

IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

Crewing Officer, Roel Aballe starts his daily routine mostly before sunrise. That small space at the office seems to be the busiest place not only during work week but even on Sundays & Holidays. "Crewing is not an easy job, but I can say it's seasonal at times," Roel commented. "But if you equate the workload during normal times as against this still ongoing pandemic, it's a lot different." He added.

Indeed this pandemic brought additional work load to our crewing personnel. In addition to the mostly procedural duties, our company must follow certain protocols laid down for the prevention of COVID19 by the government. Seafarers are now required to be quarantined for specific amount of days upon arrival, these have to be coordinated with related governmental agencies like MARINA and POEA OFW Welfare Monitoring System, in addition, for each scheduled arrival, they have to check the availability of accommodation from participating hotel establishments and make the necessary booking thereafter.

POEA's timely launching of the program OWMS (OFW Welfare Monitoring System) shows the sincere concern of our government for our OFW's. The program was created as an online system intended to closely monitor the current situation of all Filipinos working abroad. This program is used by local recruitment and manning agencies to closely monitor the condition of Filipinos that they have deployed and report the same to POEA. This procedure will give assurance to their respective families that they are well taken cared of.

Aside from Mr. Roel Aballe, Crewing personnel who provides assistance and usually stay up to wee hours in order to complete the task are Paul Christian Orijola, Welfare Officer and Rica Melle Mariano, Crewing Assistant.

Participating establishments in which we have cordial relations are the following:

- Park Inn by Radison (SM North EDSA)
- Jen Hotel
- Blue Lane Hotel
- Sequoia Hotel
- Lucky China Town Hotel
- Y2 Residence Hotel
- Holiday Inn Makati
- Holiday Inn Galleria Ortigas
- Novotel
- Red Planet
- Winford Manila
- Go Hotel (Airport Road)



WHAT'S THE LATEST UPDATE WITH CRYSTAL CRUISES AND GENTING?

By Robert McGillivray
Cruise Hive

The developing story of the past week is, of course, the situation around Asian Cruise Giant Genting Hong Kong. The owner of cruise lines such as Dream Cruises, Star Cruises, and ultra-luxury cruise line Crystal Cruises filed for winding up the company last week.

Since then, various rumors have come out around the future of the different cruise lines. We look back at what has been happening and how the story is unfolding today.

What Happened to Genting Hong Kong?

On January 18, Genting Hongkong Filed for winding up the company with the Supreme Court of Bermuda. Genting Hong Kong owns three cruise lines, a shipyard, various resorts, and several casinos worldwide.

It became clear Genting would default on \$2.8 billion of financing arrangements in the past weeks. Most of this was due to financial arrangements blocked by the German federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern for debts payments of the company's shipyard MV Werften.

As cash runs out, it could be the end for several cruise lines as the company warns that most operations could cease to exist. While bankruptcy would have been an option, it looks as the company is now heading to a restructuring rather than liquidation.

Liquidators Assigned

Lilla Zuill, the lawyer representing Genting, told the courts in Bermuda that a restructuring would be a "better outcome for creditors than a liquidation". The court appointed joint provisional liquidators to facilitate and assist the company in developing and proposing a restructuring of the group's financial indebtedness to continue as a company.

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The appointment of the liquidators will be seen as good news by the Genting board of directors: "The board believes that the appointment of provisional liquidators is essential, and in the interests of the company, its shareholders and its creditors, in order to maximize the chance of success of the financial restructuring and to provide a moratorium on claims and to seek to avoid a disorderly liquidation of the company by any of its creditors,

" CEO Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay said just days before he resigned his position.

Rumors on Crystal Cruises Purchase Begin

The appointment of liquidators also draws into doubt any rumors that have been going around regarding the sale of the various businesses Genting Hong Kong owns. For companies that want to enter the Asian cruise market, both Dream Cruises and Star Cruises are extremely valuable assets.

