



## CORRUPTION VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

### 1. PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT

Every year NHQ and the different regional offices submit their respective Operations and Plans Budget (OPB). These are consolidated into the agency's OPB during the annual command conference. Based on the Operations and Plans Budget, the Annual Procurement Plan (APP) or the Regional Annual Procurement Plan (RAPP) is prepared by Logistics. The APP or RAPP serves as the basis for the agency's (or regional office's) annual procurement of supplies and equipment.

Logistics requests Finance Management Division (FMD) for a Certificate of Available Funds (CAF) for items to be procured. Upon issuance of CAF by FMD, Logistics notifies the Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) to initiate bidding process for specific items to be purchased.

The BAC invites potential bidders through the Government E-Procurement website or by posting in designated areas in NHQ or regional offices. A failure of bidding occurs if there are no bidders. Results of bidding process are formally announced through a Board Resolution approved by the Fire Chief (or Regional Director). The agency conducts shopping as an alternative after the third failure of bidding.

Logistics prepares a Purchase Order and sends it to the winning bidder or supplier for the delivery of supplies or equipments.

The Supplies and Account Property Division (SAPD) receives items delivered after inspection of the Technical Inspection Committee (TIC) or the Inspection and Acceptance Committee (IAC). The items are recorded in the inventory and distributed to the end-user/s through the Acknowledgement Receipt of Equipment (ARE) or the Request & Issuance Sheet (RIS).

Logistics submits a Disbursement Voucher to FMD to process payment.

Refer to *Annex F* for the flow chart of Procurement process. This flow chart is based on interviews conducted by the Team of Assessors with process owners in NHQ.

#### **CVA Findings:**

The agency has in place some safeguards to prevent corruption in its procurement process.

- RA9184 – New Procurement Law
- E-Procurement
- Operations Plan and Budget
- Annual Procurement Plan
- Certificate of Availability of Funds
- Advice of Sub-Allotment
- Government e-Procurement System
- Bids & Awards Committee
- Technical Inspection Committee / Inspection and Acceptance Committee
- Acknowledgement Receipt of Equipment
- Request and Issue Sheet
- Comprehensive Delegation of Authority



However, the agency needs to improve and strengthen its procurement process as this is still highly vulnerable to corruption.

The following CVA findings are based on documents reviewed, interviews with BFP officers and staff in NHQ, regional offices, provincial/district/city/municipal fire stations as well as observations by the Team of Assessors.

#### Procurement Plan

1. Lack of consultation with the district, provincial, municipal fire stations regarding needed/required items. NHQ and Regional Offices determine items to include in Annual Procurement Plan (APP)/ Regional Annual Procurement Plan (RAPP).

*Risk: Procurement of selected items/goods for pecuniary interests.*

2. Inadequate control to ensure that budget allocated for procurement of fire fighting equipment is used for that purpose. It is noted that budget for utilities is higher than for procurement of fire fighting gears and equipment.

*Risk: Insufficient Fire Fighting Equipment hampers performance of duties and exposure to health hazards and injuries (service failure).*

3. Request for supplies/equipment pass through several channels - from city/municipal station to district/provincial level to regional level to NHQ. Requests are difficult to track with the present set up.

*Risk: Loss of documents; failure to provide prompt service; inefficiency.*

#### Bidding

1. Publication of Notice of Bid is limited to postings on designated areas in BFP and through the Government Electronic Procurement System (GEPS) website.

*Risk: Favors regular bidders; purchase of inferior products.*

2. RA9184 is not consistently implemented, particularly with regards to minimum number of bidders required for a bidding to proceed. The agency likewise lacks an accreditation process for suppliers.

*Risk: Collusion with favored suppliers.*

3. Although BAC regularly submits a Board Resolution, the agency has inadequate internal monitoring and review of BAC transactions.

*Risk: Collusion with favored suppliers.*

4. Logistic shops, receives items delivered and prepares necessary document.

*Risk: No check and balance, possible manipulation of transactions and documents.*

5. Turn over of BAC documents (such as Board Resolutions) by previous to newly designated BAC Secretariat is not consistently practiced.



