

# PRI recommended for ISO certification

By ATTY. PRINCESS MAY M. BUTRON-NECESITO

The Philippine Railways Institute (PRI) underwent its stage 2 certification audit and was recommended for ISO 9001 certification by auditors from its third-party certifying body, Certification International Philippines, Inc. (CIP), September 13.

After the two-day audit conducted by the CIP auditors on September 12-13, various conformities and opportunities for improvement were identified in the implementation of the PRI's established Quality Management System (QMS).

On the other hand, three (3) minor nonconformities (NCs) in the areas of internal quality audit, documented information, and gathering of customer's satisfaction were determined. These minor NCs, however, did not preclude the auditors from recommending the PRI for certification subject to the submission of an Action Plan as stated in the Audit Report.

During the Closing Meeting, CIP auditors, Mr. Edgardo V. Eleria and Ms. Ermelinda P. Andres, congratulated the PRI for establishing and implementing its QMS. They also highlighted the strong commitment of the whole organization from the top management down to its personnel, which was evident during the audit.

The PRI established its QMS in September 2021 and underwent its stage 1 certification audit on July 28, 2022.



# 19 PRI instructors to attend specialized training in Japan

Undersecretary and Officer-In-Charge of the Philippine Railways Institute (PRI), Anneli R. Lontoc and 19 PRI instructors met with the Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Jaime J. Bautista for a send-off meeting, September 29.

The 19 instructors will participate in the two-month Capacity Development on Railway Operations and Maintenance Practice and Training at the Tokyo Metro Co., Ltd. in Tokyo, Japan. The training organized by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), aims to support the PRI's operations, specifically in the

conduct of its training courses. The said training consists of lectures, site visits, and On-the-Job Training within Tokyo Metro's premises and using its facilities and equipment.

The instructors who will undergo the said training from October 03 to 01 December 2022 have different specializations such as Train Operations, Station Operations, Rolling Stock, Buildings and Facilities, Tracks and Guideways, Electrical and Machinery, and Railways Safety.

"The learning and knowledge that will be gained in the training in Japan are very important since the future railway lines are already in the pipeline and other potential lines across the country," Secretary Bautista reminded the instructors.

"Stick it out, stay with the Philippine Government", reminded by the Secretary as he encouraged the instructors to stay in the Government to ensure the quality of the conduct of training for the current and future railway personnel. "Mas mabuti na magkaroon ng railway system na makakarating hanggang Mindanao, para ma-develop pa ang ating economy," Secretary Bautista added.

The PRI training is pursuant to the Records of Discussion between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the DOTr to establish the PRI. The JICA was tasked to conduct training of trainers to support the PRI's operations.

By MARIA CAROLINA P. ARZADON



# PRI, IFF sign MoU for capacity building

The Institut de Formation Ferroviaire (IFF) officially inked its partnership with the Philippine Railways Institute (PRI) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) held virtually on 15 September 2022, 4PM Manila time and 9AM Morocco time. It was participated by executives and officials coming from both the PRI and the IFF.

The partnership with IFF, a Franco-Moroccan Railway Training Institute whose objective is also to provide continuing education dedicated to railway professionals, emphasizes the importance of globalization in the niche of railway industry to achieve world-class standards.

Moreover, Department of Transportation Undersecretary Anneli R. Lontoc, Officer-in-Charge of PRI gave a keynote message highlighting the collaborative objectives of the partnership: (1) determine and assist skills and competencies for different careers in the railway industry; (2) develop and address the industry demands of railway skills and competencies; and (3) provide technical exchanges through apprenticeship programs and training. Lontoc expressed gratitude to the IFF, and hoped that the partnership would bring PRI to new heights in providing quality service delivery.

The PRI's partner from Africa already generally manifested its commitment to the PRI by providing a free safety webinar prior to the MOU signing. The webinar was attended by more than 200 personnel from various Philippine railway operators and railway lines. With this international collaboration, the PRI is certain that it will reach new heights in its service delivery, providing a more responsive and impactful training to its clients.

