



ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR THE YEAR 2014

Prefatory Statement

The Public Attorney's Office (PAO) is one of the most vital agencies in the government. True to its core mandate, it has always been the last bulwark of the legal rights of indigents and other persons qualified for its *pro bono* legal services. As long as it is within the ambit of its mandate, the PAO will always be there for its clientele to extend its helping hand by rendering its free judicial and quasi-judicial services.

Despite the many challenges faced by the PAO for the year 2014, its accomplishments speak audibly about the ability of its workforce to respond effectively and promptly to the increasing demands of public service. Moreover, these achievements serve as testimony as to how this principal Free Legal Aid Office of the Philippine Government maximizes its manpower, equipment, and supplies in the performance of its duty; even as it advances for the corresponding increase of these resources vis-à-vis the growing demand through the years.

In order to address the diversity of the legal needs of the Filipino People, continuous capacity building of its public attorneys were organized and held. The Office has successfully concluded the 5th Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Accredited National Convention of Public Attorneys, with the theme ***"Pagpapaunlad sa Kakayanan, Talino, at Integridad ng mga Manananggol Pambayan Tungo sa Paghahari ng Batas at Katarungan"***, aimed at keeping its public attorneys abreast of trial techniques, professional ethics and standards, laws and jurisprudence. Also, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Stateless Persons (UNHCR), several training sessions were held for the year 2014, in order to make its public attorneys more competent in assisting refugees and stateless persons.

The PAO-UNHCR collaboration paved the way to another partnership that goes beyond the Philippine national borders. The Agreement on Mutual Assistance between the PAO and the Legal Aid Foundation (LAF), of R.O.C., Taiwan was entered for the benefit of the citizens of both the Philippines and Taiwan, and is a standing

testament to the PAO's commitment to serve Filipinos, even beyond our territorial bounds. These collaborative efforts are the PAO's contributions to cross-border cooperation in Asia and beyond.

The number of clients assisted for the year 2014, and its favorable dispositions show that every single centavo allotted to the PAO was not put into waste. The Filipino people can rest assured that the agency is resolved in remaining true to its sworn duty and commitment as champion of the poor, of the oppressed, and the underprivileged and shall continue to endure as a staunch advocate of justice, genuine public service, and peace in the country.

I. The Office

Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9406, entitled "An Act Reorganizing and Strengthening the Public Attorney's Office (PAO)" established the PAO as an independent and autonomous Office attached to the Department of Justice *only* for the purpose of policy and program coordination. The law expanded the mandate of PAO to include providing free legal services and assistance to indigent clients, other qualified persons and in the exigency of the service, when called upon by proper government authorities to render such service to other persons, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations, in all criminal, civil, labor, administrative and other quasi-judicial cases.

The PAO Central Office is located at the DOJ Agencies Building, NIA Road corner East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. The regional and district/sub-district offices, on the other hand, are strategically located nationwide to effectively respond to indigent clients from eighty-one (81) provinces, one hundred and forty-four (144) cities, one thousand and four hundred ninety (1,490) municipalities and forty-two thousand and twenty-eight (42,028) barangays, all of which, are in dire need of legal assistance.

Currently, the PAO has **17 regional offices** and **293 district offices** and **5 sub-district offices**. Most of these offices are situated at the Halls of Justice nationwide along with the courts and other offices involved in the administration of justice. However, some district offices are housed at rented office spaces like the PAO-Manila District Office, etc.

II. Public Attorneys, the Regional and District Offices, and the Courts

Despite the high turn-over rate of PAO lawyers, primarily due to resignation to engage in private law practice, transfer to the National Prosecution Service (NAPROSS), to the judiciary, to other government owned and controlled corporations, and heavy workload,

among others, the PAO has a total of **1,522 public attorneys**, who actively handle criminal and civil cases before the courts nationwide.

About **38** of them devote themselves to appealed cases before the Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court and the Office of the President. However, the handling of criminal and civil cases and representation of clients in courts as above-stated is only a portion of the public attorneys' functions. They also appear in and handle administrative and labor cases, the so-called quasi-judicial cases, and such other limited and special cases and services as shown hereafter.

Below is a table indicating the number of existing offices and assigned lawyers in each region as follows:

REGION	DISTRICT / SUB-DISTRICT OFFICES	NUMBER OF PUBLIC ATTORNEYS
Central Office		103
National Capital Region	16	274
Cordillera Administrative Region	13 / 2 sub-district	50
Region I Ilocos Region	21	86
Region II Cagayan Valley	15	64
Region III Central Luzon	30 / 1 annex	95
Region IV-A CALABARZON	34	114
Region IV-B MIMAROPA	12	44
Region V Bicol Region	20	64
Region VI Eastern Visayas	19	113
Region VII Central Visayas	21 / 1 RSACU	86
Region VIII Western Visayas	24	88
Region IX-A ARMM	3 / 1 sub-district	32
Region IX-B Zamboanga Peninsula	15 / 1 satellite office	58
Region X Northern Mindanao	17 / (1 RSACU & 1 sub-district)	86
Region XI Davao Region	11	59

Region XII SOCCSKSARGEN	11	62
Region XIII CARAGA	11	44
TOTAL	319	1,522

The establishment of district offices in different regions of the country complements the agency's mission to provide litigants free access to courts and quasi-judicial agencies by rendering legal assistance. The PAO envisions the establishment of adequate district offices to enhance the accessibility of its services in order that justice could efficiently be delivered despite geographical fragmentation.

III. Significant Accomplishments

- **CLIENTS ASSISTED AND CASES HANDLED**

The statistical figures below show the total number of indigent clients assisted and the total number of cases (judicial and quasi-judicial) handled by the PAO and its proportionate relation to the **1,522 lawyers** for the period covering January to December, 2014.

Total No. of Clients Assisted	7,514,325
Total No. of Cases Handled	783,569
Average No. of Clients Assisted by Each Lawyer	4,937
Average No. of Cases Handled by Each Lawyer	523

- **MAJOR FINAL OUTPUT AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

In order to fully monitor the effective implementation of its services and to obtain the feedbacks of its qualified clients, PAO's performance indicators were refined/enhanced to include the determination of the timeliness and quality of its services, instead of merely focusing on quantity.

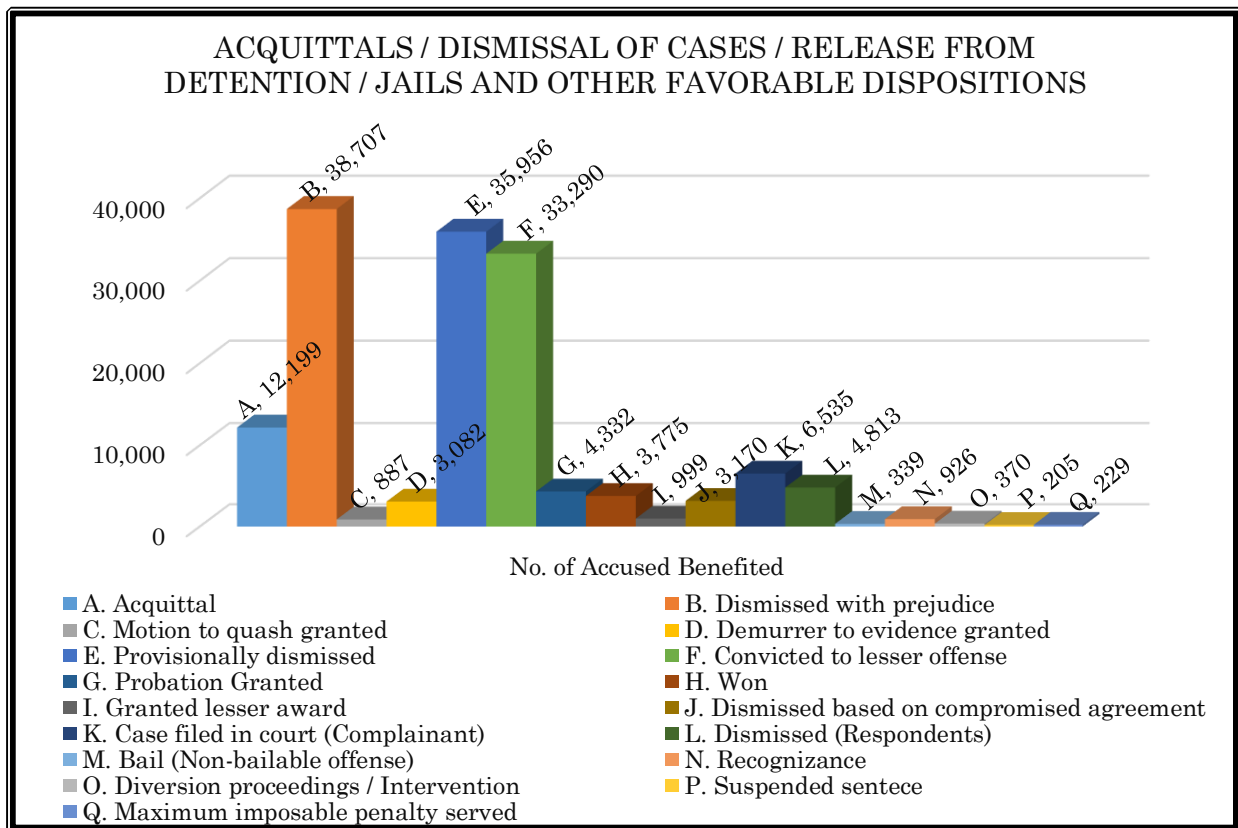
For the year 2014, the implementation of the new indicators yielded positive results, to wit:

Major Final Output: Free Legal Services to Indigent Clients and Other Qualified Persons.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	FY 2014 TARGETS	ACCOMPLISHMENTS (FY 2014)
<p>PI Set 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cases under management. • Percentage of cases with favorable judgment. • Percentage of requests for legal assistance/representation acted upon within three working days from the date of request. • Percentage of hearings for which no postponement is sought by the PAO legal representative. 	<p style="text-align: center;">783,469</p> <p style="text-align: center;">68.99% (253,838/367,934)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100% (515,500/515,500)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">99.70% (409,268/410,500)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">783,584</p> <p style="text-align: center;">72.16% (235,948/326,967)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100% (586,209/586,209)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">99.78% (413,577/414,500)</p>
<p>PI Set 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of clients served (Non-Judicial). • Number of legal advisories/counselling provided. • Percentage of clients who rated the legal services of PAO as satisfactory or better. • Percentage of requests for assistance that are acted upon within two hours. 	<p style="text-align: center;">4,880,843</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1,818,581</p> <p style="text-align: center;">99.94% (420,183/420,435)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100% (1,300,500/1,300,500)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4,893,939</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1,839,419</p> <p style="text-align: center;">99.95% (424,662/424,874)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100% (1,508,521/1,508,521)</p>

- **CLIENTS ASSISTED AND CASES HANDLED**

Undaunted by the overwhelming caseloads, the public attorneys ably represented indigent clients who are accused in court and skillfully facilitated the release and favorable disposition of cases of indigent clients, by way of acquittals, dismissal of cases, or for some other reasons, their cases were favorably disposed of, as shown in the graph below.



