraging international expertise. As part of these efforts, the PCC will host a resident advisor through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) World Friends Korea program. The advisor will help the PCC in developing a framework to guide its understanding of significant market power. This will provide valuable insights and guidance to the PCC as it continues to enhance its competition law enforcement and regulatory capabilities.

Additionally, the PCC is scheduled to sign memoranda of understanding with the Trade Competition Commission of Thailand and the Cambodia Competition Commission. These agreements will formalize cooperation between the PCC and its regional counterparts, facilitating knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and collaboration on competition-related matters.

Through these initiatives, the PCC aims to strengthen its institutional framework, drawing from global best practices and fostering strong international cooperation to reinforce its role as the country's competition authority.

COMPETITIONARY

Acquisition refers to the purchase of securities or assets, through contract or other means, for the purpose of obtaining control by: (a) one entity of the whole or part of another; (b) two or more entities over another; or (c) one or more entities over one or more entities.

Agreement refers to any type or form of contract, arrangement, understanding, collective recommendation, or concerted action, whether formal or informal, explicit or tacit, written or oral.

Bid-rigging refers to fixing prices at an auction or any form of collusive tendering, including cover bidding, bid suppression, bid rotation, and market allocation, among others. It usually occurs when parties participating in a tender coordinate their bids rather than submit independent proposals.

Conduct refers to any type or form of undertaking, collective recommendation, independent or concerted action or practice, whether formal or informal.

Competition impact assessment (CIA) involves the evaluation of the potential competition effects of a proposed or existing policy and enables a competition agency or government body to identify regulations that potentially restrict or harm competition, and thus to develop alternative regulations.

Competition policy governs how businesses interact with both consumers and each other. A country's competition policy is the sum of its competition laws, which proscribe anti-competitive behavior, and the effect that its public policy may have on competitive processes in the economy.

Dawn raid is an unannounced on-site inspection used to uncover evidence in aid of investigation and prosecution of anti-competitive agreements and conduct such as cartels and abuses of dominance.

Entity refers to any person, natural or juridical, sole proprietorship, partnership, combination or association in any form, whether incorporated or not, domestic or foreign, including those owned or controlled by the government, engaged directly or indirectly in any economic activity.

Full administrative investigation (FAI) is carried out to determine if there is enough evidence to formally lodge a complaint, called a statement of objections, against an entity for violating the Philippine Competition Act, its implementing rules, or other competition laws.

Initial assessment is a process where a PCC investigator determines whether a matter shall be recommended for the conduct of preliminary inquiry.

Letter of non-coverage (LNC) from compulsory notification is a request lodged by merging entities with the PCC, seeking to exempt their transaction from notification. The LNC covers transactions that do not breach the notification thresholds, or those that involve internal restructuring, consolidation of ownership, or land acquisitions where no change in control ensues.

Market study is research conducted to gain in-depth understanding of a market or industry and the practices therein. It may also uncover concerns on firm behavior, market structure, information failure, consumer conduct, public sector intervention in markets, and other factors that may harm consumers. The study also recommends measures to address any issues that are identified.

A **merger** refers to the joining of two or more entities into an existing entity or a new entity.

Motu proprio is Latin for "on his own impulse." *Motu proprio* reviews or investigations are initiated by the competition agency of their own accord if it deems that there are potential competition concerns that need to be looked into.

National Competition Policy (NCP) lays down a whole-of-government approach to promoting competition in the market through pro-competitive government policies, rules, regulations, issuances, and actions. The NCP is anchored on three principles: pro-competitive policies and government interventions; competitive neutrality or fair competition between government entities and private entities in a market; and the primacy of the PCC in the enforcement of competition-related laws and issuances.

Non-adversarial proceeding is a resolution or corrective action taken by the PCC to address anti-competitive behavior without resorting to administrative, civil or criminal action.

Phase I review of a proposed merger determines if the transaction may give rise to competition concerns. During Phase I review, the PCC's Mergers and Acquisitions Office may gather supplementary information from the merger parties in addition to those contained in their initial submissions, as well as information from third parties. If, during the Phase I review, the merger review team finds competition concerns, or cannot rule out the likelihood of a substantial lessening of competition, then the transaction will proceed to a Phase II review. Otherwise, the transaction may be cleared for consummation.

