IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO DEVELOP, OWN, AND OPERATE DEDICATED POINT-TO-POINT LIMITED FACILITIES FOR THE PROPOSED SAN LORENZO WIND FARM PROJECT OF TRANS-ASIA RENEWABLE ENERGY CORPORATION (TAREC) TO CONNECT TO THE VISAYAS GRID THROUGH THE TRANSMISSION SYSTEM OF THE NATIONAL GRID CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (NGCP), WITH PRAYER FOR THE ISSUANCE OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASE NO. 2014-032 MC

TRANS-ASIA RENEWABLE ENERGY CORPORATION (TAREC), Applicant.

DECISION

Before the Commission for resolution is the application filed on May 7, 2014 by Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corporation (TAREC) for authority to develop, own, and operate dedicated point-to-point limited facilities for its proposed San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to connect to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), with prayer for the issuance of provisional authority.
In the said application, TAREC alleged, among others, that:

1. It is a renewable energy generation company duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, with principal office at 11F PHINMA Plaza, 39 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City;

2. It holds a portfolio of wind sites across the Philippines, three (3) of which comprise the Guimaras Cluster located in the Island Province of Guimaras;

3. It is duly registered with the Department of Energy (DOE) as a renewable energy (RE) developer of wind energy resources located in the Island Province of Guimaras in the Visayas. In particular, it was granted by the DOE a Wind Energy Service Contract (WESC) No. 2009-10-009 to develop the wind energy resource in its contract area in San Lorenzo, Guimaras. A copy of its Certificate of Registration with the DOE and its WESC are attached to the application to form integral parts thereof;

4. In accordance with its WESC and Confirmation of Commerciality No. WCC-2013-04-002 issued by the DOE on May 16, 2013, it will develop, operate, and maintain a 54 MW Wind Farm Project located in San Lorenzo, Guimaras. A copy of the said Confirmation of Commerciality is, likewise, attached to the application to form an integral part thereof;

5. The San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project will cover four (4) barangays of the Municipality of San Lorenzo, Guimaras. It is comprised of 27 wind turbine generators at 2 MW each and is expected to start commissioning by the third quarter of 2014;

6. To dispatch the power to be generated by the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, it proposes to be connected to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of the NGCP, which is the most feasible means to dispatch power and put into beneficial use the generated capacity of the said San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project;
7. The San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project will be using an interim connection to the Visayas Grid, specifically, to the interconnection point at Zaldivar Switchyard located at Buenavista, Guimaras through a dedicated point-to-point 27-km long 69 kV overhead transmission line, 3-km long of submarine cable (energized at 69 kV but designed for 138 kV) to be connected via cut-in initially at the Sta. Barbara – Ingore 69 kV Line with related facilities and to be constructed and owned by TAREC. Ultimately, the Wind Farm Project shall be permanently connected to the Panay Energy Development Corporation (PEDC) 138 kV Substation in Ingore as soon as the said Substation is reclassified as a Transmission Asset;

8. In deciding the most feasible and economical means of dispatching energy from the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, it considered the following options:

a. Connect to the 13.2 kV Guimaras Electric Cooperative, Incorporated (GUIMELCO) distribution system. This option suffers the following disadvantages: (i) there is a limit to what the GUIMELCO distribution system capacity can handle; and (ii) GUIMELCO’s maximum demand at the time the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project starts operating by 2014 is projected at 4.7 MW to 5.1 MW, which is less than the wind farm’s output, hence, the excess has to be exported to the Visayas Grid; or

b. Connect to the proposed 69 kV overhead transmission line to Sta. Barbara – Ingore. With this option, the capacity of the line is enough to handle the capacity of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, with excess to further carry the capacity of future TAREC wind sites located in Sibunag and Nueva Valencia;
9. Meanwhile, the NGCP conducted a System Impact Study (SIS) to determine the feasibility of connecting the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid through the interim 69 kV connection, and permanently, through the PEDC 138 kV Substation. The said SIS concluded that it is technically feasible to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid and may be fully dispatched without constraints. Using both the interim and permanent connections, the system still remains in stable condition even during extended faults and loss of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project. A copy of the aforementioned SIS is attached to the application to form an integral part thereof;

10. Further, the SIS indicated the following favorable results: (i) there would be no violations of the thermal loading criteria during normal, peak and off-peak load conditions; and (ii) following a severe disturbance simulation, the system is able to withstand the consequences without loss in synchronism and is able to return to steady-state;

