



NEWS RELEASE
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POEA prohibits recruitment of seafarers at Rizal Park

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration ordered manning agencies occupying booths managed by Luneta Seafarers' Welfare Foundation, Inc. (LUSWELF) at Rizal Park near the National Library to stop their recruitment activities or face administrative sanctions.

Administrator Jennifer Jardin-Manalili said all recruitment activities of manning agencies in the area are deemed illegal. The POEA has discontinued issuance of Special Recruitment Authority (SRA) to the said agencies in May 2009 because of reported hiring malpractices.

SRA is the authority granted by the POEA to a licensed agency to conduct recruitment outside the registered office or address stated in the license of an agency or its acknowledged additional office(s).

The POEA has also directed the manning agencies to submit sworn statements of their activities, and remove their respective signages and posters of job openings in the area.

Over the years, and because of its proximity to recruitment agencies based in Manila, that part of Rizal Park or Luneta adjoining T.M. Kalaw Street had been a meeting place of seafarers looking for jobs in foreign vessels.

The Associated Marine Officers and Seaman's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) had the idea of converting the place into a center where seafarers coming from the provinces can have a place to stay in Manila while looking for a job or waiting to board a ship. The idea later evolved into a center wherein information about seafaring can be discussed or posted. AMOSUP later transferred the management of the center to LUSWELF.

The POEA became part of the center in 2007 through a memorandum of agreement with LUSWELF by conducting orientation seminars and distribution of information materials. LUSWELF later rented out booths to manning agencies which wanted to recruit seafarers in the area. Consequently, the POEA issued SRAs to legalize the recruitment activities of the agencies.

In April 2009, the Joint Manning Group, a conglomeration of several associations of manning agencies issued a resolution enjoining their members to pull out of the LUSWELF area because the objectives of the center were no longer met.

The POEA has not issued any SRA since May 2009 but instead conducted inspection salvos to monitor the activities of the agencies. It has filed several administrative cases against manning agencies caught recruiting seafarers in the area without the necessary special recruitment authority. #####