

Good News
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
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EMPHASIZING DOLE'S JURISDICTION OVER SEAFARERS' RIGHTS AND WELFARE

"Basta lahat ng mga doing business in the Philippines, including land-based and sea-based, *sakop namin iyan. Mayroon tayong DO diyan,"* BWC-PPDD Chief Nicanor Bon said on an interview with Sam Medenilla, giving emphasis on the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) over seafarers engaged in domestic shipping.

The Department Order (DO) cited by PPDD Chief Bon pertains to DO 129, Series of 2013. This DO provides for the rules and regulations governing the employment and working conditions of seafarers onboard ships engaged in domestic shipping. DO 129-13 was issued during the term of former Secretary Baldoz and took effect on 03 July 2013.

When asked on the number of inspected ships, PPDD Chief noted that from calendar year 2014 up to December 2017, a total of 337 domestic ships were covered for inspection. *"Mataas naman po ang compliance rate nila* base on our records," PPDD Chief Bon said. A noteworthy and reassuring baseline for seafarers to be made aware of especially for those who are engaged in domestic shipping. Statistics generated by the BWC-Management Information System (MIS) team provided the following compliance rate of inspected domestic ships: 87.54% on statutory monetary benefits; 92.28% on minimum wage; 97.33% on social welfare benefits; and 93.74% on maritime occupational safety and health standards.

On the other hand, Filipino seafarers onboard Philippine Registered Ships (PRS) engaged in international voyage shall be governed by DO 130-13. This was likewise issued during the term of former Secretary Baldoz and became effective on 03 July 2013. To date, DOLE has authorized eight (8) Recognized Organizations to conduct inspection and certification of PRS engaged in international voyages, and issue Maritime Labour Certificate on behalf of the Secretary as his competent authority in accordance with the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006.

It is significant to highlight that it is the mandate of DOLE to protect and promote workers and their welfare by maintaining industrial peace and furthering harmonious relationship between workers and employers. As enshrined in Article XIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Article III of the Labor Code, it is the policy of the State, with the aid of the DOLE, to assure the entitlement of all workers to security of tenure, humane conditions of work, and a living wage. Pursuant thereto, no exemption shall be considered in attaining the primary mandate of the State which is to protect all workers alike.

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