11. The foregoing proposed interconnection projects, however, require the prior authorization of the Commission pursuant to Section 9(f) of Republic Act No. 9136 otherwise known as Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 or the EPIRA, which provides that:

"(f) xxx. A generation company may develop and own or operate dedicated point-to-point limited transmission facilities that are consistent with the TDP: Provided, That such facilities are required only for the purpose of connecting to the transmission system, and are used solely by the generating facility, subject to prior authorization by the ERC: Provided, further, That in the event that such assets are required for competitive purposes, ownership of the same shall be transferred to the TRANSCO at a fair market price: Provided, finally, That in the case of disagreement on the fair market price, the ERC shall determine the fair market value of the asset.";
12. In view of the foregoing, the Commission’s authorization to develop and own or operate the dedicated point-to-point limited facilities to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid is being sought;

13. Furthermore, it shall be fully responsible for the construction, installation, permitting, siting, testing, and financing of its wind farm and interconnection projects. It shall, at its own cost and expense, operate and maintain the wind farms and interconnection projects in accordance with Philippine Grid Code (PGC), other applicable laws or regulations and their interconnection agreements;

14. To fully support the instant application for approval of the construction, ownership, and operation of the proposed point-to-point facilities, the following documents are submitted for the Commission’s consideration:

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<th>Annex</th>
<th>Document</th>
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<td>Description of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project</td>
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<td>TAREC’s Proof of Technical Capability to Operate Limited Transmission Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;M&quot;</td>
<td>Personnel Responsible for the Design, Installation, Maintenance, and Repair of Equipment for the Proposed System</td>
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<td>Audited Financial Statement (AFS) for 2012</td>
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<td>Amended Articles of Incorporation</td>
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<td>&quot;P&quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Q&quot;</td>
<td>General Information Sheet (GIS) for 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;R&quot;</td>
<td>Secretary’s Certificate authorizing the development, construction and operation of, and ownership of the 54 MW San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project</td>
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Secretary's Certificate covering Board Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the Commission for authority to develop, own, and operate the proposed interconnection facilities, designating a representative to said application, and engaging the services of Diccion Law Firm therefor

**Issuance of Provisional Authority**

15. All the foregoing allegations are repleaded by reference in support of the instant prayer for the issuance of a provisional authority;

16. A provisional authority to develop and own or operate the proposed dedicated point-to-point interconnection facility to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the transmission system of the NGCP is prayed for because it is indispensable for the completion of the construction of said Wind Farm Project, which is targeted for commissioning on the third quarter of 2014;

17. In case of any delay in the issuance of an authority from the Commission to effect said development and ownership or operation of the interconnection facilities, it may lose its chance of getting the Wind Farm Project within the 200 MW installation target to qualify for Feed-in Tariff (FIT) as the requirement to qualify for the FIT is for the project to be one hundred percent (100%) connected to the Grid and that the project can already export power to the said Grid. If this happens, the economic viability of the project will be adversely affected;

18. Further, the timely completion of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, which includes its interconnection facilities, is vital inasmuch as it is considered as a priority project in the Western Visayas, which region is actively promoted to become the country’s front-runner in renewable energy mix by 2020. A copy of the Infrastructure Development Committee (IDC) Resolution No. 5 issued by the Regional Development Council VI to endorse the 54 MW San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project as a priority project is, likewise, attached to the application to form an integral part thereof;
19. Meanwhile, to emphasize the necessity of a provisional approval of the instant application, a judicial affidavit to support the prayer for provisional authority is appended to the application and made an integral part thereof;

20. Rule 14, Section 3 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure provides for the issuance of a provisional authority pending approval of the application, to wit:

"Section 3. Action on the Motion. – Motions for provisional authority or interim relief may be acted upon with or without hearing. The Commission shall act on the motion on the bases of the allegations of the application or petitions and supporting documents and other evidences that applicant or petitioner has submitted and the comments or opposition filed by any interested person, if there be any." [Emphasis ours];

21. The foregoing constitutes sufficient basis for a provisional approval of the instant application, thus pending hearing on the merits, the issuance of a provisional authority is clearly imperative; and

Prayer

22. Thus, it prays, that prior to and/or pending hearing on the merits, a provisional authority be issued to immediately implement the development and ownership or operation of dedicated point-to-point limited facilities to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid through the Transmission System of the NGCP; and that after due notice and hearing, a final authority be issued to permanently authorize the same.