The graph above shows the figures of acquittals, dismissals and other favorable dispositions in criminal cases for the period covering January to December 2014, totalling **149,814**.

- **WINNING APPEALED CASES**

For criminal cases alone, a total of **172 cases** were favorably disposed of during the period of January to December 2014 by the PAO–Special and Appealed Cases Service. The table below shows the breakdown of figures, to wit:

Acquittals from Reclusion Temporal	84
Acquittals from Reclusion Perpetua	88
TOTAL	172

Aside from criminal cases, the Special and Appealed Cases Service (SACS) also handles civil and special cases such as appeals from the decision of NLRC, SSS and GSIS. In those cases handled, a

total of **388 favorable dispositions** were obtained by PAO-SACS from January to December 2014.

● **JAIL VISITATION AND DECONGESTION PROGRAM**

This outreach program for inmates has been strengthened by the PAO-Central Office Legal, Medical, Dental and Optical Jail Visitation Program. This program was started in 2007 and is being continuously conducted in various jails in the Philippines. The tables below show the output of the project for the year 2014, to wit:

Regular Monthly Jail Visitation of District Offices Nationwide:

No. of Inmates / Detainees	Monthly Jail Visitation of District Offices Nationwide
Interviewed & Assisted	253,700
Provided Legal Representation in Court	259,151
Released	45,898

PAO-Central Office Legal & Medical
Jail Visitation & Decongestion Program

	VISITED JAIL	DATE	LEG	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE (ADVICE)	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES FOR DENTAL ASSISTANCE	NO. OF READING GLASSES DISTRIBUTED	TOTAL NO. OF INMATES RELEASED
1	Camp Crame	January 9, 2014	1 ST	15	31	n/a	n/a	A total of 727 inmates were released from various jails in Metro Manila and nearby provinces visited by the PAO-Central Office and followed up by the field offices.
2	Camp Karingal			83	116	27	n/a	
3	Camp Bagong Diwa (Metro Manila District Jail)	January 16, 2014	2 ND	28	58	21	n/a	
4	Camp Bagong Diwa (Metro Manila District Jail-Manila Sector)			23	38	19	n/a	
5	Taguig City (Male/Female)			62	183	17	n/a	
6	Camp Bagong Diwa (BID)	January 23, 2014	3 RD	20	41	9	32	
7	Camp Bagong Diwa (SICA)			1	42	5	33	
8	Camp Bagong Diwa (QC Annex)			19	62	29	55	
9	Manila City Jail (Male/Female)	January 28, 2014	4 TH	172	130(M) / 42(F)	30(M) / 26(F)	n/a	
10	Manila Youth			80	49	31	n/a	
11	Cavite Provincial	January 29, 2014	5 TH	10	137	n/a	n/a	
12	TreceMartires			19	110	n/a	n/a	
13	Manila City Jail (Male)	March 1, 2014	6 TH	245	143	32	86	

14	Manila City Jail (Female)				144	22	82	
15	Manila Youth				53	17	1	
16	Cavite Provincial	March 17, 2014	7 TH	n/a	25	5	n/a	
17	Balanga, Bataan	April 2, 2014	8 TH	n/a	165	25	n/a	
18	Maximum Security Compound	May 27, 2014	9 TH	45	117	29	107	
	Medium Security Compound			40	133	29	59	
19	CBDTaguig (Male/Female)	June 4, 2014	10 TH	32(M) / 48(F)	141	23	105	
	CBD Metro Manila (Annex)			21	49	19	39	
20	Manila City Jail (Male/Female)	June 5, 2014	11 TH	68(M) / 53(F)	154(M) / 126(F)	25(M) / 22(F)	117(M) / 85(F)	
	Manila Youth Reception Center			170	62	25	1	
21	Quezon City Female Detention Center	June 20, 2014	12 TH	55	309	27	101	
22	Caloocan City Jail			51	98	29	98	
23	Correctional Institution for Women	August 11, 2014	13 TH	63	196	31	149	
24	Mandaluyong City Jail			19	148	27	99	
25	Maximum Security Compound	September 23, 2014	14 TH	47	147	32	150	
26	Medium Security Compound			62	112	29	106	
27	Correctional Institution for Women	December 19, 2014	15 TH	77	305	24	166	
28	Mandaluyong City Jail			21	107	22	84	
29	Marikina City Jail	December 22, 2014	16 TH	73	181	32	109	
TOTAL				1,722	3,954	740	1,864	727

● LEGAL/INQUEST PROCEEDINGS ASSISTANCE

On their scheduled duties, the public attorneys and staff of the PAO-Central Office have alternately been providing legal and inquest proceedings assistance even during night time, weekends and holidays since October 2009. For this purpose, the PAO hotline, *929-9436 (local 106 or 107 during office hours and local 159 beyond office hours)* is open to the public 24/7.

In September 2010, the coverage of this program was expanded to serve people covered by the regional and district offices of the PAO nationwide. Since then, the said offices have been rendering *legal assistance* (e.g. legal advice, attending to the legal needs of suspects in the police stations within the territorial jurisdiction of the concerned PAO regional/district offices) up to *10:00 P.M.* everyday (including

weekends and holidays). Further, the assigned PAO inquest public attorneys and staff therein *remain on call*, even beyond 10:00 P.M., to attend to inquest calls in police stations nationwide.

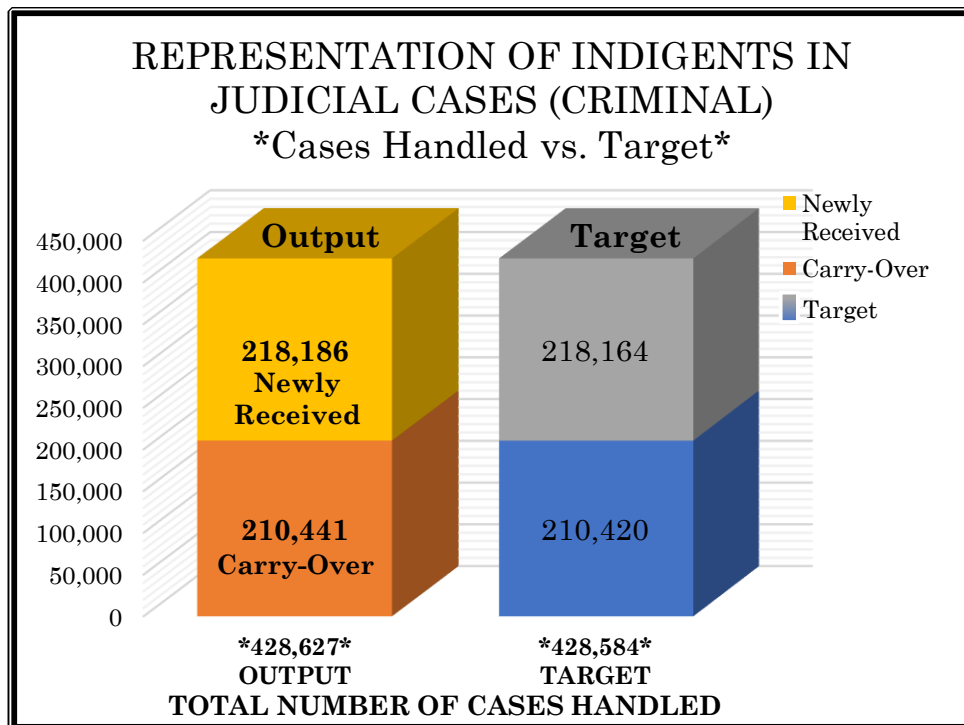
A total of **31,732 clients** benefited from the services provided by the PAO consisting of inquest assistance, legal advice/counselling and documentation at the above duty stations covering the period January to December 2014.

IV. Case Load, Statistical Report and Accomplishment

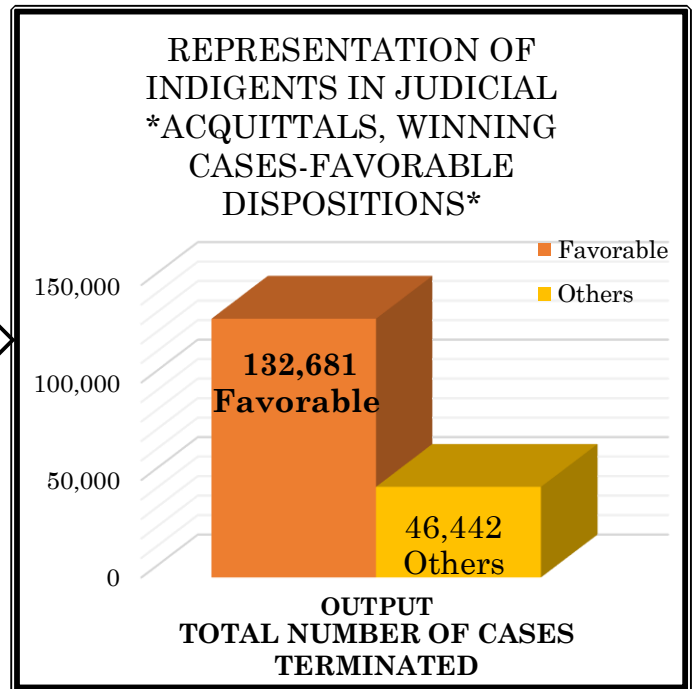
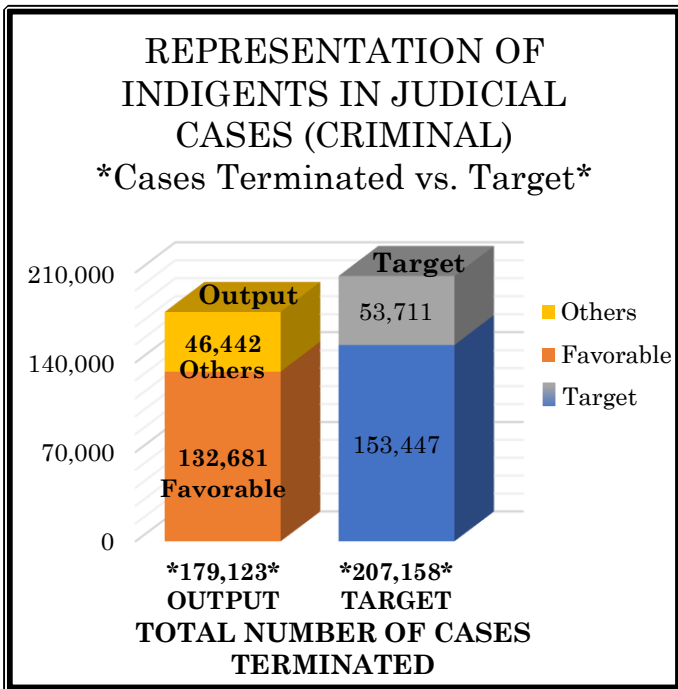
A. RENDITION OF JUDICIAL SERVICES