The IFF Chairman, Mr. Karim Eddine Chennouf, explained that the MoU would build more mutually benefiting networks with relevant stakeholders in the railway for greater impact in the sector. The PRI was very strategic in the pursuit of the institute's mandate given its location and connection to the rest of the world, which he said is a very good number of its partners and collaborators in the sector.

By JOHN REY M. LEGASPI

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## CHED CONDUCTS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR PRI

**Continuous learning** – That is the call of both the Philippine Railways Institute and the Commission on Higher Education. Having almost the same mandate, a partnership was forged between the two agencies in October 2020 through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that includes capacity building initiatives relative to the development of guidelines on the implementation of the Philippine Qualifications Framework and the Philippine Credit Transfer System.

Assisted by technical resource persons, a Joint PRI-CHED Working Group was established to achieve the leveling of skills and competencies for the different careers and opportunities in the railway sector. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the partnership was also silently working on the credit transfer system that will make certain courses be accredited prior to the PRI training.

The partnership's first workshop was held on September 28 at the UP University Hotel, Diliman, Quezon City. The workshop, which was participated by around 40 PRI staff, aimed to capacitate personnel on the harmonization and integration of PRI training courses with relevant CHED Engineering and Technology Programs.

During the workshop, emphasis was placed on discussing the content and outcomes of the PRI training curricula for possible embedment into the existing engineering curricula and/or elective subjects in higher education.

Israel Radiaganding and Engr. Kimjay Lamar, Chief Transportation Development Officers of the PRI, presented a model syllabus of one of the PRI's specialized competencies and the career pathway for railway students/enthusiasts, respectively. Also present in the activity were Dr. Cherrie Melanie Ancheta-Diego, Director IV, Office of Programs and Standards Development, CHED; Engr. Lyndon Bague, Chair of the Technical Committee for Engineering Technology; and Dr. Cynthia Llanes, Member of the Technical Committee for Engineering Technology. *By John Rey M. Legaspi*

## 199 trainees receive PRI certificates

On 29 September 2022, the Philippine Railways Institute (PRI) conducted its 10th Graduation Ceremony to recognize 199 trainees who successfully completed either the PRI's Refresher Training (RT) Course and Fundamental Training (FT) Course.

The PRI Training Division Chief, Israel A. Radiaganding delivered his welcome message to all participants of the graduation ceremony. "The certificate you will receive is just a beginning in the development of the country's rail sector and you are an important part of it. All the learning you gained from the training will help the Philippine railway transportation in ensuring the safe, reliable, efficient, and comfortable railway transportation" Mr. Radiaganding said to the graduates.

On behalf of Secretary Jaime J. Bautista, DOTr Undersecretary and PR Office-In-Charge Anneli R. Lontoc, delivered the keynote message and congratulated the graduates who attended the ceremony both in person and online. Usec. Lontoc mentioned that there are a lot of opportunities in the railway sector. She also reminded the graduates of the message of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos, Jr., in his last State of the Nation Address, the continuation of the infrastructure program, including various ongoing railway projects.

"With the training which you got, you have already become a work-ready and competitive railway worker aspirant. Let the investment of the government in your training be used to ensure the sustainable operations of our railway system for the country, and for the Filipino people," Usec. Lontoc added.

The graduates were 132 existing Operations and Maintenance (O&M) personnel who graduated from the RT Course and received their respective Certificates of Competency. In the FT Course, three (3) DOTr-MRT3 new O&M personnel received their Certificates of Competency while 64 aspiring railway personnel received their Certificates of Appearance, which can be later on converted into Certificates of Competency upon their employment in the railway sector. The PRI graduation ceremony was also attended by JICA Expert Team's Training Leader, Mr. Takahiro Tanisaka. The PRI will endorse the names of graduates of the FT Course to the existing railway operators and other service providers for potential employment. Existing train drivers who were issued their Certificates of Competency, on the other hand, may now apply for their train driver's IDs with the PRI. *By ISRAEL A. RADIAGANDING*