Having found said application sufficient in form and in substance with the required fees having been paid, an Order and a Notice of Public Hearing, both dated June 9, 2014, were issued setting the case for jurisdictional hearing, expository presentation, pre-trial conference, and evidentiary hearing on June 30, 2014.
TAREC was directed to cause the publication of the Notice of Public Hearing, at its own expense, once (1x) in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, at least ten (10) days before the scheduled date of initial hearing.

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), the Commission on Audit (COA) and the Committees on Energy of both Houses of Congress were furnished with copies of the Order and Notice of Public Hearing and were requested to have their respective duly authorized representatives present at the initial hearing.

Likewise, the Offices of the Governor of Guimaras and the Municipal Mayor of San Lorenzo were furnished with copies of the Order and Notice of Public Hearing for the appropriate posting thereof on their respective bulletin boards.

On June 24, 2014, TAREC submitted its “Pre-Trial Brief”.

During the June 30, 2014 initial hearing, only TAREC appeared. No intervenor/oppositor appeared nor was there any intervention/opposition registered.

At the said hearing, TAREC presented its proofs of compliance with the Commission’s posting and publication of notice requirements which were duly marked as Exhibits “V” to “BB”, inclusive.

Thereafter, TAREC made an expository presentation of its application.

At the termination of the expository presentation, the Commission conducted a pre-trial conference.

Subsequently, TAREC presented Mr. Danilo L. Panes, its Vice President, who testified, among others, on: a) the necessity of developing and owning or operating a dedicated point-to-point limited facilities to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of NGCP; b) the urgent necessity to secure provisional authority for the construction, development and ownership or operation of the said dedicated point-to-point limited facilities; c) the technical description and/or characteristics of the interconnection projects of TAREC for the San Lorenzo Wind Farm; and d) the estimated project cost.
In the course of his direct examination, the witness identified various documents which were duly marked as exhibits.

The said witness was, likewise, required to address the clarificatory questions propounded by the Commission.

TAREC was directed to submit various documents to facilitate the evaluation of the instant application.

PEDC and NGCP were also directed to submit their respective comments on the instant application.

On July 10, 2014, Panay Energy Development Corporation (PEDC) filed its “Comment”.

On August 5 and 6, 2014, TAREC filed a “Motion to Submit Further Evidence” and a “Notice of Compliance”, respectively.

On August 12, 2014, Mr. Panes was recalled to the witness stand to prove and clarify that the interconnection scheme refers to the connection assets that will connect the 54 MW San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid at the cable transmission station and switchyard in Barangay Ingore, Iloilo City.

The Commission, likewise, propounded additional clarificatory questions on the said witness.

On August 15, 2014, TAREC filed its “Formal Offer of Evidence”.

On August 20, 2014, TAREC filed an “Urgent Motion for Issuance of Final Authority”.

On October 1, 2014, the Commission issued an Order admitting the formal offer of evidence submitted by TAREC for being relevant and material in the evaluation of this case.
DISCUSSION

TAREC proposes to develop the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project. In this regard, it sought the Commission's authority to develop, own, and operate a dedicated point-to-point limited facilities for the said proposed project to connect to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of NGCP.

The Commission evaluated the instant application as follows:

1. Project Description

The components of the project are as follows:

a. 27 km, 69 kV Transmission Line, STACIR/AW 160mm2, OPGW – 12 fibers, steel and concrete poles, ground wires;

b. New Zaldivar 69 kV Substation (provision for a 138 kV substation);

c. 138 kV Submarine Cable (initially energized at 69 kV, XLPE insulated, 3-core, 400 mm2 size, 23.8 mm dia, 36-core fiber optic cable);

d. Sawang Cable Terminal Station (CTS), Guimaras; and

e. In gore CTS, Iloilo City.
2. Project Cost

The total estimated cost of the interconnection facilities is PhP970,234,606.00, broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost, in PhP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Substation and 69 kV Transmission Line (USD component)</td>
<td>94,600,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Substation and 69 kV Transmission Line (PhP Component)</td>
<td>285,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Submarine Cable (Yen component)</td>
<td>510,441,906.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Submarine Cable (PhP Component)</td>
<td>69,380,909.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System</td>
<td>10,811,791.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>970,234,606.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Project Rationale

The project is intended to cater the direct delivery of the full 54 MW capacity of TAREC Plant to the Grid.