1. Regular Services

a) CRIMINAL

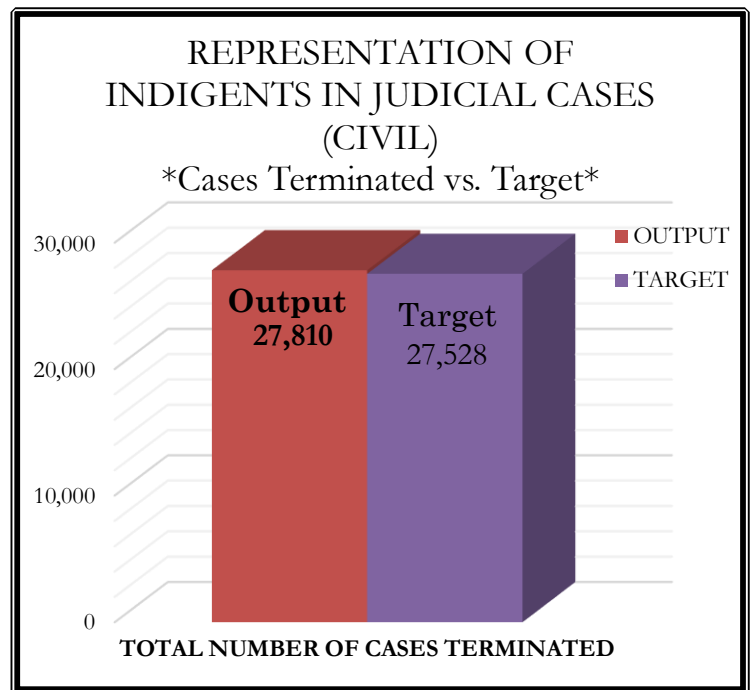
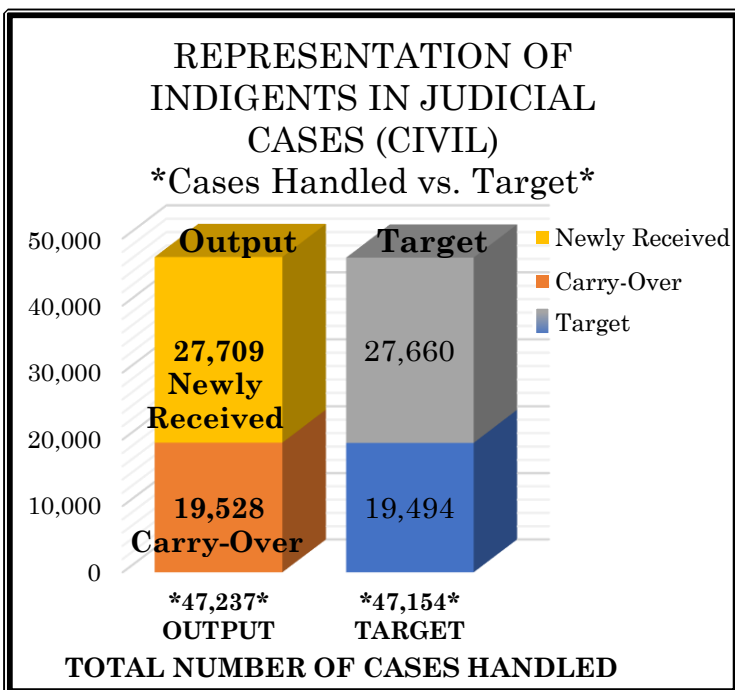


For the year 2014, the PAO handled a total of **428,627** criminal cases; of this total, 218,186 are newly received cases and 210,441 are carry-over from the previous year.



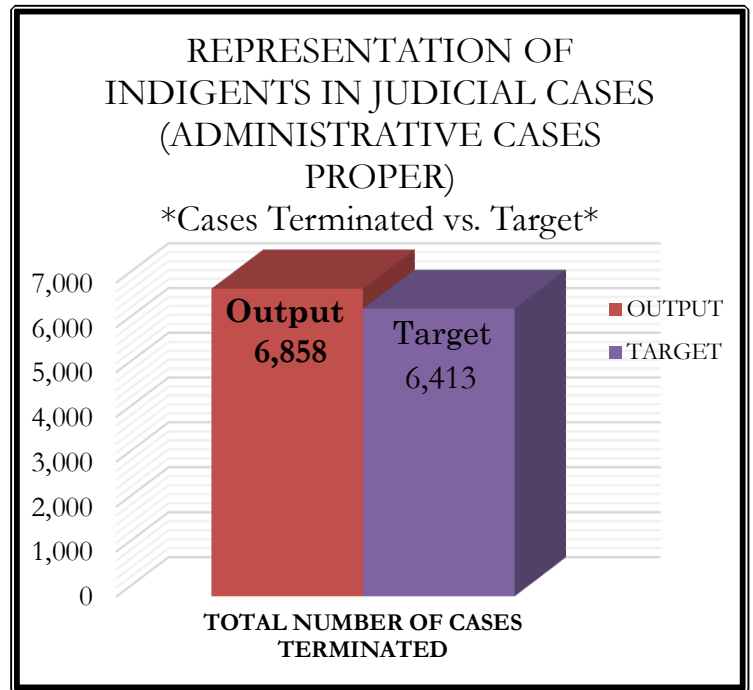
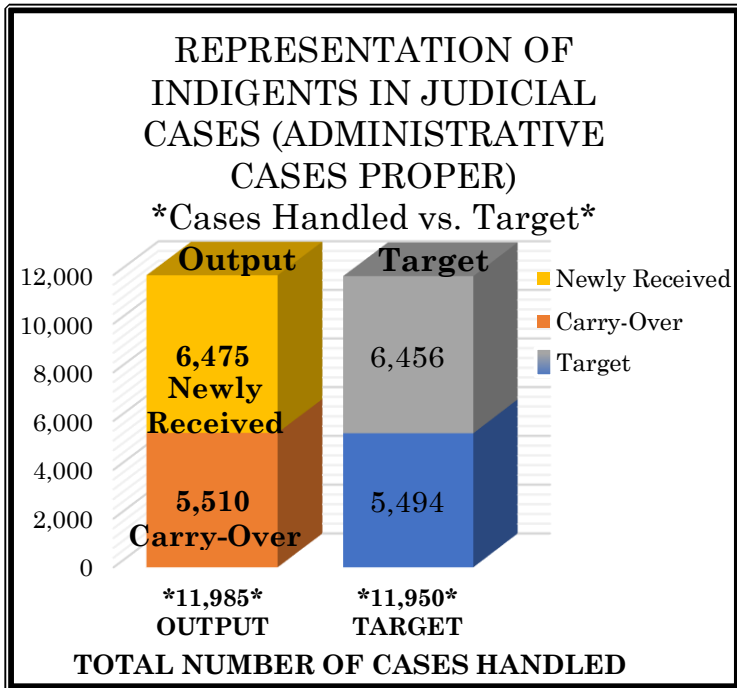
Out of the **179,123** terminated criminal cases from January to December 2014, **132,681** cases or about **74.07%** thereof were favorably disposed by the respective Public Attorneys assigned to handle the same.

b) CIVIL



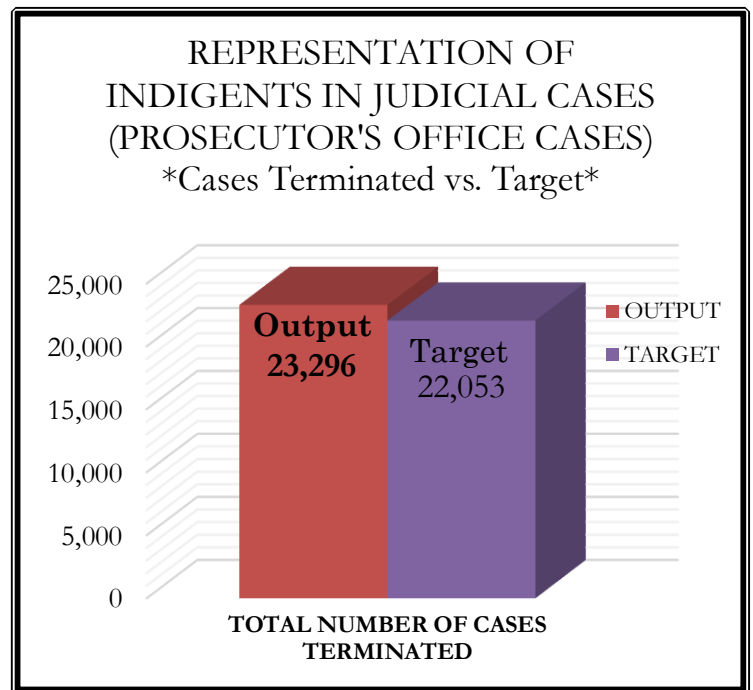
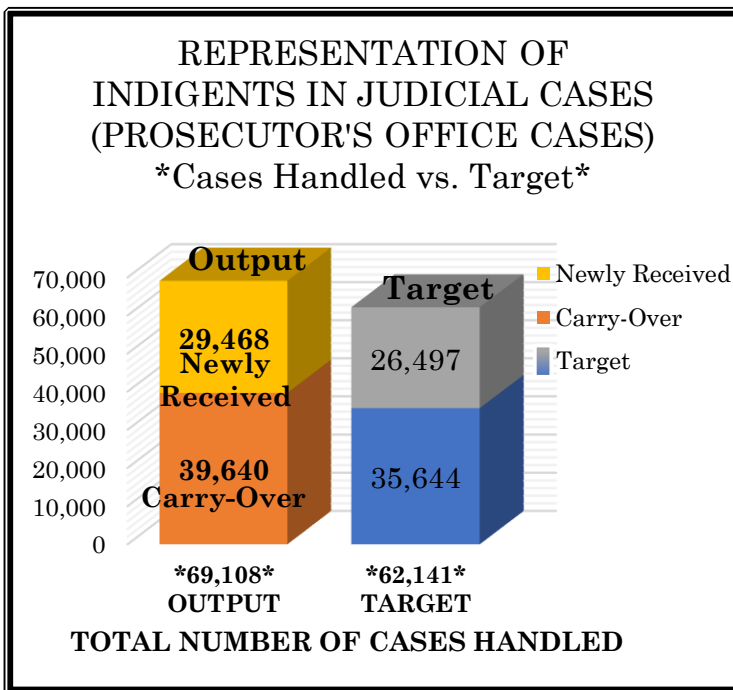
For the year 2014, the office has handled a total of **47,237** civil cases consisting of newly received and carry-over cases. During the same period, a total of **27,810** were terminated.