Phase II review of a proposed merger involves reviewing a transaction further, which after Phase I review indicates potential competition concerns or despite the Phase I review the merger review team still cannot rule out the likelihood of a substantial lessening of competition in the relevant market. During Phase II review, the PCC gathers information which may either be supplied by the parties or be requested from third parties. This activity may lead to the issuance of a statement of concerns (SoC) if the merger is found to give rise to competition concerns, or to the clearance of the merger barring such concerns.

Philippine Competition Act (PCA) or Republic Act No. 10667 is the primary competition law of the Philippines that was passed in 2015 for promoting fair competition in the marketplace and protecting the well-being of consumers in the process.

Preliminary inquiry (PI) is conducted to determine if sufficient grounds exist to warrant a full administrative investigation of an alleged violation of the Philippine Competition Act. A PI evaluates the potential adverse effects on consumer welfare or competition in the sector, alongside public interest concerns.

Pre-notification consultation (PNC) allows parties involved in a proposed merger or acquisition to seek non-binding advice from the PCC on the specific information needed for the notification before filing such.

Price fixing refers to restricting competition as to price, or components thereof, or other terms of trade. This usually happens when competitors collude with one another, rather than allow demand and supply conditions to determine the price.

Relevant market refers to the group of goods or services that are sufficiently interchangeable or substitutable and the object of competition, and the geographic area where said goods or services are offered.

Size of party (SoP) refers to the value of assets or revenues of the ultimate parent entity (the juridical entity that, directly or indirectly, controls a party to the transaction, and is not controlled by any other entity) of either transacting entity in a merger. For 2024, SoP was set at ₱7.8 billion.

Size of transaction (SoT) refers to the value of assets or revenues of the acquired party and the entities it controls. For 2024, SoT was set at ₱3.2 billion.

Statement of concerns (SoC) is a document issued by the PCC's Mergers and Acquisitions Office, detailing its findings from a Phase II review of the likelihood of a transaction giving rise to a substantial lessening of competition in the relevant market. The SoC may also include any recommendations or remedial actions that the PCC proposes to apply in order to address those findings.

Statement of objections (SO) is similar to a charge sheet in court cases and contains the details of an entity's alleged violations of the Philippine Competition Act, its implementing rules, or other competition laws. The PCC's Competition Enforcement Office issues the SO after conducting a preliminary inquiry or full administrative investigation.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, QUEZON CITY

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AUDIT SECTOR CLUSTER 1 – EXECUTIVE OFFICES

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Chairperson

Philippine Competition Commission
25/F, Vertis North Corporate Center 1, North Avenue
Quezon City

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Philippine Competition Commission (PhCC), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2024, the statement of financial performance, statement of cash flows, statement of changes in net assets/equity, statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, and notes to financial statements, including summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the PhCC as at December 31, 2024, and its financial performance, cash flows and changes in net assets/equity for the year then ended and notes to financial statements in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). Our responsibilities under those standards are described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Agency in accordance with the Revised Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for the Commission on Audit Officials and Employees (Code of Ethics) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our unmodified opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the IPSAS and for such internal control as management determined is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, Management is responsible for assessing the agency's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless Management either intends to liquidate the agency or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but it is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISSAIs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Agency's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of Management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Agency's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the


financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Agency to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit observations, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

COMMISSION ON AUDIT

By:


AMADO N. ABLAO
OIC - Supervising Auditor
Audit Group F – OEO VI
May 28, 2025

PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
ALL FUNDS
As at December 31, 2024
(In Philippine Peso)