4. Diagram
5. Result of the System Impact Study (SIS) Conducted by NGCP

NGCP conducted a SIS to determine the feasibility of connecting the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid through the interim 69 kV connection, and permanently, through a 138 kV Substation in Ingore. The said SIS concluded that it is technically feasible to connect the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to the Visayas Grid and may be fully dispatched without constraints. Using both the interim and permanent connections, the system still remains in stable condition even during extended faults and loss of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project.

Further, the SIS indicated the following favorable results: a) there would be no violation of the thermal loading criteria during normal, peak and off-peak load conditions; and b) following a severe disturbance simulation, the system is able to withstand the consequences without loss in synchronism and is able to return to steady-state.

6. Evaluation of the Proposed Project

6.1 Need for the Project

The proposed point-to-point interconnection facility is necessary to dispatch the power to be generated by the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, by connecting to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of NGCP, which was considered as the most feasible means to dispatch power and put into beneficial use the generated capacity thereof.

Among the options available to TAREC, connecting to the Visayas Grid through the proposed point-to-point interconnection project is most feasible and economical since the capacity of the proposed 69 kV overhead transmission line to Sta. Barbara-Ingore is enough to handle the capacity of the San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project, with excess to further carry the capacity of future TAREC wind sites located in Sibunag and Nueva Valencia, also in the Province of Guimaras.
Moreover, as testified by Mr. Panes, the connection to the Visayas Grid through the proposed interconnection facility is necessary for the San Lorenzo Wind Farm to be within the 200 MW installation target and qualify for a Feed-in Tariff (FIT). For a renewable energy project to qualify for a FIT, it has to be one hundred percent (100%) connected to the grid and is ready to export power to the said grid. As the installation target for wind energy resource is at 200 MW only, and with currently more than 200 MW wind projects under construction, qualifying for the FIT is on a first come, first serve basis, among wind energy projects that are fully commissioned and one hundred percent (100%) connected to the grid.

6.2 Technical Configuration

The project is composed of a 27 km 69 kV Transmission Line, New Zaldivar 69 kV Substation, 138 kV Submarine Cable, Sawang CTS and Ingore CTS. The Wind Farm Project has a total generation of 54 MW rated capacity.

Further, the single line diagram submitted by TAREC shows that it will solely use the proposed project. No other user is connected. This is in compliance with Rule 5 Section 5a(i) of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the EPIRA, to wit:

"x x x. Such dedicated point-to-point limited transmission facilities are required only for the purpose of connecting to the Grid which will be used solely by the Generation Facility, and are not used to serve End-users or Suppliers directly."

However, there is a plan for Guimaras Electric Cooperative, Incorporated (GUIMELCO) to transfer its existing connection to the grid (at Ingore) to the proposed Zaldivar Substation of TAREC. Once this occurs, any portion that is not anymore used solely by TAREC shall be reclassified into Transmission Asset.
6.3 Financial and Technical Capability of TAREC

TAREC is one hundred percent (100%) owned by Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corporation (TA-OIL), a subsidiary of Philippine Investment-Management, Incorporated (PHINMA). PHINMA is a diversified conglomerate with interests in energy, property, education and business process outsourcing sectors. Based on its submitted Audited Financial Statement (AFS), particularly, page 20 thereof, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) approved TAREC’s application for the increase in its authorized capital stock, from PhP100 Million divided into 10 billion shares with par value of PhP0.01 each share to PhP1 Billion divided into 1 billion shares with par value of PhP1.00 each share. This was approved by its Board of Directors and stockholders on September 13, 2010. The increase in TAREC’s authorized capital stock resulted in the increase in subscribed capital stock, from PhP25 Million with 2.5 billion shares to PhP250 Million with 250 million shares. The deposit for future subscriptions amounting to PhP56.25 Million as of December 31, 2010 was applied against subscriptions receivable in 2011 which resulted in the increase in paid up capital stock, from PhP14 Million to PhP70.25 Million.

In the absence of an assurance that the subject facilities will be operated without any adverse effect to the reliability of the Grid, the Commission deems it necessary that operations and maintenance of the said facilities will be through NGCP. It must be emphasized that NGCP was granted the exclusive franchise to operate and maintain the transmission system, pursuant to Section 9(c) of the EPIRA, to wit:

“c) Ensure and maintain the reliability, adequacy, security, stability and integrity of the nationwide electrical grid xxx.”