c) ADMINISTRATIVE CASES PROPER



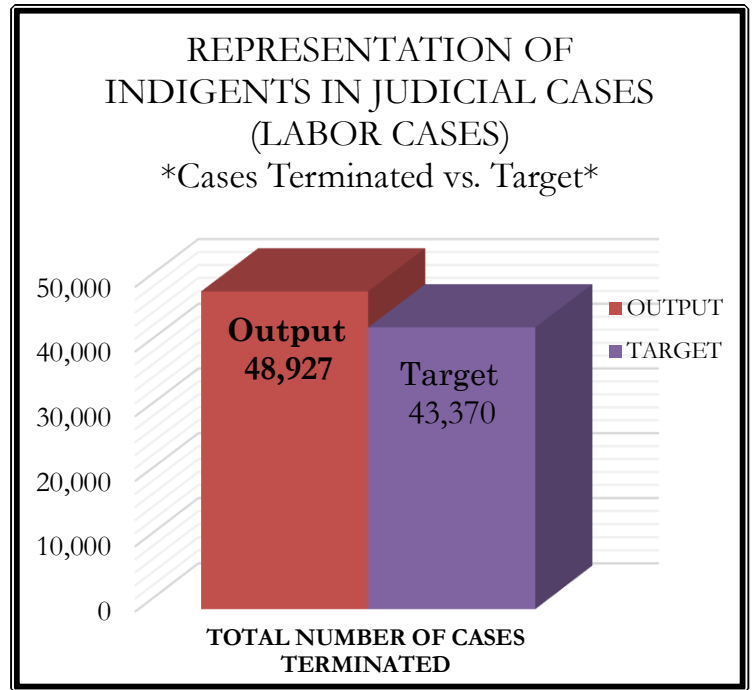
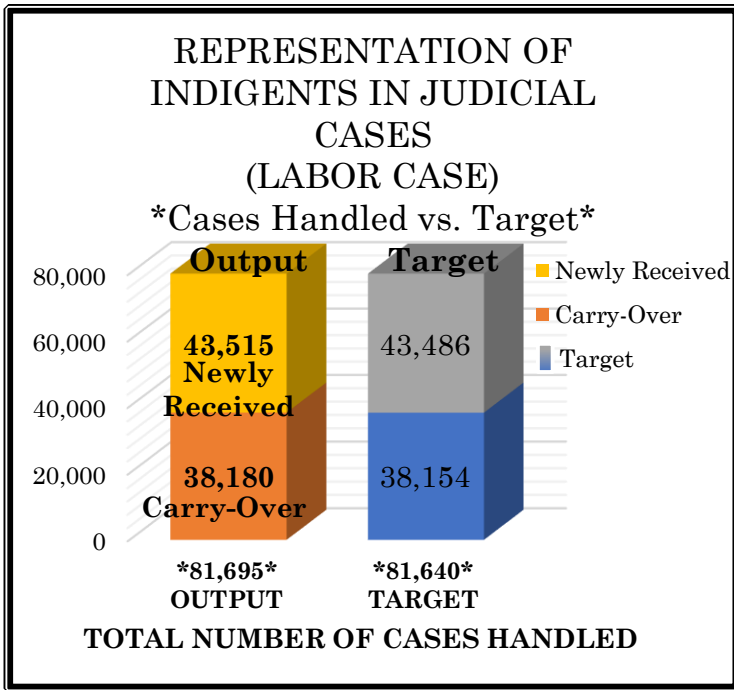
The PAO handled a total of **11,985** administrative cases consisting of 5,510 carry-over cases and 6,475 newly received cases from January to December 2014. A total of **6,858** cases were terminated.

d) PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE CASES



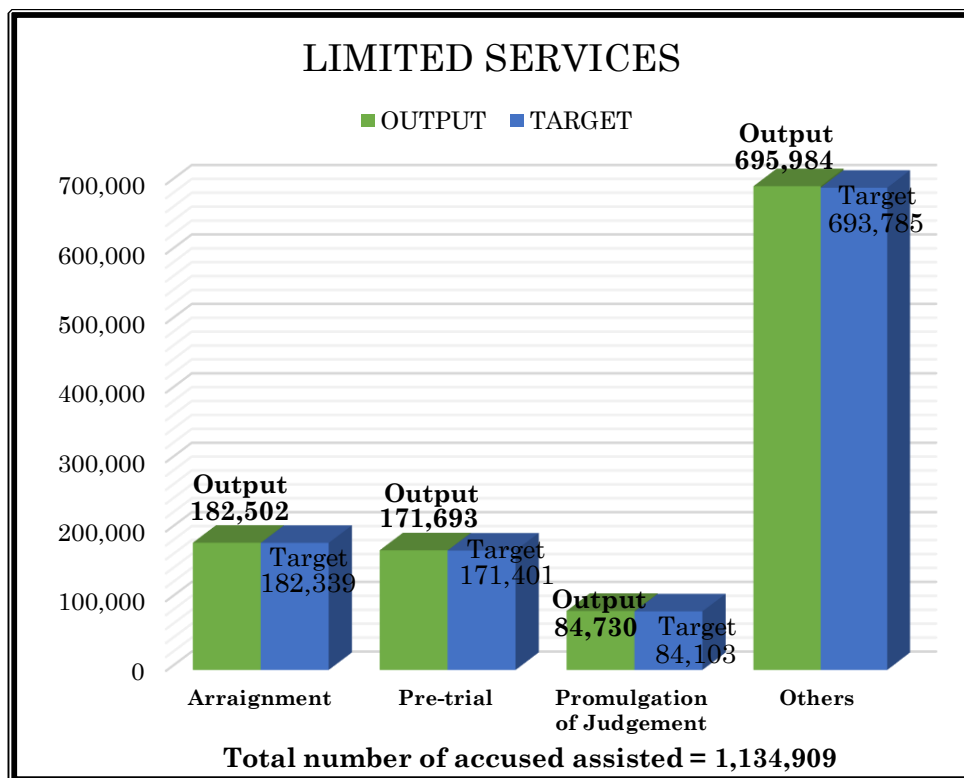
For the year 2014, the office handled a total of **69,108** cases at the Prosecutor's level, 29,468 of which are newly received and 39,640 are carried over from the previous year. Out of the said total number of cases, **23,296** were terminated.

e) LABOR CASES



In Labor cases, the PAO was able to handle a total of **81,695** complaints from January to December 2014, **48,927** of which were disposed of.

2. Limited Services



The office has extended limited services to accused in criminal cases on arraignment, pre-trial, promulgation of sentence only and in other stages of the case. It assisted a total of **1,134,909** accused from January to December 2014.

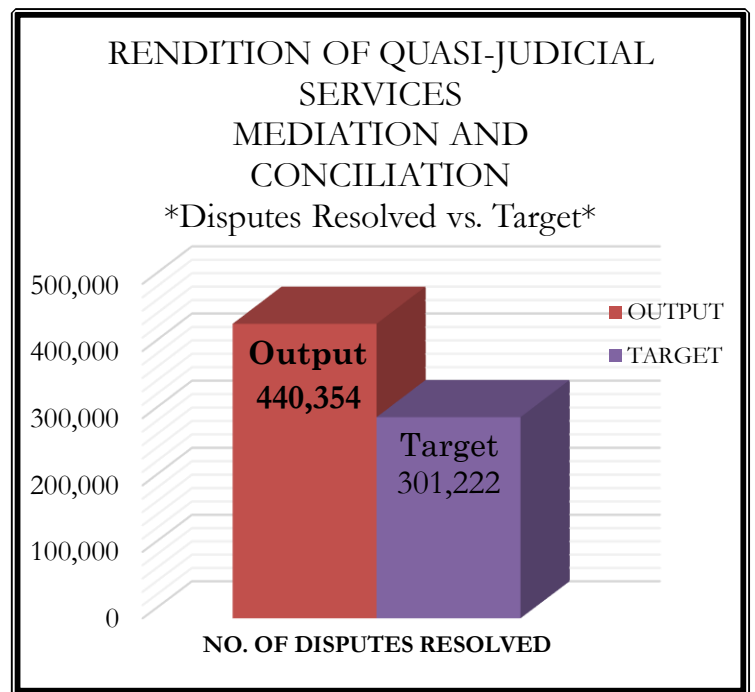
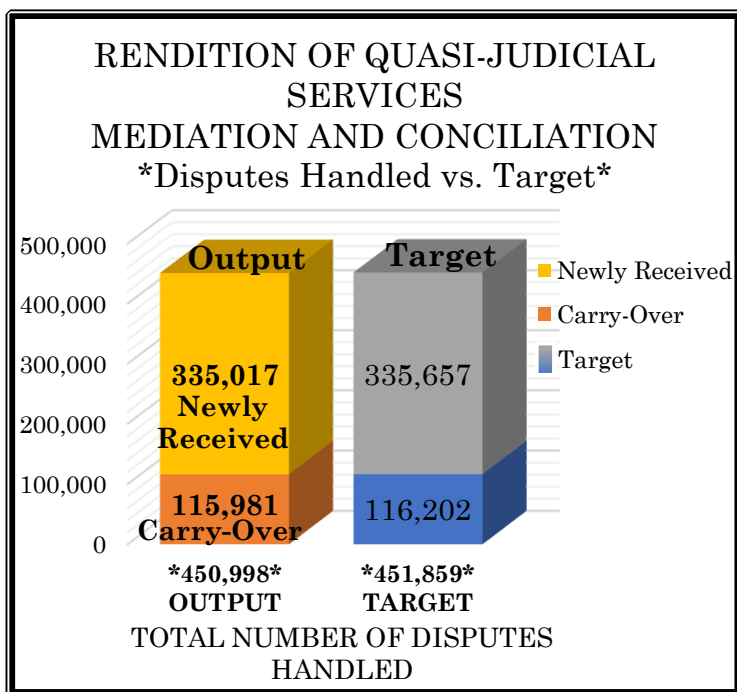
3. Special Legal Services (Pursuant to Sec 14-A of R.A. 9406 and MOAs)

From January to December 2014, the PAO served a total of **20,752 clients** under Special Legal Services.