*Risk: Loss of public records*

#### Delivery and Inspection

1. Although product testing is done by an external testing center, selection of sample of product to be tested is sometimes done by supplier/dealer instead of by BFP. Suppliers normally pay the testing fees.

*Risk: Delivery of and payment for inferior products*

2. Items are received by SAO but in some areas Logistic Chief receives the delivery.

*Risk: No check and balance on purchase and delivery of products.*

3. Although the authorized ceiling for Regional Directors is P0.5M, the Regional BAC conducts bidding beyond this amount. Processing and release of payment to suppliers is done by NHQ.

*Risk: Delayed delivery of goods and service to the regions. Incomplete or ghost delivery. Collusion with supplier*

4. Based on interviews across all sites, offices/fire stations receive cash in lieu of O7 (office supplies).

*Risk: Malversation, falsification of documents*

#### Distribution and Inventory

1. Lack of technical mechanism to measure or monitor actual fuel consumption (according to size and model of engine used in fire trucks). There is no basis for establishing actual consumption. Instead, Monthly Fuel Consumption Reports reflect only estimated daily consumption which is derived by dividing the monthly fuel allocation over the number of days per month.

*Risk: Misuse of fuel allocation.*

2. Insufficient control on usage of gas coupon. Anybody and any vehicle can exchange the gas coupon in the gasoline stations. Likewise, while there are sites that distribute gas coupons to authorized BFP personnel through the RIS, some sites simply use a logbook for the personnel to acknowledge receipt.

*Risk: Utilization of gas coupons by non-BFP authorized persons/vehicles. Exchange of gas coupons for cash*

3. Inadequate fire fighting gears/equipment and office supplies/equipment in fire stations.

*Risk: Solicitation from external stakeholders.*

4. Incomplete description/specifications of fire fighting gears/ in the ARE of fire stations' property custodians

*Risk: Loss of original fire fighting gears/equipment and replacement with cheaper or inferior quality items.*

5. Inadequate documentation and monitoring of agency's resources.

- Firefighting gears, equipment, and gas allowance are sometimes issued directly to fire stations by external stakeholders such as LGUs and politicians



- Different fire stations use different inventory and distribution forms
- Lack of a readily available data on current inventory and status of firefighting gears and equipment Bureau-wide, per region, district, province, and municipality
- Turn-over of equipment by end-user to the property custodian is not consistently practiced

*Risk: Loss of equipment; Loss of record; Lack of accountability*

6. Insufficient documentation of support (such as firefighting gears/equipment, gas allowance) received by fire stations from LGUs and local politicians.

*Risk: Lack of transparency*

### **Recommendations:**

1. Conduct regular consultation with lowest operating units in order to prioritize items in the APP/RAPP. Before coming up with an APP/RAPP, the officers should meet and discuss their priorities to achieve the agency's/regional office's mission and vision. Create a long-term Procurement Plan based on strategic plan of the Bureau.
2. Budget allocations must be properly scrutinized. Priority must be given to operations (such as firefighting gears and equipment). Budget vs actual purchase should be strictly monitored so the agency can come up with a more realistic and justifiable annual procurement plan.
3. The agency has to establish a mechanism to ensure that the ARE is issued to the end users and not to the head of the division or property custodian. This also applies to firefighting gears and equipment that are shared among the station's firefighters. Those on duty must be held accountable for any loss of BFP property. This will encourage care on the part of the end user, as he is accountable of the property. This will also result to proper and prompt turn over of accountabilities.
8. Use of fleet card is strongly recommended. This will ensure that gas allocation is utilized only by authorized BFP vehicles and personnel. Monthly Fuel Consumption Report must be reviewed and checked for data manipulation.
9. The NHQ, Regional Offices, Provincial, District, City and Municipal fire stations must come up with an official matrix showing the different distances of places within their jurisdiction so that gas allocation can be properly and more accurately dispensed and monitored.
10. Review and simplify the process whereby the regional offices conducts bidding and processing of documents (like payment vouchers) while payment is made at the NHQ. This practice results in red tape, which leads to collusion and corruption. If the transaction is done in the region, it has to be consummated in the region.
11. All items purchased that have technical specifications must be subjected to inspection. Sampling by suppliers should be discouraged as collusion in this case may arise.
12. The agency may consider setting up its own repair and maintenance shop in every region. In the long run, BFP can save money for the repair of its firetrucks. This is also to avoid connivance between BFP personnel and repair shop owner. Price quotations for repairs are very subjective and usually high.