Crystal Cruises has a longstanding reputation and a large group of well-to-do regular guests, with several brand-new river ships, a brand-new expedition vessel, and two luxury Ocean liners, Crystal would be a target for many investors.

However, any discussion regarding the sale of Dream Cruises, Star Cruises, or Crystal Cruises will be confidential during the process that liquidators Alex Whittaker, Edward Middleton, and Tiffany Wong have started. Should any sale be finalized, it will need to be approved by the courts first.

What About the Guests?

While the process behind Genting Hong Kong and the future of the cruise lines is undoubtedly fascinating, many people will be wondering how guests are protected. There is good news for guests booked onboard any of the Crystal ships sailing from the US.

Federal Maritime Commissioner Louis Sola made a statement this week, saying that guests sailing from a US port will be fully protected by the Federal Maritime Commission. At the same time, Crystal Cruises also has sufficient funds to provide refunds:

"Customers who bought a voyage embarking from a US port have consumer protection safeguards in place by the FMC. Crystal Cruises has sufficient funds to provide refunds for qualifying individuals."

"While consumers might not be able to recover all costs associated with taking a cruise, such as airfare and hotel expenses, they can take comfort that they are protected from losing the money for their cruise ticket as the law requires."

Crystal Serenity Voyage Cut Short

This will certainly be welcome news for many guests who saw their cruises canceled, some who even had their World Cruise canceled shortly after departure. Crystal Serenity guests boarded the vessel for a 116-day world cruise on January 17, yet were told their voyage would end on January 30 in Aruba. ell, they say history repeats itself. I was not able to finish the 2020 World cruise and now on day three of this world cruise Crystal goes bankrupt," Steven Shulem posted on Facebook. "We will all be off the ship next week and have our fingers crossed that someone will buy them, and we can all return to one of our favorite cruise lines."

Crystal Symphony Update

As for guests onboard Crystal Symphony, they were diverted to Bimini in the Bahamas this week after a Miami-based judge placed an arrest warrant on the vessel. Crystal Cruises has been sued for back payments on fuel supplies, amounting to millions of dollars.

Some guests had to take a ferry back to Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale, while other guests had to find their own transportation back to the United States.

Crystal Endeavour Update

Crystal Endeavour, the company's newest ship, operating in Antarctica will be completing its current voyage and return to Ushuaia in Argentina on February 4. All Crystal voyages onboard all three ships have been suspended through April 29, 2022.

Crystal states on its website that it will provide a full refund of the cruise fare paid, which will be processed automatically to the original form of payment. If the cruise was paid via a Future Cruise Payment or Credit, the total value would be returned to their Crystal Society profile account.

What About Dream Cruises and Star Cruises

For guests onboard Dream Cruises ships from Hong Kong, the cruise line still says it will be starting operations again on February 4. Cruises in Singapore are still ongoing, and there are currently no plans to cease those operations.

However, Genting did halt all bookings for all voyages for Dream Cruises last week. The company did the same for Star Cruises, which is currently not operational with its vessels.



LEISURE CRUISE
DIVISION



ALL ABOUT MARKETING

By: *MARIEBEL S. FLORES*

Marketing Executive

MARKETING STRATEGY

What Is a Marketing Strategy?

A marketing strategy refers to a business's overall game plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of their products or services. A marketing strategy contains the company's value proposition, key brand messaging, data on target customer demographics, and other high-level elements. A thorough marketing strategy covers "The four Ps" of marketing—product, price, place, and promotion.

- A marketing strategy is a business's game plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of their products or services.
- Marketing strategies should revolve around a company's value proposition.
- The ultimate goal of a marketing strategy is to achieve and communicate a sustainable competitive advantage over rival companies

Understanding Marketing Strategies

- A clear marketing strategy should revolve around the company's value proposition, which communicates to consumers what the company stands for, how it operates, and why it deserves their business.
- This provides marketing teams with a template that should inform their initiatives across all of the company's products and services. For example, Walmart is widely known as a discount retailer with "everyday low prices," whose business operations and marketing efforts are rooted in that idea.