"SEC. 14-A Powers and Functions. - The PAO shall independently discharge its mandate to render, free of charge, legal representation, assistance, and counselling to indigent persons in criminal, civil, labor, administrative and other quasi-judicial cases. In the exigency of the service, the PAO may be called upon by proper government authorities to render such service to other persons, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations."

B. RENDITION OF QUASI-JUDICIAL SERVICES

1. Mediation and Conciliation



The office also renders mediation and conciliation services as part of its quasi-judicial function. For the period covering January to December 2014, it handled a total of **450,998** disputes and resolved a total of **440,354** thereof.

2. Investigation

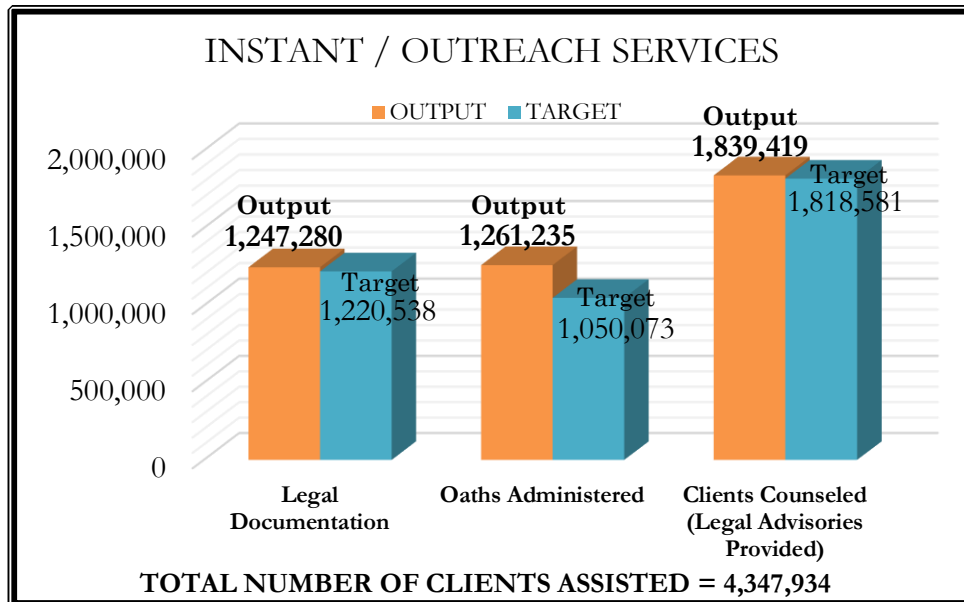
For the year 2014, the PAO conducted a total of **63 investigations** of cases involving torture.

"Section 11. Assistance in Filing a Complaint. - The CHR and the PAO shall render legal assistance in the investigation and monitoring and/or filing of the complaint

for a person who suffers torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, or for any interested party thereto.”

C. RENDITION OF NON-JUDICIAL SERVICES

1. Instant/Outreach Services

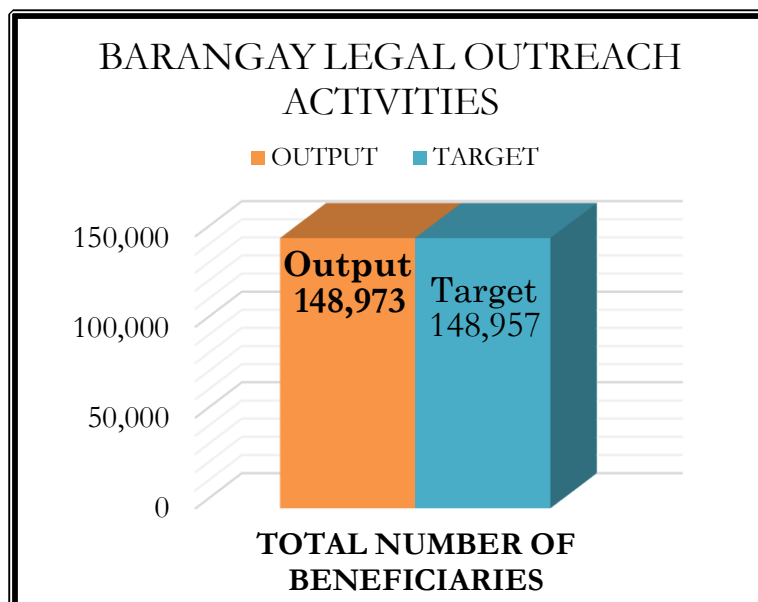


The office has rendered instant / outreach services to **4,347,934 clients** such as legal documentation, counselling and administering of oaths for the period covering January to December 2014.

2. Inquest Activities

From January to December 2014, the PAO assisted a total of **138,498 clients** during inquest investigations.

3. Barangay Legal Outreach and Visitation

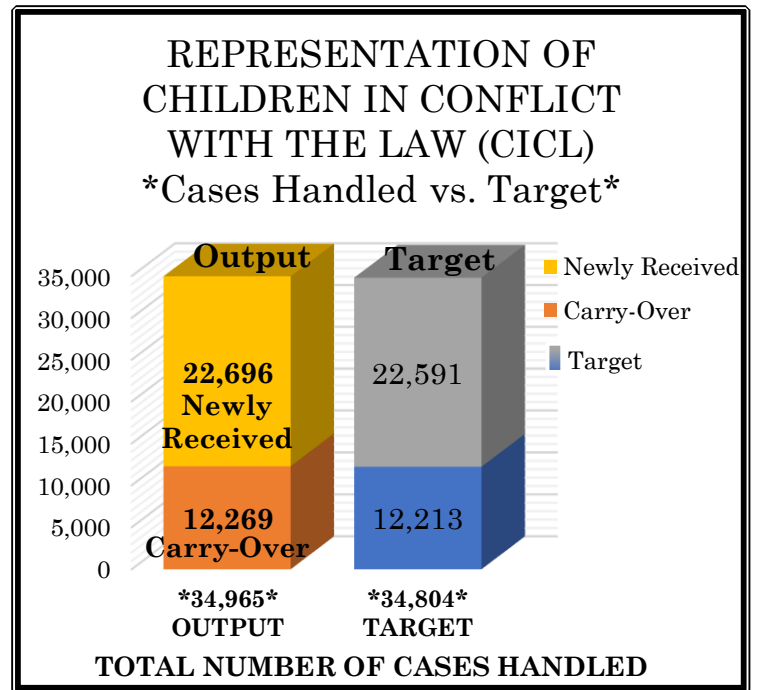
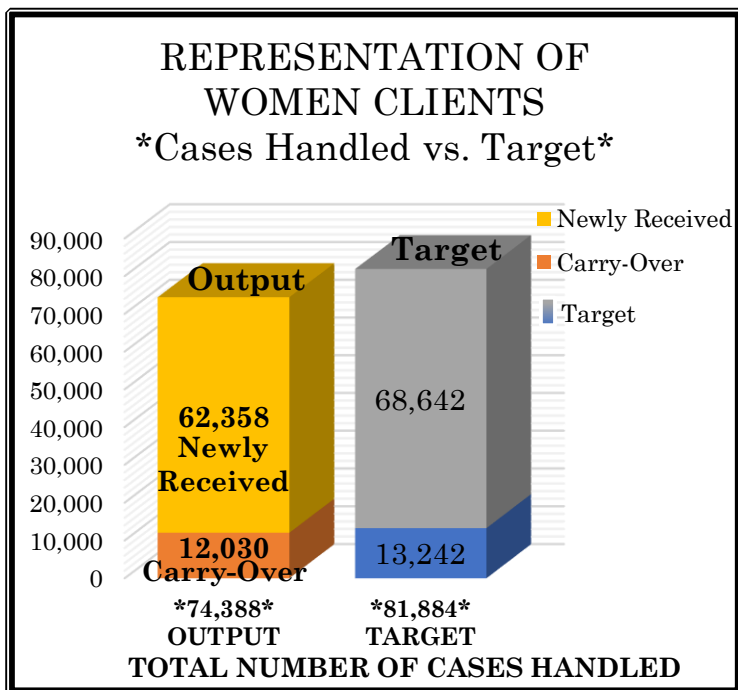


In the barangay outreach activities conducted by the office from January to December 2014, it assisted a total of **148,973 clients**.