13. Establish a policies on:
  - Disposal of unserviceable fire trucks and other BFP vehicles or equipment
  - All kinds of support or donation received by BFP from its stakeholders. Make public such support or donation received
14. Strictly implement turnover of equipment and important documents to SAO/property custodian.
15. Simplify the requesting procedure such that requests for supplies and equipment are sent directly to the requesting units' respective Regional Offices.
16. Set up an internal audit unit who will monitor procurement and distribution of supplies and equipment
17. Establish a system to evaluate/assess performance of suppliers.
18. Establish a Contract Register to monitor completed procurement transactions (including shopping). The Register shall include the following information:
  - Date of contract or MOA,
  - Name of supplier
  - Parties involved in negotiation (BAC members, observers, and/or staff)
  - Product description, specifications, volume, cost, delivery dates
  - Total contract value
  - Advantages of selected supplier
  - Other potential suppliers
  - Performance audit (when, by whom, result)

In order to ensure transparency, the above information should be posted in BAC's bulletin board.

19. Develop a Computerized Inventory System including a database of accredited suppliers/dealers.

Refer to *Annex G* for the CVA Risk Assessment Guide for Procurement. The risk factors, likelihood of occurrence, significance of risk, and control activities controls listed were used mainly to guide the Assessors in evaluating the process and do not necessarily indicate the actual situation in the agency.



## 2. RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

Both Recruitment and Promotion processes start upon identification of recruitment or promotion quota or number of vacancies per rank Bureau-wide. Interested applicants submit their folders containing evidences of educational, training, CS eligibility qualifications and other legal documents such as NBI clearance (for recruitment) and IAS clearance (for promotion). Those deemed qualified undergo an interview (for recruitment) and written exam/panel interview (for promotion). The applicants are ranked according to their scores (rating is based on their respective QS and written exam/interview). Principal and alternate applicants are recommended to fill up the quota or slots available based on their ranking. The principal applicants undergo medical and neuropsychological exam. If any of the principal applicants do not pass the exam, the next-ranking alternate takes over the slot. The names of those who pass the said examinations are then submitted to PSB for resolution and endorsed to the Directorate for Administration for appointment. These are finally forwarded to the Civil Service for attestation.

Recruitment and promotion (for FO2 to SFO4) commences at the regional level upon notification by NHQ. The matrix of qualified applicants is endorsed by the Regional Director to NHQ for further evaluation. Approval of all recruitment and promotion is by the Fire Chief.

Refer to *Annex H* for the flow chart of Recruitment and Promotion process. This flow chart is based on interviews conducted by the Team of Assessors with process owners in NHQ.

### CVA Findings:

The agency has in place some safeguards to prevent corruption in its recruitment and promotion process.

- RA 9263 - Professionalization Act of 2004
- Personnel Selection Board
- DBM's Authorized Strength
- Qualification Standards
- Guidelines and Standard Procedures in the Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Fire Officer 1
- Standard Procedure for the Promotion of Uniformed Personnel with the Rank of Fire Officer 2 to Senior Fire Officer 4
- Standard Procedure for the Promotion of Uniformed Personnel for Second Level Positions with the Rank of Inspector to Superintendent
- Guidelines for Promotion/Selection of Uniformed Personnel for Third Level Rank
- Civil Service attestation

The BFP however needs to improve and strengthen its recruitment and promotion processes, as these are still highly vulnerable to corruption risks.

The following findings are based on documents reviewed, interviews with relevant officers, and observations by the Team of Assessors in NHQ, NCR/Region 6/Region 10 Regional Offices, District/Provincial/City/Municipal Fire Stations.

1. Lack of clear guidelines on quota allocation. Basis for quota allocation (recruitment and promotion) is not clear to all, especially among those in the regions.

