

Citizens Complaint Hotline 8888 and its Implementation in the Municipality of Lingayen

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Abstract – This reach paper focuses on the implementation of the Citizens' Complaints Hotline 8888 at LGU Lingayen which is an off-shoot of the Anti-red Tape Act (ARTA) covering the period January to December 2018. It is intended to determine the most common channel used by clients to air their complaints, their common concerns, utmost Arta-related complaints; Identify Offices or Departments at the LGU with the greatest number of complaints and the corresponding nature of the same. Finally, the resolution rate was likewise determined. Percentage and frequency counts were applied to gather data/ From the consolidated data, the proponent concluded that hotline 8888 is the frequent manner in articulating their concerns mostly to air their complaints. The slow processing of transactions; discourtesy and failure to act on requests. The Local Civil Registrar is the most complained department in the LGU followed by Treasurer's Office, the Bids and Awards Committee, the Population Office and the Rural health Unit II. It is recommended that stricter service levels in responding to complaints be imposed; to monitor all types of issues that genuinely require additional information that can be directly escalated; to ensure that clear metrics be put in place to ascertain that all complaints are acted upon; to enforce stricter monitoring of more serious allegations that tend to be ignored. With these recommendations, good governance can be achieved. Furthermore, with dedicated personnel monitoring the status of such issues could greatly improve response rates and issue resolution.

Keywords – Citizens Complaint Hotline, Hotline 8888, Municipality of Lingayen, Pangasinan

INTRODUCTION

Institutionalized as the public feedback mechanism of the Philippine Government anchored on the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 and CSC Resolution No. 1400995 issued in July 2014, the Contact Center ng Bayan (CCB) or Hotline 8888 aims to promote accountability among government agencies by providing citizens with tools to report feedback on government frontline services. Citizens can access the CCB through Short Messaging Service (SMS) 09088816565, hotline 1-6565, email address email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph, and CCB website www.contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph. From the time it was launched in 2012 with six participating agencies namely Civil Service Commission, Information and Communications Technology Office, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, Department of Health, and Department of Trade and Industry, CCB has expanded from contracting a private call center company during its initial run to finally setting-up its main hub in 2015 managed by the CSC (Marasigan, T.; Macapagal, M.; Atuelan, H. 2016).

The facility has also been tapped to initially handle the operation of the Citizen's Complaint Hotline or Hotline 8888 of the Office of the President from

August 1, 2016 to November 3, 2017. The CCB serviced the Hotline 8888 as a feedback channel that the citizens used to report inefficiencies and corruption in government. To further strength the initiatives to improve the quality of public service delivery, Republic Act No. 11032 (An Act Promoting Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services, amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9485 Otherwise Known as the Anti-Red Tape Act Of 2007, and for Other Purposes) or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery (EODB EGSD) Act of 2018 was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in May 24, 2018. With the EODB-EGSD Act of 2018, the Commission issued CSC Resolution No. 1800849 reiterating the CCB's role as the main mechanism in receiving feedback on any official or employee of the Commission who performs or cause the performance of acts in violation of RA No. 11032 (Romero A., 2016)

This paper served to analyze and assess the implementation of the Citizens' Complaint Hotline 8888 in the Municipality of Lingayen covering the period January 1 2018 to December 31, 2018.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper intended to assess the implementation of the Citizens Complaint Hotline 8888 in the Municipality of Lingayen (year 2018) after it was mandated by the Department of Interior and Local government to establish and constitute a Permanent Action Team in September 2017. These will include data on the number of transactions received and acted upon during the said period; the types of concerns lodged (request for assistance, query, commendation, complaint or suggestion; nature of ARTA-related complaints; nature or reports received and referred; nature of complaints; and the resolution rate.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To gather data, the proponent employed the descriptive quantitative method using percentage and frequency counts. Content analysis of all information

recorded and documented was likewise employed. The raw data were consolidated and computed to come up with results like resolution rates, the greatest number of complaints, and other information to realize the objectives of this paper.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Citizens Complaint Hotline 8888 Statistics for 2018 are revealed under Table 1. A total of 102 transactions were received and acted upon by the Action Team. Of said transactions, 39 (38.24%) were received through Hotline 8888; 37 (36.27%) via electronic mail (email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph) ; 32 (31.37% from registered mail; and 30 (29.41%) from walk-in clients

**Table 1
Citizens Complaint Hotline 8888 Statistics for 2018**

| Manner of Receipt of Complaints | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Hotline 8888 | 39 | 38.24% |
| 2. Electronic Mail email@contactcenterngbayan.gov.ph | 37 | 36.27% |
| 3. Registered Mail | 32 | 31.37% |
| 4. Walk-in clients | 30 | 29.41% |
| TOTAL | 102 | 100% |

There are several types of concerns clients bring to the attention of the government through hotline 8888. These concerns exhibited under Table 2. The data discloses that complaints with a frequency of 42 (41.18%) are the most pressing concern brought to hotline 8888 followed by request for assistance with 38

(37.25%); commendations with 11 (10.78%); Queries with 9 (8.82%) and suggestions with 2 (1.96%). Complaints are the clients' primary concern brought top Hotline 8888 and the giving of suggestions is the least of their concerns.

**Table 2
Types of Clients' Concern Brought to Hotline 8888**

| Clients' Concern | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Request for Assistance` | 38 | 37.25% |
| 2. Suggestion | 2 | 1.96% |
| 3. Queries | 9 | 8.82% |
| 4. Commendations | 11 | 19.78% |
| 5. Complaints | 42 | 41.18% |

Going over the complaints and classifying them according to ARTA-related offenses, the top five were

on: (1) slow process of transactions; (2) discourtesy of frontliners; (3) failure to act on request; (4) failure of front liners to attend to clients during office hours; and (5) non-observance of the “No Noon Break” policy.

