

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3515**



Introduced by HONORABLE ROMEO M. ACOP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) was created by virtue of Republic Act No. 6975, otherwise known as the "Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990", with the mandate to prevent and suppress destructive fires, investigate its causes, provide emergency medical and rescue services, and enforce other fire related laws with active involvement of the community.

The BFP is also responsible for the enforcement of Republic Act No. 9514, otherwise known as the "Revised Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008", and other related laws. To fulfill its mandate, it shall establish at least one (1) fire station with adequate personnel, firefighting facilities and equipment in every provincial capital, city and municipality subject to standard rules and regulations as maybe promulgated. As part of its function to provide emergency medical and rescue services, it must ensure operational readiness of the emergency medical services (EMS) team on duty.

According to the 2008 Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Fire Code of the Philippines, the scope of training for members of fire brigades consist of training on fire suppression, rescue, EMS and related emergency response.¹ They shall also be instructed on the handling of available fire rescue apparatus, equipment, devices and tools. The IRR, however, does not impose any standard as to the type and quality of EMS and related emergency response training.

The following guidelines have also failed to establish adequate standards for entry-level fireman, Fire Officer 1 (FO1), as Certified First Responders and/or Certified Emergency Medical Technicians:

- 1) Department Order No. 92-288 dated 22 July 1992;

¹ Implementing Rules and Regulations, Fire Code of the Philippines. 2008. Bureau of Fire Protection.

- 2) Memorandum Circular No. 2008-07 – Prescribing Policies and Guidelines on BFP EMS Operations; and
- 3) Memorandum Circular No. 2008-011 – Amended Policies, Guidelines and Protocols on BFP EMS Operations.

Since its inception in the 1970s, the delivery of EMS continues to evolve and mature. As is true of most new professions, no “master plan” was conceived to systematically guide its evolution at the outset. The stakeholders of EMS had no way to predict the challenges that would face the profession in its rapid growth period. The diversity of EMS providers (from paid, full-time personnel to volunteers), system design (hospital-based to public safety-based), and local variations of practice have presented unique challenges that are not encountered by other allied health care professions.²

In the United States, it took them almost thirty (30) years to come up with a national standard EMS curricula, accreditation standards, and a national registration system; these individual elements independently developed and grew in that same period. Currently, there is no formal EMS education system in which the components are clearly defined, their interrelationships articulated, and the decision-making process for modification and improvement established. The absence of a formal EMS education system has also led to inconsistencies among the various curricula and difficulties in the ability to bridge from one level of education to another. Currently, there is no consistent method of providing input to the national EMS education decision-making process.³

While aware of these challenges, this Representation nonetheless believes that a mandatory training to qualify our fire officers in EMS and as Certified First Responders will go a long way in further strengthening the BFP in achieving its mission in the best possible way.


HON. ROMEO M. ACOP
Representative
2nd District, Antipolo City

² National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2000. Emergency Medical Services education agenda for the future: A systems approach. Washington, DC: US Department of Transportation/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (DOT/NHTSA), DOT HS, 809, p.042.

³*Id.*

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AN ACT
REQUIRING PERSONNEL OF THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION TO
BE CERTIFIED FIRST RESPONDERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9263, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT
AND PENOLOGY PROFESSIONALIZATION ACT OF 2014”

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 9263, as amended, is hereby
amended by adding two new paragraphs to read as follows:

“SEC. 3. Organization and Key Positions of the BFP and BJMP. –

The BFP ... x xx

The heads of the BFP ... x x x

The BFP and the BJMP ... xx x

THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR SHALL DESIGNATE IN EVERY FIRE STATION, AT LEAST ONE (1) UNIFORMED PERSONNEL PER SHIFT, REGARDLESS OF RANK, TO ACT AS EMERGENCY MEDICALTECHNICIAN WHOWILL SUPERVISE FIRE OFFICERS INRESPONDING TO MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.

AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN REFERS TO A TRAINED AND CERTIFIED PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE PROVIDER WHO IS CAPABLE OF PERFORMING EXTENSIVE PRE-HOSPITAL CARE, ENDOTRACHEAL INTUBATIONS AND CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS ORALLY AND INTRAVENOUSLY, AND USING AUTOVATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR AND OTHER COMPLEX EMERGENCY MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.”

SECTION 2.Section 8 of the same Act, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 8. Professionalization and Qualifications Upgrading Program. - The DILG shall design and establish a professionalization and qualifications upgrading program for the uniformed personnel of the BFP and the BJMP in coordination with the CSC and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) through an off-campus education program or other similar programs within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

THE BFP AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) SHALL DESIGN AND ESTABLISH A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS AND OTHER RELEVANT TRAININGS THAT WILL BE INTEGRATED INTO THE FIRE BASIC RECRUIT COURSE (FBRC).

UPON THEIR APPOINTMENT, THE NEWLY ABSORBED FIRE OFFICER 1 (FO1) OF THE BFP MUST UNDERGO AND COMPLETE THE FIRE BASIC RECRUIT COURSE (FBRC), WHICH SHALL PROVIDE THE FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO MEET THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF FIRE PERSONNEL COMPETENCE, INCLUDING ADVANCED FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONSE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN COURSES. THE COMPONENTS AND COURSE DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRE BASIC RECRUIT COURSE SHALL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INTERNAL RULES AND REGULATIONS ON MANDATORY TRAINING, LOCAL SCHOOLING, SEMINAR, AND WORKSHOP WHICH ARE ISSUED BY THE BFP. GRADUATES OF THE FIRE BASIC RECRUIT COURSE SHALL BE ISSUED THE APPROPRIATE CERTIFICATIONS AS MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDER AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN, ACCORDINGLY.

UNIFORMED PERSONNEL WHO ARE ALREADY IN THE SERVICE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022 SHALL BE GIVEN FIVE (5) YEARS TO OBTAIN THE MINIMUM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT AS MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDER: PROVIDED, THAT UNIFORMED BFP PERSONNEL WHO HAVE RENDERED MORE THAN FIFTEEN (15) YEARS OF SERVICE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022 SHALL NO LONGER BE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH THE AFOREMENTIONED CERTIFICATION AS MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDER OR AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN.

THE BFP PERSONNEL DESIGNATED AS FIRE STATION EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN MUST POSSESS THE APPROPRIATE CERTIFICATION AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN IN ADDITION TO THEIR TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION AS MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDER.”

SECTION 3. Should any part of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, implementing rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,