Light Rail Transit Authority's Roel Martin Dela Cruz receives the Certificate of Competency from PRI officials for emerging as topnotcher in the 41st Refresher Training Course. Witnessing is Mr. Takahiro Tanisaka (center), Training Leader of the JICA Expert Team. *By ISRAEL A. RADIAGANDING*



## PRI's Manzano advocates for better mental health in the railway industry

*By EISEN LOWELL A. GOCO*

To honor the yearly World Health Awareness Day, Ryan Christopher V. Manzano of the Institutional and Human Skills Section of the Philippine Railways Institute gave a talk on overthinking and limits and boundaries of anxiety during a recently concluded webinar, September 23.

**Train of Thought: To What Station?**, organized by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) Railway Engineering Department, focused on raising awareness, specifically on students' mental health as a support to a new academic year and career paths. The said webinar, is part of their efforts to promote academic excellence, healthy exchange of emotions and knowledge, enhancement of social awareness, and camaraderie among Railway Engineering students.

Manzano, a licensed psychometrician and social worker, talked about the Signs of Overthinking, Types of Unproductive Overthinking, Reward of Overthinking, and Ways to Stop Overthinking. The PRI instructor further discussed that there are studies associating overthinking with depression, anxiety, and PTSD. "Significantly, a survey made by the British Rail Safety and Standards Board showed that rail employees experienced 1.5 times higher rates of anxiety compared with the general population," stressed Manzano.

These remarkable statistics show that mental health is a significant issue in the railway industry worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a closer focus on the railway workforce and collective well-being. "We need to explore practical steps all of us can take to support each and everyone," Manzano pointed out.

The PUP alumnus ended by warning that individuals with poor mental health take a much higher degree of sickness, which in turn affects an organization's productivity. Along with him as resource speaker is Rachelle Ann G. Castro, a registered and licensed psychologist and psychometrician, who discussed how to overcome emotional stress and fear. *By ISRAEL A. RADIAGANDING*

## LunChat 3.0 promotes careers in railway

20 September 2022 - The third session of the LunChat series was held tackling the overview of the last two remaining railway competencies - Fare and Ticketing Management (FTM) and Commercial Train Driving (CTD). Participants from across the country attended the short, informative webinar via Facebook Live while having their lunches in the comfort of their respective locations.

This initiative was derived from the cooperation and partnership of the Philippine Railways Institute and the Department of Education in promoting railway-related careers and opportunities to graduating Senior High School (SHS) students. Micro-sessions such as the LunChat series were proposed to tackle and introduce different railway competencies to the students. The first LunChat was held in March 2022, which discussed the Building and Facilities Maintenance and Passenger Management competencies. On the other hand, the LunChat 2.0 in June 2022 tackled the Tracks and Guideways Maintenance, Power Supply and Distribution Maintenance, and the Signaling and Communications Maintenance competencies.

In the most recent LunChat 3.0, SHS students coming from as far as South Cotabato and Leyte gained insights and asked questions regarding the FTM and CTD competencies. The FTM competency was discussed by Ms. Karen Bitao, an experienced ticket seller for more than 11 years in LRT Line 1 and now leads the PRI's training for the said competency. Meanwhile, the CTD competency was tackled by Engr. Darwin Discaya, a registered mechanical engineer and former MRT Line 3 train driver for 12 years.

The LunChat series aims to introduce and attract the youth and interested students to the wonders of the railway sector. Due to the sector's continuous growth, a huge demand is expected in the near future. The PRI then took the initiative through this series to ensure that the demand will be met as students consider joining the railway workforce by aligning their career paths prior to entering their undergraduate and technical-vocational programs. *By JOHN REY M. LEGASPI*

**LUNCHAT SERIES 03:**  
**FARE & TICKETING MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCIAL TRAIN DRIVING**

**SPEAKER**  
KAREN B. BITAO, MGM  
TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT OFFICER II

**SPEAKER**  
ENGR. DARWIN E. DISCAYA  
SENIOR TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

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