The other complaints were non-ARTA-related, such as graft and corrupt practices and administrative

discipline and personnel actions. Table 3 shows is the complete list of ARTA-related complaints lodged by the public, with their corresponding frequencies and percentages

**Table 3
Nature of ARTA -Related Offenses**

| ARTA -related Offenses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Slow Processing of Transactions | 15 | 14.71% |
| Discourteous Frontliners | 14 | 13.73% |
| Failure to Act on Request | 12 | 11.76% |
| Failure to Attend to Clients during Office Hours | 11 | 10,78% |
| Non-observance of the No Noon Break | 10 | 9,80% |
| Presence of Fixer | 6 | 5,88% |
| Poor Service Delivery/Poor Facility | 6 | 5,88% |
| Unclear Procedure/s | 5 | 4,90% |
| Unattended Hotline Number | 5 | 4,90% |
| Non observance of queuing system | 2 | 1,96% |
| Non response to letter | 2 | 1,96% |
| Non- Issuance of Official Receipt | 2 | 1,96% |
| No Special Lane for SC, PW, PWD | 2 | 1,96% |
| Imposition of Additional Cost/ Additional Requirements | 2 | 1,96% |
| Extortion | 2 | 1,96% |
| No Citizens Charter | 2 | 1,96% |
| Absence of Easy to Read Identification of Frontliner | 2 | 1,96% |
| No Public Assistance and Complaints Desk | 2 | 1,96% |
| TOTAL | 102 | 100% |

The succeeding table presents the Top 5 Departments of the LGU with the most number of

complaints and the nature of clients’ complaints. This is intended to serve as their source of relevant information

to enable them to institute remedial measures to address these complaints and improve public service delivery.

The findings disclose that the Local Civil registrar tops the list. This could be attributed to the fact that this Office attends to most number of clients

requesting for birth, death and other Certificates. The complaint common to these Offices are slow processes and discourtesy on the part of the personnel

**Table 4
Departments with the Most Number of Complaints and the Nature of Complaints at LGU-Lingayen
(January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018)**

| Rank | Department | Number of Complaints | Percentage | Nature of Complaints |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1 | Local Civil Registrar | 19 | 18.63% | -Failure to Act on Request; -Discourtesy; - Slow Process; - Poor Facilities |
| 2 | Municipal Treasurer's Office | 18 | 17.65% | -Unclear Procedure/s -Slow Process Imposition of Additional Cost - Erroneous computations of fees and charges |
| 3 | Bids and Awards Committee Office | 15 | 14.71% | - Discourtesy - Unattended Telephone Number -Slow Process |
| 4 | Municipal Population Office | 12 | 11.76% | -Unclear Procedure/s -No Citizens Charter -No Noon Break |
| 5 | Rural Health Unit 2 | 10 | 9.80% | -Slow Process -Failure to Attend to Clients during Office Hours - Discourtesy |

LGU Lingayen’s Permanent Action Team ensures that transactions are in compliance with the number of days required under ARTA. By end of December, 95.09% of the total number of simple and complex transactions have been resolved. The remaining

4.91% of complaints were lodged in December 2018, and are expected to be resolved in the early part of 2019.

Table 5 shows the resolution rate of LGU Offices on complaints

**Table 5
Departments/Offices Resolution Rate
(January to December 2018)**

| Departments/Offices | Total Complaints | Total Resolved | Resolution Rate |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Local Civil Registrar | 19 | 19 | 100% |
| 2. Municipal Treasurer’s Office | 18 | 18 | 100% |
| 3. Bids and Awards Committee | 15 | 14 | 93.33% |
| 4. Municipal Population Office | 12 | 11 | 91.67% |
| 5. RHU 2 | 10 | 8 | 80% |
| 6. RHU1 | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| 7. HRMDO | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| 8. MPDC | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| 9. MBO | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| 10. MaSO | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| 11. MAgO | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| 12. MEO | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| 13. MaCO | 3 | 3 | 100% |
| TOTAL | 102 | 87 | 95.09% |

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the data gathered, the proponent established that from January to December 2018, majority of complaints are channeled through Hotline 8888. The airing of complaints is the most common subject of the hotline and are often due to slow processing of transactions, discourteous personnel and failure to act on requests, which are all Arta-related. The most complained office is the Local Civil Registrar primarily due to failure to act on clients’ requests. The LGU, however recorded a high-resolution rate of 95.09% with 97 out of 102 complaints resolved before the year end.

The following recommendations are offered for consideration to further enhance public service delivery

at LGU-Lingayen: Considering how critical response time is for customers, it is imperative that stricter service levels in responding to complainants Based on data, actions can be taken in 24 hours or less in many cases bringing the wait time down to this for all ARTA class types would be ideal. • Monitor the types of issues that genuinely require additional information versus those that can be directly escalated. Many issues were reduced to pure feedback for offices, • Ensure that there are clear and consistent metrics for closing complaints. A number of complaints were deemed closed but were left unexplained. Clear metrics must be put in place to ensure that all complaints are properly acknowledged and acted upon. • Enforce stricter monitoring on more serious allegations that currently tend to get ignored. ARTA concerns like Bribery and Extortion, Fixing Activities, Imposition of Additional Requirements, and Imposition of Additional Cost were often not acted upon. These



serious allegations should be addressed head-on instead of delaying action until the issue expires, in order to ensure good governance across all offices, and having dedicated personnel monitoring the status of such issues could greatly improve response rates and issue resolution.

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