

## **ARTA Watch Report**

### **I. Introduction**

The Civil Service Commission, as one of the lead implementers of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, has consistently taken bold steps in making sure that the intent or objectives of the law gets across the bureaucracy and the public. The law provided the CSC the impetus to adopt concrete initiatives and measures to ensure and monitor government offices' compliance with the Act.

Among these measures is the conduct of the ARTA Report Card Survey (RCS) which has been successfully implemented throughout the various regions. The RCS aims to gather feedback on how agencies, including local government units, follow provisions of their Citizen's Charters<sup>1</sup>. RCS rates their performance and client satisfaction in relation to frontline service delivery. Results of the survey may be used by the agencies in improving or modifying their frontline services and Citizen's Charters.

Government agencies that obtain an excellent public performance based on the result of the RCS are awarded the Citizen's Satisfaction Center (CSC) Seal of Excellence Award. Recipients receive the CSC Seal of Excellence Award mounted on wall-glass and cash reward which shall be used to purchase equipment and other materials that will further improve frontline service delivery.

CSC Regional and Field Offices continue to constantly monitor agencies' systems and procedures, as well as their Citizen's Charters for re-evaluation and benchmarking.

Aside from these measures, the Commission also receives reports on violation of ARTA thru existing feedback mechanisms under the Aksyon Agad Para Sa Taumbayan Program. The complaints include allegations that agencies do not observe "No Lunch Break Policy" and the presence of fixers in agency premises. These reports are immediately referred to the concerned agencies for appropriate action. In 2009, reports on alleged fixing activities were also forwarded to the Office of the Ombudsman.

It is thus important for the Commission to intensify its drive against fixers, promote and encourage agencies' commitment to the implementation of ARTA, and eventually ensure efficient frontline services throughout the bureaucracy.

### **II. ARTA Watch Inception**

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<sup>1</sup> The Anti-Red Tape Act requires agencies to come up with their respective Citizens Charters. The Charter contains a listing of the frontline services offered by the agency, the documents to be submitted, fees to be paid, the transaction period, the person or particular unit in charge and procedures for redress.

In January 2011, Chairman Francisco Duque III initiated surprise inspection of frontline services of agencies with reports of alleged violation of ARTA based on the results of the RCS and the 2010 Accomplishment Report of the CSC Public Assistance Desk. Invoking the power of the Commission to "Inspect and audit the personnel actions and programs of the departments, agencies, bureaus, offices, local government units and other instrumentalities of the government including government-owned or controlled corporations" and the mandate of CSC "to establish a career service, adopt measures to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness and courtesy to the civil service" pursuant to Executive Order No. 292 or the Revised Administrative Code of 1987, ARTA Watch came into being. ARTA Watch is also anchored on specific provisions of the Anti-Red Tape Act which mandates CSC to promote and monitor compliance of government offices providing frontline services on vital ARTA provisions and measure the level of effectiveness of their frontline services.

The ARTA Watch has become a mechanism for spot check of agencies' compliance with the provisions of ARTA. It emphasizes agencies' implementation of the "no noon break policy" and posting of the Citizen's Charter and Anti-fixer Campaign poster in conspicuous places, it also serves as an information drive on the law itself, on the CSC Seal of Excellence, on the Service Delivery Excellence Program (SDEP) and on the RCS Rating for agencies which have been subjected to the survey.

### III. ARTA Watch Visits

From January to April 2011, thirteen agencies have been visited by the Chair in coordination with PAIO, OPMIS and CSC Regional Offices. Media partners were also invited to observe the inspection. Press releases were also immediately issued after every inspection.

Below is a summary of the agencies inspected and the observations gathered during the visits:

DATE	AGENCY	OBSERVATIONS
NCR		
January 18	Land Transportation Office -Main Office  (Top 1 most reported agency based on Para sa TaumBayan data)	It was observed that information Billboards on Citizens Charter and Anti-Fixer Campaign visibly displayed in conspicuous places.  Chair Duque briefly discussed ARTA provisions to the LTO staff.

January 21	Land Registration Office - Main Office  (Top 6 most reported agency based on <i>Para sa Taumbayan</i> data)	Chair Duque provided suggestions to further improve compliance with the ARTA, such as posting of Citizen's Charter in conspicuous places, implementation of "No lunch break policy" In Registries of Deeds nationwide, and manning of Public Assistance Desk by competent staff.  LRA Administrator Eulalio Diaz expressed his commitment to continuously review procedures and systems of the agency to ensure efficient delivery of service to the public
February 2	Social Security System - Main Office (The agency has performance client satisfaction rating of 62.18% or an equivalent descriptive rating of "Acceptable" based on RCS)	It was observed that delivery of frontline services is continuous even during lunch break. Special Courtesy lane is provided for Senior Citizens. Clients can easily understand the instructions per transaction as they are printed at the back of each form In both English and Filipino languages.  Information booths are in place and there is an efficient queuing system. The agency was reminded to post Anti-fixer Campaign In all branches nationwide-
March 4	Bureau of Immigration - Main Office (The agency has performance client satisfaction rating of 76.91% or an equivalent descriptive rating of "Good" based on RCS)	The agency provides sufficient information on transactions. Including requirements and fees. It has an effective queuing system. The anti-fixer campaign poster, however, is not posted in a conspicuous place.
CAR		
March 11	Professional Regulation Commission - Regional Office 3 Baguio City	The agency is compliant with ARTA provisions and gained positive feedback from actual clients availing frontline service.
March 11	Land Transportation Office - Baguio City Branch	The office does not observe "no noon break policy".
March 11	Government Service Insurance System - Saguio City Branch	The agency is yet to install its Citizen's Charter.
March 11	National Bureau of Investigation- Baguio City Office	No Citizen's Charter was posted. However, actual clients gave positive feedback on the agency's frontline service.
March 11	Department of Public Works and Highways - Regional Office 3, Baguio City	The agency has a Citizen's Charter but it was not posted in the main entrance or any conspicuous place.
NCR		

March 18	Food and Drug Administration - Main Office  (The agency has performance client satisfaction rating of 55.79% or an equivalent descriptive rating of "Acceptable" based on RCSJ)	It was observed that the FDA has Citizen's Charter displayed at the front lobby of the building.  Chair Duque presented general information on ARTA and personally gave the Report Card to FDA Director Suzette Lazo,
Region 3		
April 15	Land Transportation Office Licensing Section - San Fernando	There was positive feedback from clients, However, Chair Duque suggested that Information must be displayed in bigger posters/billboards.
April 15	Department of Foreign Affairs Consular Office - San Fernando, Pempanga	Information must be displayed in bigger posters/billboards.
April 15	National Bureau of Investigation - San Fernando, Pstmpanea	The agency does not observe "no lunch break policy".

#### IV. Assessment

ARTA Watch presents a good opportunity both for the CSC and government agencies to underscore their commitment to improved public service delivery.

With the top official of the Commission personally conducting the visits, the Commission brings the message that it is serious in pushing for efficiency in the delivery of government service. It is expected that such strategy would generate interest, awareness and compliance with ARTA. As it evolves to become a top-management initiative, the CSC manifests once more its firm resolve to assist the different agencies in keeping their respective mandates faithful to the needs and aspirations of the general public.

The ARTA Watch Initiative challenges agencies to be more responsive, innovative and determined in pursuing the needed reforms on their respective areas of jurisdiction. For it is only when the intent and provisions of the ARTA Law are fully implemented that government instrumentalities, through ARTA Watch, will adequately address and respond to the demands of its varied clientele.