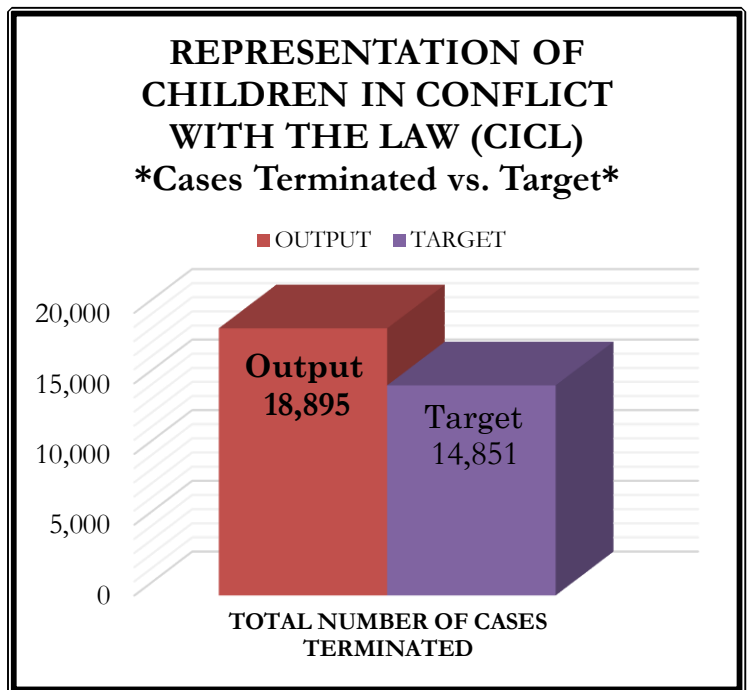
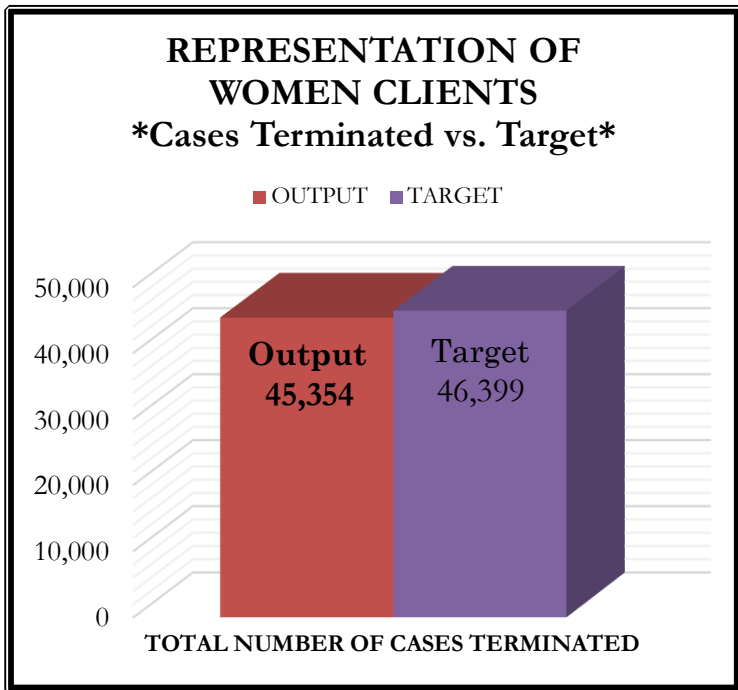
WOMEN CLIENTS AND CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Under Republic Act No. 9262 (R.A. No. 9262), otherwise known as the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act and Republic Act No. 9344 (R.A. No. 9344), otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare System Act, as well as the subsequent pertinent issuances, the PAO is specifically mandated by law to extend legal assistance to women and their children who are victims of violence and to facilitate the release and proper disposition of Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL), particularly those who were fifteen years old or below at the time of the alleged commission of the crime.

To this mandated task, the PAO is continuously giving special attention to the cause of women and children in so far as the criminal justice system is concerned.



The graphs above show the number of women and children assisted by the PAO for the year 2014. From January to December 2014, the office handled a total of **74,388 and 34,965 cases** involving **women and CICL**, respectively.



The graphs above show that from January to December 2014, a total of **45,354 and 18,895 cases** were terminated involving **women and CICL**, respectively.

It is humbly submitted that the above data manifest and indicate the continuous trust and faith of the people in the performance of the agency.

It is viewed that when the agency performs its duties and responsibilities with the highest standard of efficiency and dedication, it gives its humble share in converting and transforming public apathy and chaos into trust and faith to the criminal justice system and ultimately to the entire administration.

V. The Office of the Chief Public Attorney

1. The Office of the Chief Public Attorney ***received/answered 90,217 communications*** from January to December, 2014. The breakdown is as follows:

Communications to / from CPA Rueda-Acosta	<i>Total No. of Communications</i>	90,217
A. Communications from Executive Division	16,608	
1. Appointments	929	
2. Memoranda	608	
3. Memorandum Orders	432	
4. Office Orders	161	
5. Reassignment Orders	49	
6. Travel Orders	60	
7. Other Communications		

7.1. Signed by CPA	1,196	
7.2. Signed by Executive Lawyers	13,173	
B. Communications from Other Services		35,891
1. Administrative Service	3,852	
2. Legal Research Service	8,098	
3. Field Operations and Statistics Service	7,822	
4. Financial Planning and Management Service	7,722	
5. Special and Appealed Cases Service	8,397	
C. Communications from Regional Offices		6,476
1. Region I	446	
2. Region II	190	
3. Region III	886	
4. Region IV	864	
5. Region V	499	
6. Region VI	485	
7. Region VII	381	
8. Region VIII	331	
9. Region IX / ARMM	236	
10. Region X	178	
11. Region XI	222	
12. Region XII	164	
13. Region XII/CARAGA	169	
14. CAR	304	
15. NCR	1,121	
D. Communications from OP, OVP, Senate & HOR		326
E. Communications from Other Offices		26,013
1. Department of Justice	707	
2. Supreme Court	3,326	
3. Court of Appeals	15,136	
4. National Labor Relations Commission	2,158	
5. Other Communications	4,524	
6. Applicants	162	
F. Publications		1,137
1. <i>Say Mo Attorney?</i> , People's Tonight	351	
2. <i>Dear PAO</i> , Manila Times	351	
3. <i>Magtanong Kay Attorney</i> , Bulgar	331	
4. Atorni First, Pinoy Parazzi	104	
G. EMAILS		3,766
1. Legal Assistance	2,877	
2. Applicants	191	
3. Other emails	698	

2. The Office of the Chief Public Attorney served **19,895 clients** during this period.
3. The Chief Public Attorney *attended* the following *training sessions and seminars* and/or served as *resource person*, thereto:
 - a. *Guest of Honor and Speaker, Meeting (Theme: Violence Against Women and Children) of the Inner Wheel Club of the Philippines (IWCP) Turquoise of Quezon City*, held on December 1, 2014, Rotary Center, Roces Ave. cor. Mother Ignacia St., Quezon City;
 - b. *Speaker, 2014 International Forum on Legal Aid*, sponsored by the Legal Aid Foundation of Taiwan, held on October 25 to 27, 2014, in Taipei, Taiwan;
 - c. *Resource Speaker, Pambansang Kongreso sa Salin*. August 7, 2014, University of the Philippines-Iloilo City;
 - d. *Speaker, International Conference on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems*. Chief Persida V. Rueda-Acosta served as Panel Speaker during the International Conference on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, hosted by the Government of South Africa, Legal Aid South Africa, together with the International Legal Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, held on June 24-26, 2014, in Johannesburg, South Africa;
 - e. *Keynote Speaker, Philippine Private School Health Officers' Association's (PSHOA) Convention*, held on April 10, 2014 at the Bayanihan Hall of the Unilab Laboratories, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City;
 - f. *Guest of Honor/Speaker, Bataan Peninsula State University 2013 Commencement Exercises*, held on April 2, 2014 at the Bataan People's Center, City of Balanga, Bataan;
 - g. *Guest of Honor/Speaker, Regular General Membership Meeting of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilpinas (KBP)*, held on March 19, 2014 at The Residences, Esperanza St., Makati City;
 - h. *Guest of Honor/Speaker, Public Installation of Elected and Appointed Officers of Hamtic Lodge No. 76*, held

on March 8, 2014 at the Masonic Center of Antique, Bantayan (Brgy. 2), San Jose, Antique;

- i. **Resource Person, Seminar on Katarungang Pambarangay.** The Alliance of Lupon Justices, Inc., member organization of different Lupon Tagapamayapa in Caloocan, invited Chief Persida V. Rueda-Acosta and other authorized senior public attorneys from the Central Office and PAO-Caloocan District Office to serve as Resource Persons during the said association's seminar that was conducted on February 22, 2014 in Caloocan City; and
 - j. **Resource Person, Seminar on the Perks of Being a Public Attorney,** upon the invitation of the Pre-Law Society of the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Cavite City, held on February 18, 2014 at the Museo de La Salle, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Cavite City;
4. The Chief Public Attorney ***personally handled and/or led*** the following ***cases*** and/or ***rendered legal assistance*** to the following individuals, to wit:

A.

The seventy-one (71) civil cases filed by the PAO against Sulpicio Lines, Inc. (SLI) on behalf of the victims of the M/V Princess of the Stars maritime tragedy. These cases are currently undergoing trial at the Regional Trial Court – Branch 49, Manila.

Sixty-four (64) civil cases filed by the PAO for the abovementioned tragedy undergoing trial at the Regional Trial Court – Branch 16, Cebu City.

The criminal case for Reckless Imprudence in the same tragedy currently pending at the Regional Trial Court – Branch 5, Manila;

B.

The cases of Bonita Baran that are currently undergoing trial. The PAO is presently assisting and coordinating closely with the trial prosecutors in the following criminal cases:

- i. **Criminal Case No. Q-12-178028** entitled, "***People of the Philippines versus Analiza Catahan-Marzan y Tarroza alias 'Analiza Marzan' and Reynold Marzan y Tan***", for Serious Illegal Detention pending before Regional Trial Court- Branch No. 77 of Quezon City;

- ii. *Criminal Case No. 159544-45* also entitled “*People of the Philippines versus Analiza Catahan-Marzan y Tarroza alias ‘Analiza Marzan’ and Reynold Marzan y Tan*”, for Attempted Homicide pending before Metropolitan Trial Court- Branch No. 40 of Quezon City; and
- iii. *Criminal Case No. 159537-43* for Serious Physical Injuries with the same title and also pending before Metropolitan Trial Court- Branch No. 40 of Quezon City.

C.

Ms. Filipina Cudia, in her Petition-in-Intervention filed with the Supreme Court on March 25, 2014. The said petition was filed on behalf of her son, Cadet First Class Aldrin Jeff P. Cudia to join and reinforce the earlier Petition filed by Mr. Renato Cudia with the High Court.

The said Petition-in-Intervention sought: (a) to challenge the Philippine Military Academy’s (PMA) decision to dismiss Cadet Cudia from the PMA and deprive him of his right to be a part of the March 16, 2014 graduation rites thereat, for having been rendered with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction; (b) to command the PMA to confer upon Cadet Cudia his rights and benefits as a lawfully-entitled graduate of the Academy.

The Consolidated Comment dated June 17, 2014, filed by the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), the PMA Honor Committee of 2014 (HC) and the PMA Cadet Review and Appeals Board (CRAB), through the Office of the Solicitor General was countered by the Reply of Ms. Cudia, as assisted by PAO.

The said Reply was later adopted by the petitioners Renato Cudia and Atty. Berteni Cataluna Causing (via a *Manifestation with Motion for Leave to Adopt Reply of Intervenor to the Office of the Solicitor General*, dated August 18, 2014).

Meanwhile, on July 21, 2014, Ms. Cudia filed a *Manifestation with Motion to Submit Case for Early Resolution*; followed by a *Manifestation with Second Motion to Submit Case for Early Resolution* filed on September 30, 2014; and lastly, a *Third Motion to Submit Case for Early Resolution and Reiteration of Manifestation in Lieu of Memorandum* filed on December 11, 2014. The

first two (2) manifestations with motions were duly noted by the Supreme Court.