*Risk: Favoring certain regions/applicants*



2. Very few slots available compared to the number of applicants.

*Risk: Paying officials to obtain a slot*

3. There is no logbook to record folders received. There is a possibility that not all applicants may be included in the matrix or list.

*Risk: Favoring certain applicants*

4. Insufficient information dissemination regarding vacancies. Publication of vacancies (for recruitment) is normally through postings in BFP offices or fire stations. There was no record of the Memorandum formally announcing commencement of recruitment and promotions at NCR, Region 6 and Region 10 offices and district/provincial/city/municipal fire stations. The only record available was the follow-up Memorandum stating that the regional offices need only to submit the matrix of applicants (for promotion).

It was observed that most fire stations do not have adequate communication equipment. Most of them rely on personal mobile phones and two-way radios and even personal collection of radio messages from the provincial fire station or nearest fire stations.

Even if communications reach those at the sub-stations or municipal fire stations, the messages are delayed such that the personnel do not have sufficient time to comply with the requirements. There are times when they only have 2 days to prepare and submit their folders.

*Risk: Unequal opportunity to qualified applicants*

5. Application entails a lot of cost on the part of applicants. Regional recruitment applicants are required to undergo a medical exam in the region and again at NHQ prior to acceptance to the Bureau. Promotion applicants, on the other hand, are required to submit 5-7 folders with all supporting documents authenticated. The applicants are also required to personally submit their folders to their respective regional offices. As since these entail a lot of expense on the part of the applicants, those qualified may prefer not to apply for promotion.

*Risk: Unequal opportunity to qualified applicants*

6. QS requirements and background investigation are not strictly observed. Those who don't possess appropriate CS eligibility are still considered for promotion; waivers (for height and age) are granted upon submission of certification from the national Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) or the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA). Not much background investigation is conducted particularly to applicants for promotion. Evaluation of application relies mostly on authenticated documents.

*Risk: Circumvention of the law. There is high likelihood that those not qualified (without required CS/education eligibility or with pending cases) are hired or promoted.*

7. Insufficient control to prevent influence from both external and internal stakeholders. It is a common practice across all sites visited to attach the 'reseta' in the applicant's folder. Another practice is writing the names of the internal sponsor (BFP officer) on the worksheet used during the interview by PSB/RPSB. Further, the system allows the Regional Director or Fire Chief to arbitrarily change the recommendations of RPSB/PSB.



*Risk: Favoring certain applicants to the detriment of those more qualified. It may also lead to perpetuation of 'utang na loob' or loyalty to the endorsing official instead of to the Bureau. Undue pressure is given to the PSB/RPSB, Regional Director or Fire Chief to ensure that those with 'resetas' are taken in.*

8. Lack of specific guidelines in the conduct of written exam and interview. PSB members themselves create the exam questions, administer, and evaluate the answers. Nobody checks the validity and reliability of test questions and answers.

There are no clear and specific indicators that would guide the PSB members in rating the applicants' capability according to the 3 dimensions measured through the oral interview (personality, potential, psychosocial). PSB members rely on own discretion or "diskarte" to ask questions according to their own interpretation of the definition given on the 3 dimensions.

There is inadequate documentation of PSB/RPSB deliberation proceedings.

No formal feedback is given to applicants as to the reasons for not being promoted.

*Risk: Lack of transparency, which might lead to biased selection of applicants or manipulation of the conduct of the exam and/or interview to favor certain applicants.*

9. RA 9263 is not strictly observed. Although the law empowers the Regional Directors to approve recruitment and promotion of NORs in their respective areas of responsibility, the present system requires further evaluation of applicants by NHQ and approval of the Fire Chief.

