



## Mactan-Cebu International Airport fortifies its capacity to respond swiftly and effectively during disaster with second GARD Workshop

**CEBU, 8 October 2024:** The Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (MCIAA) organized the second Get Airports Ready for Disaster (GARD) Workshop on September 23-27 with support from the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and lead trainer DHL Group. This workshop followed the first held in Cebu in 2014.

Organized in the Mactan-Cebu International Airport, the five-day workshop had 38 participants, including representatives from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, airport terminal operators, Office of Civil Defense, Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Immigration, local government unit, PNP Aviation Security Group (PNP), and Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP).

“The GARD Workshop is an essential initiative in fortifying our airport’s capacity to respond swiftly and effectively in the event of a disaster.

By conducting thorough assessments and identifying areas for enhancement in our airport operations, we ensure the public that the Mactan-Cebu International Airport remains resilient and prepared to handle the challenges that come with increased air traffic during crisis situations.

Together with key stakeholders, including government agencies, international partners, and humanitarian organizations, we are taking proactive steps to safeguard the continuity of vital operations here at MCIAA and, ultimately, to help save lives in times of need,” said Julius G. Neri Jr, General Manager and CEO, MCIAA.

"Reflecting on the 2013 Typhoon Yolanda response, when Mactan Cebu Airport became a crucial hub for relief efforts, we recognized the logistical challenges our country faces during disasters. After bringing the GARD program to five airports, including Mactan Cebu, we aim to expand further, building the capacities of more airports and enhancing coordination for future disaster response," said Guillermo Luz, PDRF Chief Resilience Officer.

As a founding member of GARD, UNDP Philippines Resident Representative Dr. Selva Ramachandran, conveyed through UNDP Philippines Programme Analyst Mark Anthony Ramirez, emphasized the ongoing partnership with the PDRF, as well as UNDP’s collaboration with the private sector, including DHL, and its partnership with the WFP in implementing GARD. "We are honored and confident in our ability to support the Philippine Government in enhancing the capabilities of our airport hubs to effectively respond to emergencies and disasters. UNDP is dedicated to strengthening the government’s capacity for early warning, preparedness, and early action in the face of crises," Dr. Ramachandran noted.

Echoing Dr. Ramachandran's remarks, WFP Head of Supply Chain Mr. Joao Merencio added, "The GARD initiative goes beyond serving as an operational framework. It is about establishing robust systems and strengthening the capacity to manage disaster response. By assessing, and enhancing existing airport and its personnel capacities, we can collectively ensure that relief reaches affected communities in the most timely and efficient manner possible."

The workshop focused on airport assessments, identifying areas of improvement, and collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of logistics for the movement of aid during a disaster. It targets to help in developing local know-how on ensuring Mactan-Cebu International Airport is well-equipped to play its role as a logistics hub for critical life-saving supplies, materials and for search-and-rescue personnel. The workshop is conducted by GARD instructors, specially trained logistics and training experts from the DHL Group with the support of trainers from organizations like IFATCA.

"We are pleased to have been able to work with the Mactan-Cebu International Airport under its now Public Private Partnership and do the GARD assessment for the new airport. With Cebu Airport as a strategic hub and spoke in and for the region, it is important that we had this workshop again to help all stakeholders who are party to preparedness and response in the event of a disaster.

Also this year, like for the GARD workshop last December in Paro, Bhutan, we have received outstanding support from the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers Associations (IFATCA), whose participating specialist with decades of experience shared critical insights on managing the air traffic coming into the airport," said Carl Schelfhaut, Head of the GoHelp Program for Asia Pacific, DHL Group.

Established in 2009, GARD is a public-private partnership between UNDP and DHL Group. It aims to echo the demand for airport preparedness and response capacity of transportation hubs in the event of disasters. The program, launched in 60 airports in 28 countries, includes training personnel in handling the influx of goods and people during calamities, assisting local authorities in relief operations, and assessing the current state of concerned airports. This year, the GARD public-private partnership marks its 15th year of preparing airports for disasters.

#### **Media Contacts:**

PDRF - Isabel Almenteros-Maravillas, [malmenteros@pdrf.org.ph](mailto:malmenteros@pdrf.org.ph)

DHL Group - Nicholas Leong, [Nicholas.Leong@dhl.com](mailto:Nicholas.Leong@dhl.com)

#### **About Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority**

Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (MCIAA) was created through Republic Act 6958 otherwise known as its corporate charter. The MCIAA is a government-owned and controlled corporation and is an attached agency of the Department of Transportation (DOTr). The Authority shall principally undertake the economical, efficient and effective control, management and supervision of the Mactan-Cebu International Airport, Bantayan Island Airport, Camotes Airport, and other airports that may be established in the province of Cebu. For more information, kindly visit <https://mciaa.gov.ph/profile/>.

#### **About The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation**

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector vehicle and coordinator for disaster resilience. As an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster risk management capabilities of the private sector in the country, PDRF aims to contribute to the sustainable development and the general welfare of the Filipino people. For more information, visit [www.pdrf.org](http://www.pdrf.org).

**DHL – The logistics company for the world**

DHL is the leading global brand in the logistics industry. Our DHL divisions offer an unrivalled portfolio of logistics services ranging from national and international parcel delivery, e-commerce shipping and fulfillment solutions, international express, road, air and ocean transport to industrial supply chain management. With about 395,000 employees in more than 220 countries and territories worldwide, DHL connects people and businesses securely and reliably, enabling global sustainable trade flows. With specialized solutions for growth markets and industries including technology, life sciences and healthcare, engineering, manufacturing & energy, auto-mobility and retail, DHL is decisively positioned as “The logistics company for the world”.

DHL is part of DHL Group. The Group generated revenues of more than 81.8 billion euros in 2023. With sustainable business practices and a commitment to society and the environment, the Group makes a positive contribution to the world. DHL Group aims to achieve net-zero emissions logistics by 2050.