5. The Chief Public Attorney received the following prestigious **awards**, to wit:

- a. *Outstanding San Rafaeleno 2014*, given during the 6th Anniversary of D' San Rafaelenos in celebration of Araw ng San Rafael on December 30, 2014 at the San Rafael Civic & Sports Complex, Poblacion, San Rafael, Bulacan;
- b. *The Gintong Palad Public Service Award*, given by the Movie Writers Welfare Foundation and the Rotary Club of Intramuros, Manila on November 29, 2014 at the Ilustrado Restaurant in Intramuros, Manila;
- c. *Special Award for an Individual in the Government Service*, conferred during the 16th Founding Anniversary of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) on August 20, 2014 at NBI Gym, Taft Avenue, Manila;
- d. *FAMAS Excellence Award in Criminal Justice*, (conferred also to the PAO Jail Visitation Team) from the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences (FAMAS), on July 13, 2014 at Solaire Entertainment City, Parañaque City;
- e. *The 2014 Gawad Justice Felix Angelo Bautista (for the Prosecution Pillar)*, given by the Philippine College of Criminology Alumni Association, Inc., during the 2nd Gawad Justice Felix Angelo Bautista on May 20, 2014 at the Ballroom of the Century Park Hotel, Manila;
- f. *Recognition*, given by the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU) Law School-Rockwell, headed by Dean Sedfrey Candelaria and by the Ateneo Law Alumni Association, during the Testimonial Luncheon and Recognition that was held for its graduates and alumni who are currently employed at the PAO. Thirty (30) *Atenean* lawyers, including the current Chief Public Attorney who is an alumna of the ADMU Law School, were given such an honor on February 21, 2014 at ADMU Law School; and
- g. *Certificate of Merit*, during the Parangal sa Mag-aaral of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City, which recognized outstanding students in the second semester, 2012-2013 and in the first semester, 2013-2014, Chief Persida V. Rueda-Acosta, Ph.D student thereat, received the said recognition for having an average of 1.00. Chief Acosta is a Civil Service Commission/Presidential

Lingkod Bayan Scholar, per E.O. 508 of former President Corazon C. Aquino. The Parangal was held on February 19, 2014 at the UP Film Center.

● **THE PAO LEGAL AND FORENSIC TEAM**

❖ **Assistance to the Orellano Sisters**

The father of three (3) minors who sought legal and forensic assistance from the PAO-Central Office on May 2, 2014, in behalf of his daughters who were allegedly raped by their cousin. In connection thereto, one (1) count of Attempted Rape and five (5) counts of Rape were filed against the said relative on June 2, 2014 in Pangasinan.

❖ **Legal and Forensic Assistance to the Families of the Two (2) Jesus Is Lord (JIL) Preachers Who were Allegedly Raped and Murdered by Policemen**

The legal and forensic assistance extended to the victims' families led to the arrest and detention of the policemen who allegedly raped and killed the two female preachers. The Warrant for their Arrest was issued last January 15, 2014.

The criminal case for Rape and Murder is currently undergoing trial in the RTC of Batangas. Likewise, the administrative case for Grave Misconduct filed against them before the National Police Commission Region 4 is also undergoing trial for presentation of evidence.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

❖ **Agreement on Mutual Assistance for Citizens of the Philippines and Taiwan**

The Public Attorney's Office (PAO) and the Legal Aid Foundation (LAF), R.O.C., Taiwan, signed an Agreement on Mutual Assistance for Citizens of Both Countries, on October 27, 2014, the last day of the International Forum on Legal Aid in Taipei, Taiwan.

The said Agreement was signed by Chief Acosta for the PAO, and Chairperson Lin Chun-Jung for LAF, to safeguard the basic right of citizens to receive legal assistance and facilitate sharing and exchange between the PAO and LAF.

The beneficiaries of the Agreement are Filipinos in Taiwan, and Taiwanese in the Philippines, who are seeking legal

assistance and are qualified for the legal services of the said organizations.

❖ **5TH MCLE-Accredited National Convention for Public Attorneys**

The PAO conducted the 5th MCLE-Accredited National Convention for Public Attorneys that was held from October 13 to 17, 2014 at the Manila Hotel.

The PAO, being an MCLE provider since 2002, was able to grant free MCLE-accredited courses for its public attorneys nationwide. Free MCLE-accredited courses were also offered to public attorneys during the past four (4) MCLE-accredited conventions of the PAO, which were held in 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2011.

❖ **2014 Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) Breakthrough Agency Award from the Civil Service Commission (CSC)**

The Public Attorney's Office received the 2014 Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) Breakthrough Agency Award from the Civil Service Commission (CSC), on October 22, 2014 at the Luxent Hotel, Timog Avenue, Quezon City.

The PAO-Central Office and the PAO-Cagayan De Oro District Office were featured in the book, *Breakthrough – Game Changers in Public Frontline Service Delivery*, published by the Civil Service Commission, and was launched also during the aforesaid CSC event.

PAO-Central Office was featured as one of the *Game Changers in Government* while *PAO-Cagayan De Oro*, one of the ten frontline offices which the CSC called the *Ten Paragons of Excellence*.

❖ **Excellent Performance of the Public Attorney's Office Recognized by the Civil Service Commission With Seal of Excellence and Cash Prize**

For their EXCELLENT performance in providing service to the public and adherence to the requirements of Republic Act No. 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA), the PAO-Central Office, PAO-Malabon and PAO-Las Piñas District Offices were awarded with the Citizen's Satisfaction Center Seal of Excellence plus a cash prize of P100,000.00 each by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on June 29, 2014.

CSC Commissioner Nieves L. Osorio conferred the award for the Central Office to the Honorable Chief Public Attorney Persida V. Rueda-Acosta, while the awards for Malabon and Las Piñas District Offices were accepted by the its Officers-in-Charge, Atty. Eric Alajar and Atty. Rogel Jimenez, respectively. The awarding was held after the flag ceremony on June 29, 2014 at the Parole and Probation Administration (PPA) Multi-Purpose Hall, DOJ Agencies Building, NIA Road corner East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

- ❖ In a Certification from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) dated March 12, 2014, the PAO-Regional Office No. III was recognized for obtaining a final numerical rating of 85.76 with a final descriptive rating of GOOD relative to the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) Report Card Survey conducted by the CSC Regional Office No. III. Further, PAO-Macabebe was awarded by the CSC a “Citizen’s Satisfaction Center of Excellence” together with a cash award of P100,000.00.
- ❖ The Public Attorney’s Office placed second on the latest results on the Report Card Survey (RCS) conducted by the Civil Service Commission relative to its compliance with *Republic Act 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) of 2007*. The following are clippings from broadsheets to this effect:

By Michael Punongbayan, The Philippine Star, February 27, 2014

“Xxx Xxx Xxx

The RCS covered 929 government offices nationwide and measured compliance with Republic Act 9485 or the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA).

Xxx Xxx Xxx

The latest RCS results now place the offices of the Land Bank of the Philippines, **Public Attorney’s Office** and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the “**Excellent**” category.” (Emphasis supplied)

Xxx Xxx Xxx

67 gov’t agencies fail anti-red tape test.”

By Merck Maggudayao, Manila Standard \Today,
February 27, 2014

“Xxx

Xxx

Xxx

The **PAO**, Land Bank of the Philippines, and the LTO registered the most number of Excellent and Good grades while the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had the most number of offices with Acceptable grades. (Emphasis supplied)

Xxx

Xxx

Xxx

67 offices fail report card survey.”

❖ **PAO-Tagbilaran District Office, Granted With the CSC’s Citizen’s Satisfaction Center Seal of Excellence Plus a Cash Prize**

PAO-Tagbilaran District Office was awarded with the Citizen’s Satisfaction Center Seal of Excellence plus a cash prize of P100,000.00 by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on January 17, 2014 at the CSC Regional Office No. 7, Sudlon, Lahug, Cebu City.

PAO-Tagbilaran District Office was honored for having obtained an EXCELLENT rating of 91.84 from the CSC, in connection with the latter’s Report Card Survey (RCS) relative to the observance of the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) of 2007. The said district office was also able to pass the two-phased validation process conducted by the CSC-Central Office. The monetary award is to be used in purchasing office equipment, materials and services that will further improve PAO’s delivery of its frontline services.

VI. Administrative Concerns

The PAO, in the delivery of its mandated mission, is complemented by several administrative units that render support to its technical operations. Altogether, they managed to carry out its operations with utmost efficiency and dedication throughout the year.

- **PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT**

The table below shows the number of authorized, filled, and unfilled positions in the PAO for the year 2014, to wit:

	Authorized	Filled	Unfilled
Lawyers	1,536	1,522	14
Support Personnel	1,025	1,016	9
TOTAL	2,561	2,538	23

- **PERSONNEL MOVEMENT**

From January to December 1, 2014, the movement of personnel in the PAO is shown here below:

	Lawyer	Support Staff	TOTAL
Recruited	91	27	118
Promoted	67	44	111

- **PERSONNEL ENHANCEMENT**

The PAO has conducted a series of seminars to enhance the capability, knowledge and professional skills of participants in order to mold them into efficient and truly competitive legal counsels.

It has been the PAO's practice to provide continuous seminars and training programs to its personnel, specifically lawyers, to keep them abreast with the recent developments in law and jurisprudence. Thus, ensuring the efficiency and capability of the public attorneys in protecting the rights of the oppressed and indigents.

Aside from training programs and seminars conducted by the office, lawyers and support personnel from the PAO have likewise attended other trainings, seminars, workshops and conferences upon invitation of other government and non-government organizations.

From January to December 2014, there were about **137 seminars** attended by PAO personnel. A total of **551 lawyers** and **24 support staff** were registered in attendance.

- **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The approved appropriation for the PAO for the year 2014 is **Php 1,898,292,000.00** and was fully released, intended to cover funding for the operational requirements. In addition, Performance-

Based Bonuses of **Php 29,678,000.00** and **Php 12,690,000.00** for Productivity Enhancement Incentive were released. The amount of **Php 31,135,162.00** was also released for the Terminal Leave benefits of retired employees. The total obligations for FY 2014 amounted to **Php 1,971,795,051.00**.

• **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The PAO, through its library services, envisions giving better and more efficient means of assisting its clientele through the use of modern and advanced information-assisted technology such as the Internet, modern fax machines, and telephone units for seamless transmission of output.

For January to December 2014, a total of **364** copies of legal books and reference materials were purchased and distributed to PAO Regional Offices and District Offices. The PAO also has a yearly subscription of the *Lex Libris* Bulletin which is a compilation of laws, jurisprudence circulars, memoranda, etc. in a compact disc (CD) supplied by CD Technologies Asia Inc.