*Risk: Delay in processing of application and demoralization of staff*

10. Lack of clear and specific guidelines on recruitment of lateral entries.

*Risk: Some steps in the recruitment process such as written exam, interview, and medical or agility tests may be skipped to favor certain applicants.*

#### **Recommendations:**

1. To provide a more objective means of evaluating applicants through the written exam and interview, the agency has to establish Rules and Procedures on the Conduct of Written Exam and/or Interview that would include:
  - a) Clear and specific indicators to measure knowledge, skills, and attitude required of a particular rank. These indicators shall guide the PSB members in setting their written exam and interview questions. In this regard, the agency must first create a job description for all positions/rank.
  - b) Code of conduct for PSB/RPSB members that includes a disclosure of conflict of interest and commitment to refrain from unduly influencing other members of the Board. Members must abstain from interviewing (and rating) applicants who are their direct subordinates or relatives.
  - c) To ensure check and balance, it is recommended that RPSB/PSB Members review all answer sheets of applicants and concur on the final rating.
  - d) Post matrix before and after exam/interview to ensure transparency.



2. All PSB/RPSB deliberations must be documented and kept by the agency to ensure transparency and accountability.
3. Institutionalize the practice of preparing a Board Resolution with corresponding justification for any changes in the Matrix of Applicants (recruitment and promotion).
4. Establish a computerized Personnel Information System (with adequate security measures) that captures updated personal data, training, personnel movement and actions. Through this system, HR Division can efficiently monitor those who are eligible for promotion and take appropriate actions.
5. Consider other means of informing the public regarding vacancies. One cost-effective way is through local radio especially in cities and municipalities.
6. Administer written exams for FO1 applicants. This will ascertain qualification of applicants like capacity to make narrative reports.
7. Create a feedback mechanism to inform applicants the reasons for not being promoted as well as their areas for improvement, based on the written exam and interview.
8. Establish a policy on resetas or internal endorsements. Resetas must be disregarded at the start and discontinue the practice of attaching these to the folders of applicants to prevent unduly influencing PSB/RPSB members.
9. Strict Implementation of RA 9263 which stipulates that the Regional Directors shall approve recruitment and promotion of personnel (FO1 to SFO4) in their respective areas of responsibility. In this regard, accountability of Regional Directors and RPSB in the recruitment and promotion process must be clearly established.

This will benefit both the Bureau and applicants:

- Regional applicants don't have to go to Manila which means less expense on their part
  - NHQ personnel can devote their time in other personnel related activities.
  - Regional Directors are in the best position to decide who among the applicants are best suited for the region
10. Strictly enforce CSC requirement on renewal of temporary appointments of those without the necessary 3<sup>rd</sup> level CS eligibility. Temporary appointments should be revocable anytime in order to accommodate newly qualified employees and boost morale. Strongly encourage those occupying second level ranks to take third level CS eligibility to increase the number of qualified applicants for third level ranks.
  11. Priority should be given to recruitment applicants who pass the QS requirements. Those who don't pass the height and age requirements may only be considered if quota is not filled up. More importantly, waivers must be strictly screened as these can be abused and be a source of corruption.
  12. Establish clear guidelines and procedures for the recruitment of lateral entries to ensure that all BFP personnel satisfy all requirements for recruitment.
  13. Establish appropriate sanctions for all BFP officers found violating the agency's recruitment and promotion rules and procedures.



Refer to *Annex I* for the CVA Risk Assessment Guide for Promotion and Recruitment. The risk factors, likelihood of occurrence, significance of risk, and control activities controls listed were used mainly to guide the Assessors in evaluating the process and do not necessarily indicate the actual situation in the agency.



### 3. ISSUANCE OF FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION CERTIFICATE (FSIC)

There are two types of FSIC issued: 1) FSIC for Occupancy Permit and 2) FSIC for Business Permit.

The process for issuance of FSIC for Occupancy Permit starts upon receipt of endorsement from LGU-Local Building Official for fire clearance in relation to an application for building permit. The Fire Safety Enforcement Division (FSED) evaluates conformity of the building plan with the Fire Code and issues the Fire Safety Correction Sheet (FSCS) and Order of Payment. Upon receipt of payment, FSED releases the building plan together with the FSCS.

Upon completion of construction, the building owner applies for Occupancy Permit at the LGU. The Occupancy Permit is released by the LGU only after inspection and issuance of a Fire Safety Inspection Certificate (FSIC) from BFP.