Marketing Strategies vs. Marketing Plans

- The marketing strategy is outlined in the marketing plan, which is a document that details the specific types of marketing activities a company conducts and contains timetables for rolling out various marketing initiatives.
- Marketing strategies should ideally have longer lifespans than individual marketing plans because they contain value propositions and other key elements of a company's brand, which generally hold constant over the long haul. In other words, marketing strategies cover big-picture messaging, while marketing plans delineate the logistical details of specific campaigns.

Benefits of a Marketing Strategy

- The ultimate goal of a marketing strategy is to achieve and communicate a sustainable competitive advantage over rival companies by understanding the needs and wants of its consumers. Whether it's a print ad design, mass customization, or a social media campaign, a marketing asset can be judged based on how effectively it communicates a company's core value proposition.
- Market research can help chart the efficacy of a given campaign and can help identify untapped audiences to achieve bottom-line goals and increase sales.

Why Does My Company Need a Marketing Strategy?

A marketing plan helps a company direct its advertising investments to where it will have the most impact. A 2019 study found that firms with a documented marketing strategy were 313% more likely to report success in their marketing campaigns.

What Does a Marketing Strategy Look Like?

A marketing strategy will detail the advertising, outreach, and PR campaigns to be carried out by a firm, including how the company will measure the effect of these initiatives. They will typically follow the "four P's". The functions and components of a marketing plan include market research to support pricing decisions and new market entries, tailored messaging that targets certain demographics and geographic areas, platform selection for product and service promotion—digital, radio, Internet, trade magazines, and the mix of those platforms for each campaign, and metrics that measure the results of marketing efforts and their reporting timelines

What Do the 4 Ps Mean in a Marketing Strategy?

The 4 P's are product, price, promotion, and place. These are the key factors that are involved in the marketing of a good or service. The 4 P's can be used when planning a new business venture, evaluating an existing offer, or trying to optimize sales with a target audience. It can also be used to test a current marketing strategy on a new audience.

Is a Marketing Strategy the Same As a Marketing Plan?

The terms marketing plan and marketing strategy are often used interchangeably because a marketing plan is developed based on an overarching strategic framework. In some cases, the strategy and the plan may be incorporated into one document, particularly for smaller companies that may only run one or two major campaigns in a year. The plan outlines marketing activities on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis while the marketing strategy outlines the overall value proposition.

REFERENCE:

INVESTOPEDIA

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HR CORNER

By: MICHELLE G. VALENCIANO
Human Resource Manager

For over two (2) years I've co-managed the Human Resource Department under the Corporate Communication, I've added a lot of experience in the work place. What expedited my grasp in the day to day business of managing HR was the advent of various governmental restrictions and protocols caused by the dreaded COVID19 which did not spare any business/industry for being affected. These sometimes ridiculous restrictions caused us to divert from the normal procedures we follow in going about our job responsibilities from we earn our living.

Lest we completely forget the function and responsibilities of Human Resource Management, let me share you this article.

What is human resource management?

Human resource management is the recruitment, management, and development of employees to serve an organization's goals. In most businesses, this function is overseen by an HR manager or director:

Larger organizations may employ a department of specialists in specific human resource functions such as recruitment, benefits administration, and training. Many organizations manage one or more of these tasks with HR software. Others may outsource HR functions, such as recruiting or payroll, to a vendor.

The science of employee management involves using people analytics to evaluate how well your company is leveraging its talent. By tracking key HR metrics such as job applications and acceptance rates, quality of work, attendance, and employee turnover, people analytics provide objective data to guide HR strategy.

The art of HR involves relational aspects of a company's culture such as team dynamics, communication styles, autonomy, and transparency. HR managers are often called on to provide a sounding board for employees, resolve conflicts between co-workers, and help employees navigate change.

The 8 key functions of human resource management
Human resource management encompasses eight key functions.