Section 8 of the same law also provides that: “no person, company or entity other than the National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) (now NGCP) shall own any transmission facilities.” The only exception is when it recognizes that a generation company may construct, own and operate a dedicated point-to-point
limited transmission facilities. This exemption, however, is bound by numerous strict limitations.

The aforementioned discussion is in accordance with the Commission's Decision in ERC Case No. 2010-009 RC\(^1\) wherein the dedicated point-to-point limited transmission facility of GNPower Mariveles Coal Plant Ltd. Co (GMCP) was financed by it but the operations and maintenance of which was assigned to NGCP.

Moreover, this is consistent with the Open Access Transmission Service (OATS) Rules, particularly, Section B17.2 thereof, which reads:

"Financing Options Available to the End-user. While the End-user shall be financially responsible for all costs associated with a Connection to the Grid, the following financing options may be available to him:

(a) Financing provided by the Transmission Provider;

(b) Financing provided by the Qualified Distribution Utility; or

(c) Financing provided by the End-user."

Finally, Section 9(f) of the EPIRA provides that ownership of such assets may be transferred to NGCP, to wit:

"x x x. A generation company may develop and own or operate dedicated point-to-point limited transmission facilities that are consistent with the TDP: Provided, That such facilities are required only for the purpose of

\(^{1}\) In the Matter of the Application for Approval of the Implementation of the Construction of the Connection Assets Associated with the 2x300MW Coal Fired Power Plant of GNPower Mariveles coal Plant Limited Company (GNPOWER), with Prayer for Provisional Authority, NGCP and GNPOWER – Applicants
6.4 Project Cost

The capital investment for the proposed project is PhP970,234,606.00.

The contract for the supply of materials for the proposed projects will be assigned to qualified suppliers and contractors following a competitive bidding and selection process. The funding will be sourced through TAREC’s equity and loan.

A perusal of the evidence presented herein showed that the approval of TAREC’s application for authority to develop, own, and operate dedicated point-to-point limited facilities for its proposed San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to connect to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of NGCP is in accordance with the provisions of Section 9(f) of the EPIRA, and the pertinent provisions of PGC and OATS Rules as well as other issuances of the Commission and will redound to the benefit of the power customers in terms of continuous, quality, reliable and efficient power supply.

WHEREFORE, the foregoing premises considered, the application filed by Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corporation (TAREC) for authority to develop, own, and operate dedicated point-to-point limited facilities for its proposed San Lorenzo Wind Farm Project to connect to the Visayas Grid through the transmission system of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), is hereby APPROVED WITH MODIFICATION and subject to the following conditions:
TAREC is hereby authorized to DEVELOP and OWN a dedicated point-to-point transmission facilities to connect to the transmission system of NGCP;

The Connection Assets shall be used solely by TAREC and should not be used directly to serve the end-users. In the event that the said facilities or any portion thereof will be used/required for competitive purposes or to connect any other user, ownership of the same shall be transferred to the National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO)/NGCP;

NGCP shall OPERATE the dedicated point-to-point transmission facilities subject to applicable charges; and

The said dedicated point-to-point facilities shall be developed and constructed in accordance with the System Impact Study (SIS) requirements so as not to result in the degradation of NGCP’s transmission system.

Relative thereto, TAREC is hereby directed to pay a permit fee in the amount of Seven Million Two Hundred Seventy-Six Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty-Nine Pesos (PhP7,276,759.00), within ten (10) days from receipt hereof, computed as follows:

\[
\frac{PhP970,234,606.00}{PhP100.00} \times PhP0.75 = PhP7,276,759.00
\]

SO ORDERED.

Pasig City, October 15, 2014.

ZENAIDA G. CRUZ-DUCUT  
Chairperson

ALFREDO J. NON  
Commissioner

GLORIA VICTORIA. YAP-TARUC  
Commissioner

JOSEFINA PATRICIA A. MAGPALE-ASIRIT  
Commissioner
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2. Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corporation (TAREC)  
   11F PHINMA Plaza, 39 Plaza Drive,  
   Rockwell Center, Makati City

3. The Office of the Solicitor General  
   134 Amorosolo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City

4. The Commission on Audit  
   Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City

5. The Senate Committee on Energy  
   GSIS Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

6. The House Committee on Energy  
   Batasan Hills, Quezon City

7. Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)  
   3rd Floor, ECC Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

8. National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP)  
   Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City

9. Office of the Governor  
   Province of Guimaras

10. Office of the Municipal Mayor  
    San Lorenzo, Guimaras