The process for issuance of FSIC for Business Permit starts upon receipt of endorsement from the LGU-Business Permit and Licensing Office for fire clearance in relation to an application for business permit. The Business Permit is issued by the LGU only after the Fire Safety Inspection Certificate (FSIC) for Business Permit is released by BFP.

Refer to *Annex J* for the flow chart of FSIC issuance process. This flow chart is based on interviews conducted by the Team of Assessors with process owners in NHQ.

#### **CVA Findings:**

The agency has in place some safeguards to prevent corruption in its issuance of FSIC process.

- Fire Safety Enforcement Division
- Fire Safety Correction Sheet
- Mission Order
- After Mission Report

The BFP however needs to improve and strengthen its processes pertaining to the issuance of FSIC, as this is still highly vulnerable to corruption risks.

The following CVA findings are based on documents reviewed, interview with BFP officers and staff, FSIC applicants, and LGU personnel as well as observations by the Team of Assessors.

#### Receiving, evaluating, recording, and release of endorsements/building plans:

- In most sites visited, the FSED-Plan Checker receives the endorsement/building plan from the applicant, evaluates the building plan, records, and releases the building plan together with the corresponding Fire Safety Correction Sheet.

*Risk: Having direct contact with applicants, plan checkers are given the opportunity to fix or facilitate release of building plan.*

- In some sites visited, the transacting area is disorganized and application process is unsystematic. Although some offices display the process flow chart, the applicant is at a loss as to where to start and who to approach. There is lack of waiting area for applicants. The office is crowded and difficult to distinguish the FSED personnel from applicants. This gives applicants the impression that acquisition of FSICs is long and tedious. Fire safety inspectors are also seen talking with building/occupancy and business permit applicants.



*Risk: Fixing to expedite processing of FSICs.*

- Inadequate means to monitor and enforce the 3-day processing time. In most sites visited, endorsements are recorded (in a logbook) only upon release but not upon receipt.

*Risk: Neglect of duty and malfeasance, inability of FSED officials to determine whether the required service or evaluation was acted upon appropriately and expeditiously.*

- The FSCS form does not differentiate requirements for a one-storey or multi-storey building, residential or commercial building. Guidelines for evaluation are inadequate.

*Risk: Abuse of discretion*

#### Preparation and issuance of mission order

- Reshuffling of fire safety inspectors is not regularly done.

*Risk: Familiarity between clients and inspectors may lead to collusion between the two parties, neglect of duty and extortion (on the part of inspectors) or bribery (on the part of applicants)*

- There are instances when the plan checker (who evaluated the building plan) is assigned as the fire safety inspector (for the issuance of FSIC).

*Risk: Lack of check and balance. Applicants may not be fully informed of some non-compliance in the building plan but fire inspectors will strictly enforce them to hold the release of FSIC.*

- There is no standard practice in the preparation of mission orders especially for FSIC for business permit applications. Either 1) team leaders prepare the mission order to be approved by the FSED chief and later by city/ municipal fire marshal; or 2) station commanders endorse the mission order to city/ municipal fire marshal; or 3. FSED Chief sends the mission order to the station commander.

Not all sites adhere to a standard format. Some Mission Orders are not pre-numbered and can easily be reproduced.

*Risk: Occurrence of double/multiple inspections; harassment; abuse of authority; unauthorized inspection*

- Request to inspect outside an inspector's area of responsibility is granted upon concurrence of inspector and team leader of the desired area.

*Risk: Potential conflict of interest*

- Not all sites monitor the deployment or itinerary of fire inspectors. Time-in/out of office for the purpose of conducting inspection is not observed in some sites. It is worth noting though that some stations in Region 10 log deployment/itinerary of FSIs specifying the time of departure, activity, exact place visited, and time of return.

*Risk: use of official time for personal gain*



### Fire Safety Inspection

- Inspections are either done individually or by a team of 2-3 inspectors. Mainly due to insufficient manpower, the former is usually observed. Inspectors do not refer to FSCS/Building Plan in conducting inspection (occupancy).

