

Evaluation of Various Safety Measures Implemented By DPWH RMC1 (Bilateral)-UPMO: COVID19 Management

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Abstract: - Most of the countries around the world suffered from this COVID-19 pandemic which killed [1] approximately 4.9 million people and has 244 million cases and still rising until now. In the Philippines, the government agency needed to comply with the policy mandated by the IATF (Inter-Agency-Task-Force) for the management of this emerging infectious disease. Every government and private sector have a different approach on how to manage their own office or business but still, following the given policy by the IATF which is applicable for them, this study was going to evaluate the safety measures implemented by the DPWH RMC1(Bilateral)-UPMO on the field/outside of the office works, what is the positive and negative effect of the policy and how to improve if needed improvement, also this study tends to help the office itself and other agency in managing this COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Words: — *Safety measures, Management, Evaluation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

When most of the country still recovering but some still suffering. Here in the Philippines, we can say that we're still on the stage of suffering but still hoping to recover quickly as much as possible, private and government sectors both suffer losses. Philippines economic growth, infrastructure growth, and others are on the verge of recovering and trying to adapt to the new normal whereas we need to continue our work even if we know we are prone to be infected because covid-19 can not be seen in the naked eye.

1.1 DPWH Roads Management Cluster 1 (Bilateral) – Unified Project Management Office

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is the state's an engineering and construction arm. As a public service agency, its primordial concern is to find the most effective and efficient ways to serve its clientele - the Filipino people.

Manuscript revised December 04, 2021; accepted December 05, 2021. Date of publication December 06, 2021.

This paper available online at www.ijprse.com

ISSN (Online): 2582-7898; SJIF: 5.494

It is composed of six (6) Bureaus, nine (9) Services, 17 Regional Offices (ROs), over 180 District Engineering Offices (DEOs), and five (5) Unified Project Management Offices (UPMOs). [3] Roads Management Cluster I (Bilateral) – Unified Project Management Office, RMC1(B)-UPMO undertakes the overall implementation, supervision, and monitoring of projects funded through bilateral agreements until its completion, following the approved plans and specifications.[3]

RMC1 Office, thru the initiative of the Department, held a vaccination program for its employees and two of their family members in July 2021. Field and onsite personnel were encouraged to get their vaccine as soon as possible either in Office or in their respective local government, whichever comes first. On October 27, 2021, the office was given recognition of excellence award for its outstanding accomplishment in COVID-19 Management in the workplace by effectively implementing an effective COVID-19 response and by strictly adhering to establish IATF and DPWH COVID-19 health protocols.

1.2 Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines (IATF Policy)

As of September 23, 2021, IATF amended the protocols that shall be observed in areas placed under Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ), Modified Enhance Community Quarantine (MECQ), General Community Quarantine (GCQ), and Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ). Minimum public health standards shall comply with all times in any of the aforesaid levels of quarantine, such as wearing of facemask and the maintenance of social distancing. Relevant to the construction sector, for areas under ECQ and MECQ, “Essential and priority construction projects, whether public or private, under the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) including contractors, subcontractors, and consultants of the Department of Transportation for the construction of Build Build Build flagship infrastructure projects.” And for areas under GCQ and MGCQ, “All construction projects shall be allowed subject to strict compliance with the construction safety guidelines issued by the DPWH.”

1.3 DPWH Department Orders (D.O.)

The issuance of D.O. No. 83 series of 2020, ‘DPWH Guidelines on COVID19 Management’ prescribes all offices in the department nationwide to strictly implement, in addition to existing DPWH policy to minimize, if not to stop the further spread of COVID19 in the workplace. Here discussed in detail the prescribed steps/actions in the workplace health management, COVID suspected case management, COVID confirmed case management, as well the work suspension and information disclosure.

According to the revised omnibus guidelines by IATF which granted authority to DPWH to issue Construction Safety Guidelines for allowed government and private construction projects in different areas with different levels of a quarantine imposed, D.O. No. 30, series of 2021, ‘Revised Construction Safety Guidelines for the Infrastructure Projects During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis, Amending Department Order No. 39, Series of 2021’ was issued.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researchers utilized the descriptive research method. Descriptive research involves collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated or can describe categories of information. Observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect data from the study [5].

