

**Office of the President  
of the Philippines  
Malacañang**

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 94**

**CREATING THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE FOR THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA**

**WHEREAS**, Section 7, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interest, and the right to self-determination are paramount considerations of the Philippines in its relations with the international community;

**WHEREAS**, Section 3, Article II of the 1987 Constitution mandates the Armed Forces of the Philippines to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory;

**WHEREAS**, Section 2, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State is bound to protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino citizens;

**WHEREAS**, consistent with the Constitution, the Philippines' interests in the West Philippine Sea include the maintenance and protection of Philippine sovereignty, preservation and defense of territorial integrity, and promotion of the welfare and well-being of the Filipino people;

**WHEREAS**, the issues, policies, and required actions in the West Philippine Sea transcend the maritime security domain as these extend to other areas of concern such as in the diplomatic, politico-legal, information, military and law enforcement, and socio-economic fields; and

**WHEREAS**, given the country's national interest, national policies and evolving strategic landscape, a more deliberate and coherent approach in addressing the West Philippine Sea issue is needed for the purpose of orchestrating the national effort and achieving unified action in the West Philippine Sea.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the concerned agencies are hereby directed as follows:

**SECTION 1. Creation of the National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea.** The National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) is hereby formally established composed of representatives from the following:

Chairperson:	National Security Adviser
Members:	Department of Foreign Affairs
	Department of National Defense
	Department of Justice
	Department of the Interior and Local Government
	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
	Department of Energy
	Department of Agriculture
	Department of Trade and Industry
	Department of Transportation and Communications
	Department of Finance
	National Economic and Development Authority
	National Coast Watch System

Armed Forces of the Philippines  
Philippine National Police – Maritime Group  
Philippine Coast Guard  
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources  
Such other government officials and private citizens as the  
Chairperson may designate from time to time.

The NTF-WPS shall be composed of permanent representatives from each of the relevant agencies with the rank of Undersecretary as regular members, and such other officials of support and concerned agencies as necessary.

The National Security Council shall provide administrative and technical support to the NTF-WPS.

**SECTION 2. Functions of the NTF-WPS.** The NTF-WPS shall receive guidance from the President, through the Cabinet Cluster on Security, Justice and Peace. It shall be responsible in orchestrating and synchronizing the employment of the different national government agencies' capabilities to achieve the national objectives in the WPS and in submitting such reports and/or recommendations to the President through the Security Cluster. The functions of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on the WPS shall now be transferred to and performed by the NTF-WPS.

**SECTION 3. Creation of Area-level and Tactical-level Task Forces.** The NTF-WPS shall create an Area-level Task Force (ATF) which shall orchestrate and synchronize the efforts of the different government agencies at the area level. It shall receive guidance and direction from the NTF-WPS. Concerned government agencies shall closely coordinate with the ATF in the employment of their capabilities, assets, equipment, and personnel.

The ATF may organize Tactical-level Task Forces (TTFs) composed of units, assets, capabilities and elements of different agencies. TTFs shall perform their mandates in accordance with the guidance and direction made by the ATF. Depending on the coordination and mechanisms made, all actions undertaken by these government units shall be reported to the ATF directly or through their respective regional offices.

**SECTION 4. Support and Cooperation.** All branches of the government, departments, bureaus, agencies, offices, and local government units, including government-owned or –controlled corporations, are directed to render full support, assistance, and cooperation to the National Task Force in carrying out its mandates and function.

**SECTION 5. Separability.** If any provision of this Circular is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions unaffected shall remain valid and subsisting.

**SECTION 6. Repeal.** All orders, proclamations, rules, regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Circular are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 7. Effectivity.** This Circular shall take effect immediately.

**DONE**, in the City of Manila, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Sixteen.

By Authority of the President:

  
**PAQUITO N. OCHOA, JR.**  
Executive Secretary