Function #1: Recruiting and Hiring

Recruiting and hiring talent is one of the most important HR functions, and it goes far beyond attending job fairs and going through resumes. Workforce planning, writing job descriptions, advertising openings, screening and interviewing applicants, and helping managers make the best hiring decisions are all part of this critical HR function. HR managers need to do this while accomplishing the company's wider goals of attracting a diverse, multigenerational workforce.

HR managers generally also provide support through the hiring and onboarding process, including making job offers, negotiating salary, and enrolling new hires in benefit programs.

Best practices for recruiting and hiring:

To get the right people in the right positions, observe the following best practices:

- **Distribute and sign handbooks:** All personnel policies should be clearly spelled out in an employee handbook, and it should be required reading for all new employees. Communicate the important points in person and have employees sign a document confirming that they have read the handbook and agree to abide by its terms.
- **Sign a comprehensive contract:** Contracts should clearly state the terms of the hiring agreement, including whether employment is at-will and whether the hire is a contract employee.
- **Re-evaluate job descriptions with every hire:** Every employee who holds a position changes it. Treat job descriptions as works in progress to ensure that the employees you hire today are a good fit for the job they'll actually be doing.

- **Pursue diversity:** Bias is often systemic rather than intentional. If you're not getting diverse applicants, you probably need to cast a wider net. Look for job fairs, schools, and marketing platforms with diverse audiences.

- **Conduct exit interviews:** Whether they were a bad fit or a great one, talking to employees who are leaving a position can give you perspective on the nature of the job and the kind of person who will succeed in it.

Function #2: Compensation Management

Compensation management includes establishing salary ranges for positions, placing employees within the ranges based on their qualifications, and adjusting pay to recognize milestones and accomplishments. It also includes managing performance incentives such as year-end bonuses and sales commissions. The HR manager may be responsible for setting corporate strategy and working with front-line supervisors and managers to ensure competitive, equitable compensation practices across the organization.

Best practices for compensation management:

- **Benchmark your compensation plans:** To ensure that your pay is competitive, consult a reliable source such as the National Wage Board, which publishes wage data broken down by occupation and geographic area.
- **Audit salaries for bias:** Setting policies and providing training isn't enough to prevent bias from creeping into an organization's pay. The only way to be sure your pay practices are equitable, and legal, is to conduct regular audits across gender, race, age, ability, and other characteristics protected by antidiscrimination law.

Function #3: Performance Management

Performance management is a continual process of evaluating how individual employees are performing, identifying areas of improvement, and recognizing achievement. Many organizations conduct performance reviews on a regular schedule, often annually, with additional reviews as desired by the employee or manager:

If an employee is underperforming or violating policy, employers may impose discipline or create a performance improvement plan with goals to achieve within a specific time period. For serious infractions, employees may be fired or placed on probation subject to firing. All disciplinary policies should be spelled out in the handbook, and managers should be trained to implement them accordingly.

Best practices for performance management:

A performance management plan helps all employees work to the best of their abilities. These practices will help:

- **Set clear expectations:** Every employee should be working toward concrete, measurable performance goals. For example, if attendance is a key performance indicator, define good attendance. Is it fewer than three absences a year? Does it mean scheduling vacation more than two weeks in advance?
- **Include an initial performance review within 60 days:** In most positions, sixty days is enough time to settle in and begin performing. Checking in with new hires gives the employee and manager a chance to assess the job fit, address any concerns, and make adjustments as needed.
- **Make performance appraisals a give-and-take:** Use check-ins to gather feedback as well as give it. Is the employee happy in their position? Where do they see themselves going in the next year? What would they like to see improved?
- **Appraise continually:** The contents of a performance appraisal should never come as a surprise to the employee. Front-line managers should be communicating regularly with their employees to correct deficiencies and recognize achievements.

Function #4: Benefits Management

Benefits make up approximately 30 percent of total employee compensation. Benefits that are provided as part of an employee's compensation are known as fringe benefits. