



Office of the President of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

**PRE-CONSULTATION MEETING ON THE
IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REFORM ACT**

11:30 a.m., Thursday, 22 January 2009
Chermont Function Room, Discovery Suites, Pasig City

Welcome Remarks

SEC. RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III

Commission on Information and Communications Technology

Government Procurement Policy Board Technical Services Office Executive Director Ruby Alvarez, partners from the E3 project, representatives and guests from various ICT organizations and corporations, fellow government workers, ladies and gentlemen, a pleasant day to all of you.

I have the distinct pleasure of welcoming you to the Pre-Consultation Meeting on an initiative to review, streamline, and amend the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Today's meeting sets the table for several consultations with a broad set of stakeholders, jointly organized by the CICT and the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB)-Technical Support Office, for the first quarter of 2009. The aim of this review is to make the IRR more ICT-responsive to help ensure the successful implementation of government ICT projects.

As ICT practitioners, you must all be aware of how much ICT has contributed to the development of the country. Mobile communications, the Internet, e-commerce, voice-over-IP, social networking, business process outsourcing—all of these developments have helped enrich the lives of our fellow Filipinos. We have also seen how ICT has helped make our government more efficient, transparent and accountable. ICT in government allows our citizens to order civil registry documents online, file tax returns online, renew driver's licenses in half an hour instead of days, obtain NBI clearances from kiosks all over the city, and, hopefully by 2010, deliver election results in a matter of days instead of weeks. Unfortunately, we have also seen what happens when ICT projects are not executed properly. We have already witnessed a few high profile ICT projects fail and many more are languishing with missed deadlines and soaring costs. One of the most common reasons cited for a failed ICT project is procurement problems, and that is why the CICT feels today's exercise is of utmost importance.

For the past several years, the CICT has seen the need to review the IRR as it relates to ICT because government ICT projects affect mission-critical processes, require sizable investments, and involve highly complex systems. The entire cycle of project implementation thus compels more coordination, more prudent use of government resources, and more thorough and systematic management oversight. We have deemed it necessary therefore to ensure that the revised IRR will be more responsive, practicable, and explicit in these days where ICT plays a more significant role in ensuring and maintaining transparency in implementing government projects.

Of course, ICT procurement is only part of the solution. The task to oversee the successful implementation of government ICT projects still lies in a central agency that will serve as the government's CIO. The CICT has endeavored to serve as such, from the time it was created five years ago. However, our role has been limited to approving Information Systems Strategic Plans, or ISSPs, and providing funding for ICT projects through the E-Government Fund. The CICT needs to be strengthened in order for us to effectively and prudently execute our mandate and fulfill the promise of ICT in government.

The good news is the bill creating the Department of Information and Communications Technology has gone further than it ever has, having been approved by the House of Representatives on third reading, approved at the committee level by the Senate Committee on Science and Technology, and certified as urgent by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The bad news is it appears we are losing momentum and we are running out of time, as the bill has yet to be included in the Senate's agenda for plenary deliberation. We hope that we can count on your continued support as we make one final push for the DICT to become a reality.

Before I conclude, I would like to give special mention to our partners from the Electronic Governance for Efficiency and Effectiveness, or E3, Project for their efforts in improving e-governance in the Philippines. In addition to supporting us in the review of the IRR of RA 9184, they are also providing technical assistance to the CICT in updating the Government Information Systems Plan, or GISP, strengthening the guidelines for the E-Government Fund, building the capability of government CIOs and drafting the IRR for the DICT. Whatever we accomplish in the area of ICT procurement and implementation reform is also your success.

To all of you present here today, we look forward to working closely with you in sustaining the ICT gains of the past few years, both in the growth of the sector itself, as well as the recognition of its potential in attaining our national development agenda. I invite you to join the CICT's commitment to this continuous reform process for ICT in government.

Thank you once again for your participation and I wish everyone a productive meeting.