	Note	2024	2023 (As Restated)
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5	59,391,913.16	67,951,474.42
Receivables	6	655,747.33	1,553,072.58
Inventories	7	662,763.87	670,050.05
Other Current Assets	8	12,892,007.57	15,267,630.99
Total Current Assets		73,602,431.93	85,442,228.04
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	71,273,930.95	59,036,848.01
Intangible Assets	10	1,436,527.00	972,255.91
Other Non-Current Assets	8	27,859,022.70	26,770,393.04
Total Non-Current Assets		100,569,480.65	86,779,496.96
TOTAL ASSETS		174,171,912.58	172,221,725.00
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Financial Liabilities	11	33,129,559.78	42,989,855.42
Inter-Agency Payables	12	6,245,736.25	4,169,302.44
Due to Other Funds	13	1,360.32	3,576.57
Trust Liabilities	14	3,056,915.80	3,451,381.54
Pension Benefits Payable	15	436,711.89	820,344.93
Total Current Liabilities		42,870,284.04	51,434,460.90
TOTAL LIABILITIES		42,870,284.04	51,434,460.90
TOTAL ASSETS LESS TOTAL LIABILITIES		131,301,628.54	120,787,264.10
NET ASSETS/EQUITY			
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit)		131,301,628.54	120,787,264.10
TOTAL NET ASSETS / EQUITY		131,301,628.54	120,787,264.10

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION			
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE			
ALL FUNDS			
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024			
(In Philippine Peso)			
	Note	2024	2023 (As Restated)
REVENUE			
Service and Business Income	16	13,167,771.09	23,013,855.00
Total Revenue		13,167,771.09	23,013,855.00
EXPENSES			
Current Operating Expenses			
Personnel Services	17	259,763,042.61	249,930,101.35
Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses	18	292,528,056.99	327,959,387.60
Non-Cash Expenses	19	17,743,772.76	16,429,427.33
Total Current Operating Expenses	20	570,034,872.36	594,318,916.28
Surplus (Deficit) from Current Operations		(556,867,101.27)	(571,305,061.28)
Financial Assistance/Subsidy from NGAs, LGUs, GOCCs	20	582,987,669.59	658,557,908.20
Other Non-Operating Income	21	1,014,903.06	17,201.36
Losses	22	(80,652.62)	-
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD		27,054,818.76	87,270,048.28

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION			
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS/EQUITY			
ALL FUNDS			
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024			
(In Philippine Peso)			
	Note	2024	2023 (As restated)
Balance at January 1		120,787,264.10	58,311,623.03
Add/(Deduct):			
Prior period Adjustments/Unrecorded Income and Expenses	4	-	(498,009.93)
Restated balance		120,787,264.10	57,813,613.10
Add/(Deduct):			
Changes in Net Assets/Equity for the Calendar Year			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		27,054,818.76	87,270,048.28
Adjustment of net revenue recognized directly in net assets/equity	43	(16,540,454.32)	(24,299,952.90)
Closing of Cash-ConstructiveDisbursements		-	3,555.62
Total Changes in Net/Assets/Equity for the Calendar Year		10,514,364.44	62,973,651.00
Balance at December 31		131,301,628.54	120,787,264.10