The PAO Library, through its personnel, was able to collate a total of **464 news releases** from twelve (**12**) various broadsheets and tabloids for the year 2014 which include, among others, the following:

- The jail visitation conducted by the Public Attorney's Office in several city jails including - Camp Bagong Diwa, Manila City Jail, New Bilibid Prison, etc.;
- The case of *MV Princess of the Stars* that sank on June 21, 2008 in Romblon. PAO is the legal counsel of the relatives of the victims.
- The case of Bonita Baran, tortured domestic helper in Quezon City causing her to go blind and suffer facial, head and other disabling injuries. PAO is the legal counsel of Bonita Baran.
- The case of Cadet 1st Class Jeff Aldrin Cudia. The PAO handles the case of Cadet 1st Class Cudia.
- The Excellent Report Card ratings of the Public Attorney's Office – Central Office and other PAO district offices, relative to the Anti-Red Tape Act Survey being conducted by the Civil Service Commission.

- The Testimonial Luncheon held at the Ateneo Professional Schools Building in Rockwell, Makati City for graduates of Ateneo School of Law serving at the Public Attorney's Office.
- The Excellence in the Criminal Justice System "*Pro Bono Publico Patria*" Award to Chief Public Attorney Persida V. Rueda-Acosta given by officials of the Philippine College of Criminology Alumni Association headed by Dr. Lily Lim at the Century Park Hotel on May 20, 2014.
- The speech delivered by Chief Public Attorney Persida V. Rueda-Acosta during the 2nd Gawad Justice Felix Angelo Bautista Awards at the Century Park Hotel on May 20, 2014.
- The 5th MCLE-Accredited National Convention of Public Attorney's Office held at the Tent City, Manila Hotel on October 13 to 17 2014.
- The conferment of the Civil Service Commission of the prestigious 2014 Anti-Red Tape Act Breakthrough Agency Award to the Public Attorney's Office on October 22, 2014.
- The signing of the Mutual Legal Aid Agreement by the Public Attorney's Office and Legal Aid Foundation of Taiwan held on October 27, 2014, in Taipei, Taiwan.
- The MWWF Gintong Palad Public Service Award given to Chief Public Attorney Persida V, Rueda-Acosta for government category on November 29, 2014 at the Function Room of the Ilustrado Restaurant in Intramuros, Manila.

Through its tri-media linkages, the PAO has continuously been rendering legal advice to the general public through the newspaper columns *Say Mo Attorney?* Published in *People's Tonight*; *Atorni First* published in *Pinoy Parazzi*; *Dear PAO*, published in *The Manila Times*, and *Magtanong Kay Attorney*, published in *Bulgar*. A total of **155 articles** for *Say Mo Attorney?*, **354 articles** for *Dear PAO*, **357 articles** for *Magtanong kay Attorney*, and **104 articles** for *Atorni First* were published and clipped into file from January to December, 2014.

● OFFICE EQUIPMENT

For the period covering **January to December, 2014**, the PAO purchased and distributed the following office equipment, to wit:

* Chairs	388 units
* Tables	12 units
* Monitor	1 unit
* Printers	34 units
* Air conditioners	53 units
* Fax Machines	20 units
* Metal Detectors	3 units
* Floor Polishers	3 units
* Steel Filing Cabinets	10 units
* Keyboard	1 unit
* Shelves	2 units
* Water Dispenser	15 units
* Cameras	2 units
* Microphones	4 units
* Microscope	1 unit

Since her assumption into office, it has been the battle cry of the Chief Public Attorney to put into oblivion the traditional impression of public offices littered with office supply and obsolete and/or worn out office equipment. With the purchase of the foregoing office furnishings, such as chairs, filing cabinets, tables, and posture chairs, PAO personnel were able to perform their duties in a more office-friendly environment. Needless to say, it somehow contributed to the continuously swelling public trust to the services of the PAO.

In addition, the computerization program of the PAO saw the continuous upgrading of existing computer units in order to cope up with the fast changing times and technology.

VII. Technical Operations

1. PAO-NLRC SUB-STATION

By virtue of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) and the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), the PAO maintains its sub-station at the NLRC, located in Banawe in Quezon City, to serve its clients.

The sub-station facilitates the rendition of legal assistance to complaining workers before the NLRC and aims to expedite the proceedings; hence, it makes its services more accessible to complaining workers.

The efficiency and effectiveness of this office has been proven for years. For the period covering January to December 2014, a total of **12,655** clients were accommodated and given legal assistance.

2. RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION

For the year 2014, a total of **3,069 research works** were duly accomplished by the Public Attorney's Office through the Legal Research Service.

For the said period, the PAO, through the Legal Research Service, was able to answer **366** legal queries, and out of which, **122** answered questions were published in newspapers of national circulation. These include legal questions from the public that were either directly addressed or referred to the PAO. The sudden upsurge in the number of research works was brought about by the increasing public trust coupled with consistent tri-media linkages as means of education and information dissemination of the PAO. The accessibility of the Chief Public Attorney herself for public services has, for one reason, made a great difference.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS AGAINST PAO EMPLOYEES

From January to December 2014, ***269 cases were resolved and terminated*** out of ***468 administrative complaints*** received by the PAO - Legal Research Service. As a result of these cases, several PAO Personnel received administrative sanctions, after due notice and hearing pursuant to the Revised Rules on Administrative Cases for the Civil Service. Four (4) were Dismissed from the Service, four (4) were Fined, one (1) was Reprimanded, twenty-seven (27) were Admonished, one (1) was Sternly Warned, one-hundred and two (102) were Advised or Earnestly Advised, and two (2) were Dropped from the Rolls.

This further proves the PAO's resolve in fulfilling its mandate effectively, even to the extent of disciplining its own ranks. This shows that misconduct or unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated, especially since the PAO, through the fortitude of the Chief Public Attorney, has been trying to preserve the integrity not only of the entire agency but of every lawyer and personnel appointed in the office.

VIII. Continuing Plans and Programs

- A.** Capacity building for support staff to enhance their competence as partners of public attorneys in rendering legal service.
- B.** Coordinate with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and other agencies for acquisition of land and eventually for the construction of the PAO's own building.
- C.** Development of an internal operating system to address all Information Technology (IT) concerns, for the rendition of prompt and effective legal services to the indigents;
- D.** Organization, establishment and maintenance of database, case management, and monitoring system for all cases handled by PAO nationwide;
- E.** Compliance with ISO 9000 and the Government Quality Management Systems Standards (GQMSS), pursuant to Administrative Order No. 161, dated October 5, 2006;
- F.** Maintain and upgrade the PAO Forensic Laboratory for the furtherance of investigation being conducted relative to cases handled by this Office, pursuant to Republic Act 9745 (Anti-Torture Act of 2009), Republic Act No. 9262 (Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004, Republic Act 8353 (Anti-Rape Law) and other existing laws mandating the PAO to assist the victims or accused on a first come-first served basis;
- G.** Development of talents of personnel through trainings and support to PAO-Chorale members;
- H.** Open a Medical and Dental Clinic at the PAO-Central Office for the health benefit of its employees;
- I.** Policy advocacy and coordination for the enhancement of the PAO Victims' Protection Unit;
- J.** Continuously carry out activities and outreach programs for the welfare of prisoners and inmates such as the PAO's Legal and Medical Jail Visitation and Decongestion Program;
- K.** Continuation of the "PAO's Advanced Training/Workshop in Forensic Medicine and Science" pursuant to DOJ Memorandum Circular No. 1, dated January 7, 2008, as part of manpower capacity building;

- L.** Continuous promotion of good governance, professionalism, and anti-corruption measures;
- M.** Continuous improvement of communication facilities and other office equipment;
- N.** Vigorous efforts to implement compensation scheme, financial incentives and retirement benefits of the PAO lawyers to further motivate them in discharging their duties and/or stay in the service pursuant to R.A. No. 9406 (PAO Law);
- O.** Continuous capacity building, enhancement of the skills and competence of PAO lawyers and staff through the holding of workshops and seminars;
- P.** Increase the number of lawyers and support staff assigned in each of the Regional and District Offices for a more effective and efficient delivery of services pursuant to Republic Act 9406 (PAO Law);
- Q.** Continuous coordination with the tri-media for the advancement of the PAO outreach activities, more particularly, dissemination of free legal advice, counselling, and mediation;
- R.** Vigorously pursue the rendition of prompt, effective and adequate legal services to the indigent sector;
- S.** Maintain programs and policies in achieving virtues of excellence, integrity, professionalism and moral values of all PAO lawyers and staff;
- T.** Strive to achieve the ideal situation of one PAO lawyer being assigned to one court for a more effective and efficient representation of clients;
- U.** Empowerment of the PAO's capacity in promoting Gender and Development (GAD) Program of the government such as the creation of projects and activities that will promote gender sensitivity;
- V.** Continuous active participation of the PAO in the on-going anti-corruption, pro-poor and social justice programs of the Aquino administration; and

W. Continuous cooperation with the courts in the case decongestion program being spearheaded by the Supreme Court.

Concluding Statement

All said, it is with great honor and humility that we at the Public Attorney's Office submit this Accomplishment Report outlining our achievements, coupled with awards and recognitions, for the year 2014 as well as our plans for the coming year/s. We are hopeful that our service to the nation contributes to the larger goal of achieving justice for all.

Further, it is with confidence that we state that the allotted resources for the PAO were put into good and efficient use. Loosely stating, for the year 2014, the Philippine Government has spent P258.00¹ in legal fees each time an indigent (or otherwise qualified person for PAO's services) was served by the PAO. This amount not only covers lawyer's salaries/allowances but also includes everything from paper, photocopying, costs of evidence gathering, etc. – an extremely small amount, considering the costs of legal services today.

Despite the enormous task conferred to us by law, and the limited resources at our disposal, we continue to strive and exert ourselves to reach beyond our limits, and achieve significant steps toward providing a basic constitutional right for all, i.e. access to adequate legal assistance² - all in the name of serving the Filipino People.

January 22, 2015

PERSIDA V. RUEDA-ACOSTA
Chief Public Attorney

¹ Total Budget received excluding Terminal Leave for the year 2014 (divided by) Total number of clients Assisted/Served for the year 2014.

² 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Article III, Section 11 – Free Access to the courts and quasi-judicial bodies and **adequate legal assistance shall not be denied to any person by reason of poverty** (emphasis supplied).