The data collection was done in the different project sites currently implemented by RMC1 (B)-UPMO. The researchers

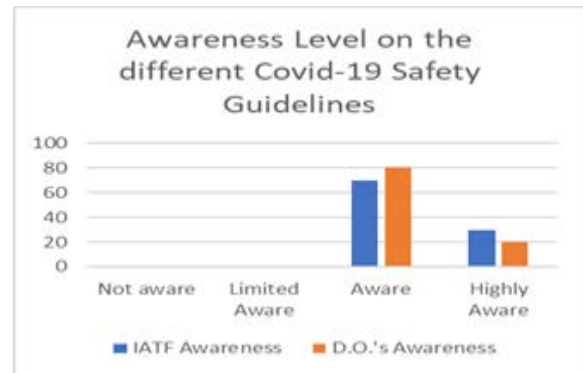
sent a survey questionnaire via online using Google Forms as a platform. The participants answered close-ended questions and, if any, provided their recommendations/suggestions at the end of the survey. The researchers used the D.O. No. 83 s2020 and D.O. No. 30 s2021 as a checklist for the compliance in safety measures to prevent and control COVID-19 transmission in field/project sites.

To summarize the data gathered from the study, the researchers used descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are used to provide and describe the summary of the data collected.[6]

III. RESULTS

The following table shows the result of the survey:

Table.1. Awareness of COVID-19 Safety Guidelines



The table shows that respondents aged 21 – 60 above, employees of RMC1, which consists of engineers, field officers, admin/office staff, unit head, etc. are already aware and some are extremely aware.

Table.2. Workplace Health Management



Table.2 shows that work health management prescribe in the guidelines are all observable and complied in every project site/field office of RMC1.

Table.3. Confirmed Cases Management



Table.3. shows that respondents all agree on the activities that must be done when confirmed cases arise from their office/workplace.

Table.4. Overall COVID-19 Management

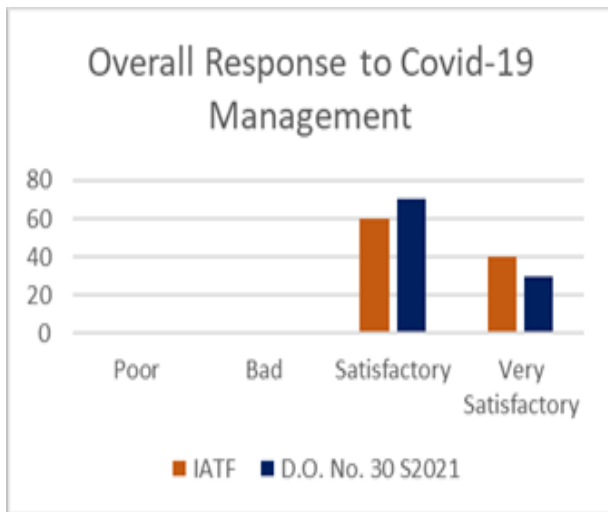


Table.4. shows the respondents' rating on Overall COVID-19 Management which majority are satisfied and some rated very satisfactory.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected every organization in the government and private sectors, including the construction industry. This 'new normal' brought new protocols, new guidelines, and new policies for organizations to strictly comply and implement to mitigate the transmission of the virus. The Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) granted authority to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to issue Construction Safety Guidelines for allowed government and private construction projects in different areas with different levels of a quarantine imposed.

In this study, the researchers evaluated RMC1 (B)-UPMO COVID-19 Management. If the Office is compliant with the DPWH Construction Safety Guidelines in their field/project sites. Measure the level of awareness of its employee to the different safety and health protocols. And employee's assessment on how the Office handled COVID-19 suspected and confirmed cases.

There are a lot of ways that are used to lessen or prevent the spread of the virus in the workplace. And one of the big steps is the vaccination program initiatives to strengthen the protection of everyone. Employees' awareness of the safety health protocols of IATF and DPWH makes them take necessary action on their part. Thus, awareness makes an impact in fighting this virus individually or as an organization. Response of the Office on COVID-19 Confirmed Case is detailed and satisfies the employee's worries about continuing to work in the workplace. Though some are not yet fully adjusted on the 'new normal', employees assessed Office's COVID-19 Management satisfactory to very satisfactory.

Based on the findings, the researchers have concluded that the Office is strictly implementing its Department Orders concerning COVID-19 management in their respective field/project sites. Most of the employees are well-informed and already aware of the existing protocols, guidelines, and policies. Moreover, results also showed that employees are satisfied and felt safer concerning workplace health management.

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