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION			
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW			
ALL FUNDS			
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024			
(In Philippine Pesos)			
	Note	2024	2023 (As restated)
Cash Flows From Operating Activities			
Cash Inflows			
Receipt of Notice of Cash Allocation	23	654,580,800.72	769,431,144.11
Collection of Income/Revenues	24	13,468,300.72	23,013,855.00
Collection of Receivables	25	2,216.25	74,216.55
Receipt of Inter-Agency Fund Transfers	26	905,242.92	16,767.76
Trust Receipts	27	613,088.88	569,807.83
Other Receipts	28	2,507,941.86	1,476,613.58
Adjustments	29	796,173.42	68,122.69
Total Cash Inflows		672,873,764.77	794,650,527.52
Cash Outflows			
Remittance to National Treasury	30	16,540,454.32	24,299,952.90
Payment of Expenses	31	403,405,999.55	394,544,962.22
Grant of Cash Advances	32	9,880,679.24	16,270,971.02
Prepayments	33	36,809,058.79	71,468,552.53
Refund of Deposits	34	91,301.39	615,762.23
Payment of prior years' accounts payables for operating expenses	35	18,481,771.65	24,119,638.80
Payment of tax refunds payable	36	491,468.18	185,221.47
Remittance of Personnel Benefit Contributions and Mandatory Deductic	37	93,578,910.82	84,811,545.39
Grant of Financial Assistance/Subsidy		-	-
Release of Inter-Agency Fund Transfers	38	7,408,732.03	7,605,820.79
Other Disbursements	39	2,036,493.78	3,152,359.89
Reversal of Unutilized NCA		70,107,829.35	104,988,732.13
Adjustments		796,172.75	64,747.07
Total Cash Outflows		659,628,871.85	732,128,266.44
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities	42	13,244,892.92	62,522,261.08
Cash Flow from Investing Activities			
Cash Inflows			
Proceed from Sale/Disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment	40	9,952.77	-
Total Cash Outflows		9,952.77	-
Cash Outflows			
Purchase/Construction of Property, Plant and Equipment	41	21,814,406.95	24,766,137.32
Total Cash Outflows		21,814,406.95	24,766,137.32
Net Cash Provided By (Used In) Investing Activities		(21,804,454.18)	(24,766,137.32)
Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(8,559,561.26)	37,756,123.76
Cash and Cash Equivalents, January 1		67,951,474.42	30,195,350.66
Cash and Cash Equivalents, December 31		59,391,913.16	67,951,474.42

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION				
STATEMENT OF COMPARISON OF BUDGET AND ACTUAL AMOUNT				
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024				
(In Philippine Pesos)				
Particulars	ALL FUNDS			
	Budgeted Amount		Actual Amounts on Comparable Basis	Difference Final Budget and Actual
	Original	Final		
RECEIPTS				
Services and Business Income	-	-	13,167,771.09	(13,167,771.09)
Other Non-Operating Income	-	-	1,155,259.98	(1,155,259.98)
TOTAL RECEIPTS	-	-	14,323,031.07	(14,323,031.07)
PAYMENTS				
Personnel Services	265,545,000.00	288,255,986.70	253,472,341.54	34,783,645.16
Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses	656,896,632.93	641,412,131.23	261,075,692.77	380,336,438.46
Capital Outlay	4,500,000.00	14,160,000.00	7,695,966.34	6,464,033.66
TOTAL PAYMENTS	926,941,632.93	943,828,117.93	522,244,000.65	421,584,117.28
NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENT	(926,941,632.93)	(943,828,117.93)	(507,920,969.58)	(435,907,148.35)

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

▶▶▶ OFFICE DIRECTORY

Office of the Chairperson

+632 87719-722 local 103
otc@phcc.gov.ph

Office of the Commissioners

+632 87719-722 local 142
+632 87719-722 local 122
+632 87719-722 local 112
+632 87719-722 local 132
commissioners@phcc.gov.ph

Office of the Executive Director

+632 87719-722 local 152
oed@phcc.gov.ph

Office of the General Counsel

+632 87719-722 local 229
+632 87719-722 local 225
legal@phcc.gov.ph
legis@phcc.gov.ph

Office of the Commission Clerk and Sheriff

+632 87719-722 local 222
occs@phcc.gov.ph

Mergers and Acquisitions Office

+632 87719-722 local 252
mergers@phcc.gov.ph

Competition Enforcement Office

+632 87719-722 local 232
enforcement@phcc.gov.ph

Economics Office

+632 87719-722 local 262
economics@phcc.gov.ph

Communications and Knowledge Management Office

+632 87719-722 local 242
ckmo@phcc.gov.ph

Administrative Office

+632 87719-722 local 202
ao@phcc.gov.ph

Finance, Planning and Management Office

+632 87719-722 local 212
fpmo@phcc.gov.ph



Ensuring businesses compete and consumers benefit



Ensuring businesses compete and consumers benefit

The Philippine Competition Commission is open Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Submission of notifications and complaints are accepted during these hours.

📍 25/F Vertis North Corporate Center 1
North Avenue, Quezon City 1105
Philippines

☎️ (+632) 8771-9PCC (722)

🌐 www.phcc.gov.ph

✉️ queries@phcc.gov.ph

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