*Risk: Abuse of discretion, possible collusion between applicant and fire safety inspector*

- No travel allowance is given to inspectors. They are forced to shoulder transportation cost in order to perform their duties. There are sites where applicants fetch the inspectors.

*Risk: Solicitation, collusion between applicant and fire safety inspector*

- Most LGUs provide allowance to BFP personnel assigned in their respective localities.

*Risk: Loyalty of BFP personnel to LGU official*

- Unclear delineation of duties and responsibilities among Inspectors, Team Leaders, and FSED Chief.

*Risk: Lack of accountability, neglect of duty*

- Inadequate steps to verify accuracy of After Mission Report. Random checks by team leaders or FSED Chief is seldom made.

*Risk: Possible collusion with applicant*

- Lack of specific guidelines for inspection. Outcome of inspection depends largely on the inspector. According to inspectors interviewed, separate inspections of the same building by two inspectors yield different results.

*Risk: Inconsistent application of penalty, abuse of discretion*

- Although fire safety inspection requires technical expertise, not all inspectors are licensed engineers, nor have formal training on Fire Arson Investigation and Inspection Course (FAIIC). Feedback from previous FAIIC trainees, however, is that the course is more focused on arson investigation than on inspection.

*Risk: Inability to adequately perform required job, collusion with applicants*

- Lack of a standard After Mission Report (AMR) Form. Some forms require the Applicant to acknowledge inspection results while others don't.

*Risk: Discrepancies in report submitted to applicant and District Fire Marshal/FSED Chief/Team Leader, Extortion to reflect compliance*

- Lack of a database of FSICs issued

*Risk: Difficulty in monitoring released FSICs; Likelihood of issuing FSICs with the same control number to two or more building owners or business establishments*



- Lack of a standard procedure for monitoring the fire code fees collected by LGU. While some sites record the amount paid and photocopy the Official Receipt, some sites merely record the amount paid in the logbook.

*Risk: Discrepancy between agency's record on Fire Code fees collected vs LGU's remittance to the Bureau of Treasury*

- Insufficient monitoring mechanism to identify establishments operating without FSIC or with FSIC issued through the One Stop Shop.

*Risk: Loss of lives and property*

### **Recommendations:**

1. The receipt of building plans should be delegated to the FSED record section. This will enable the plan checker to focus on evaluating building plans rather than directly dealing with applicants. A window transaction system similar to LTO is recommended. Another option is to disallow walk-in applications; instead, all documents shall come from the LGU and properly received/recorded by the fire station.
2. FSED should have an organized record and data repository of all its transactions to establish accountability. The FSED section should keep a logbook of building plans received indicating the name of applicant, address, type of occupancy, control number, OR number, amount of fire code fee paid, date received and released, plan checker and fire safety inspector assigned, and more importantly the name and signature of receiving officer.
3. Close coordination with the LGU for a monthly or quarterly reconciliation of remittances. This will ensure that all FSIC payment is remitted to BFP's account.
4. Moreover, processing time must be strictly monitored and appropriate sanctions established for exceeding the prescribed period.
5. There must be a program for continuous capability building of FSED personnel specifically on fire safety inspection and building plan evaluation. Close coordination with FNTI is necessary to review and improve the FAIC program. To increase the number of fire safety inspectors, appoint BFP personnel with Engineering background as fire safety inspectors. A long-term alternative is to adapt Singapore's practice of maintaining a pool of accredited fire safety engineers to conduct building plan evaluation and fire safety inspections.
6. Establish guidelines on assignments/dispatch of fire safety inspectors. Disallow requests for inspecting buildings that are not in one's area of responsibility. Likewise, disclosure of conflicts of interest must be practiced. Rotation of areas of jurisdiction of Inspectors is recommended to avoid familiarity and closeness with building owners.
7. Standardize the practice of having the AMR acknowledged by and copy furnished to applicant.
8. Establish a standard checklist for building plan evaluation (for one-storey, multi-storey, residential, commercial buildings) and inspection to limit discretion of fire safety inspectors.
9. FSICs issued through the One-stop Shop should be closely monitored and inspection done immediately thereafter. In case fire occurs before inspection, BFP will definitely be placed in a defensive position. A standard time table must be set for inspection.



