

2. The Anti-Corruption Initiative Assessment

Overview

The purpose of the Anti-Corruption Initiative Assessment (AIA) is to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the anti-corruption initiatives being implemented by each public organization. It can be thought of as a comprehensive assessment mechanism that covers various areas of anti-corruption and integrity initiatives. The fundamental objective of the AIA is to spread best practices across the public sector as part of the fight against corruption as well as to encourage each public organization to make an increased effort to enhance its integrity.

The ACRC improved the AIA in 2012 so that it would take note of the voluntary efforts of public agencies and to feed back the results into the assessment in a practical way. To do this, efforts to assess the transparency of policies and efforts to improve corruption-prone duties (BPR) were integrated into one single “comprehensive countermeasure” item to be assessed. Also, the AIA enhanced its assessment about the connection between plans and performance of each agency.

An assessment team consisting of the ACRC’s staff evaluated the implementation of major anti-corruption measures created by the ACRC. As for areas requiring qualitative evaluation such as action plans, best practices and voluntary efforts, the assessment was conducted by an external research agency.

Assessment criteria

In 2011, the AIA consisted of the three parts of common initiatives, voluntary initiatives, and performance results.

The common initiatives were divided according to the following six criteria, based on an analysis of the factors responsible for corruption in public organizations, including the nature of the duties and the characteristics of corruption. The six criteria are as follows:

- a. *Establishment and management of anti-corruption systems*: the establishment of anti-corruption systems; the promotion of public-private partnerships; and, the introduction and dissemination of the best anti-corruption practices
- b. *Leaders’ determination to fight corruption*: determination of the leaders; transparency of business promotion expenses; and, the results of a survey of the internal staff
- c. *Comprehensive measures for institutional improvement*: implementation and effectiveness of the recommendations made by the ACRC; voluntary efforts for institutional improvement; willingness to implement institutional improvement when corruption occurs
- d. *Corruption Impact Assessment*: the degree of cooperation given to conducting the Assessment; and, the implementation of recommendations made by the ACRC
- e. *Compliance with the Code of Conduct for Public Organization Employees and the promotion of whistleblowing*: the introduction and implementation of best practices of the Code of Conduct; the rate voluntary detections of violations of the Code of Conduct; and the giving of instructions and reviewing the implementation of the Code of Conduct
- f. *Anti-corruption training and promotional activities*: completion of anti-corruption training; best practices of anti-corruption training and promotion; and utilization of the educational and promotional contents

Voluntary initiatives were divided using the assessment criteria of the appropriateness of action plans based on public agencies’ own characteristics; the implementation of action plans; and best practices of their own anti-corruption measures. Also, the result of the Integrity Assessment of the year and the improvement compared to the previous year were incorporated into the measure of anti-corruption performance.

Target organizations (208 public organizations)

- Central government agencies (39): 17 ministries, 18 services, 1 office and 3 commissions
- Metropolitan governments (16): 16 cities and provinces
- Local governments (20): 20 cities, counties and districts
- Municipal and Provincial Offices of Education (16): the offices of education in 16 cities and provinces
- Public service-related agencies (115): 27 public corporations, 88 other quasi-government agencies

Results of the 2011 Assessment

The 2011 AIA categorized public organizations into the 5 categories of central government agencies, metropolitan and local governments, municipal and provincial offices of education, public corporations, and other public service-related agencies. The results of the AIA were also divided into the 5 ranks by type.

A total of 4 central agencies, 2 metropolitan and local governments, 2 offices of education, 4 public corporations and 5 other public service-related agencies posted a “BEST” ranking. Individual contributors and “BEST” organizations received commendations and prize money.

Future directions

The ACRC sends a comprehensive report of the AIA, the assessment results by criteria, and an analysis of the best-performing organizations to the target organization. The Commission encourages them to make a voluntary effort to improve in the areas that the results revealed to be unsatisfactory and to benchmark the best practices of other organizations.

In 2012, the ACRC will change the title of the assessment to “Anti-Corruption Competitiveness Assessment” and revise it to cover not only anti-corruption efforts but also anti-corruption performance and best practices. Particularly, the number of target organizations will be reduced while separate assessment criteria will be developed to monitor corruption-prone sectors such as public agencies in the financial sector or local governments.