10. The agency may consider coming up with an FSIC emblem or seal. This shall be stamped (including the FSIC number) on the business and occupancy permits to easily identify establishments with the required FSIC and those without.
11. Establish a computerized system or e-database of FSED transactions to:
  - Ensure timely release of FSCS/FSIC.
  - Prevent issuance of fake FSICs and MOs
  - Monitor delays in issuance of FSICs
  - Generate reports for decision making such Actual Fire Code Fees Collected, Number of Establishments for Inspection vs Number of Manpower, Establishments for Inspection vs Establishments Inspected
  - Monitor recalcitrant violators
  - Identify number of violators and corresponding violations, common violations per type of establishment per area
  - Determine number establishments with occupancy and/or business permits vs number of FSICs issued

FSED chiefs can access records and monitor the performance of her/his inspectors, especially in meeting the prescribed 3-day processing. The system should be protected by passwords and accessed only by pertinent personnel to be identified by FSED.

12. Establish a mechanism to receive and respond to feedback and complaints from FSIC applicants.
13. Review the possibility of providing transportation allowance to fire safety inspectors.
14. Create and strictly enforce stiff sanctions for fire safety inspectors found guilty of corruption.

Refer to *Annex K* for the CVA Risk Assessment Guide for Issuance of FSIC. The risk factors, likelihood of occurrence, significance of risk, and control activities listed were used mainly to guide the Assessors in evaluating the process and do not necessarily indicate the actual situation in the agency.



## V. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create an Integrity Development Steering Committee who will lead in the preparation, implementation, review and improvement of the agency's corruption prevention initiatives. Specifically, the committee shall be responsible for:
  - Developing a written policy on corruption prevention and detection that defines specific corrupt practices and sets equitable sanctions
  - Establishing, implementing, and evaluating BFP's Corruption Prevention Plan
  - Enforcing sanctions
  - Making public sanctions against BFP personnel (unnamed)
  - Actively disseminating the Policy on Corruption Prevention and Detection as well as other related policies
  - Ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to address the gaps identified in the Integrity Development Review

The IDSC shall be composed of the Fire Chief (chair), Deputy Fire Chief (Operations) and Deputy Fire Chief (Admin) as vice-Chairs, Chief of Directorial Staff and Directorates as members.

The following Sub-Committees may be formed headed by the Directorates and the Regional Directors as members:

- Policy Making
  - Enforcement and Monitoring
  - Investigation
  - Systems and Procedures
  - Sanctions/Rewards and Incentives
  - Information Dissemination
2. Revisit FIRES and provide specific guidelines on ethical conduct. Provide clear examples of what are acceptable practices and what are not. Realign the IACT-SMEP and other values enhancement programs with FIRES and BFP's core values. Conduct periodic values enhancement programs to all BFP personnel.
  3. Establish sanctions for corrupt practices as well as incentives for good performance. Link Performance Evaluation System with incentives scheme.
  4. Review the recruitment and promotion scheme and its adherence to fairness, equal opportunity, fitness and merit. Since performance rating is a significant factor in the agency's promotion process, there is a need to revisit implementation of Performance Evaluation System to provide an objective basis of personnel's actual performance and potentials.
  5. Invest in computerization of Inventory, Personnel Information, Accounting, and FSIC Monitoring systems.
  6. Establish a Code of Conduct for BAC/RBAC and PSB/RPSB.
  7. Prioritize budget allocation for purchase of firefighting gears/equipment as well as maintenance and upgrading of facilities and equipment of fire stations.
  8. Improve communication facilities of all BFP offices/fire stations.
  9. Enhance transparency on donations and support from the LGUs and other stakeholders.



10. Benchmark with fire Bureaus of other countries such as Singapore and the U.S. Identify good practices related to procurement, recruitment and promotion, and issuance of fire safety certificates that may be adapted by BFP particularly in prevention and detection of corruption.
11. BFP should pursue the revision of the Fire Code through a legislative agenda. The agency has to be authorized to collect the fire code fees, execute penalties, and provided with punitive as well as administrative powers.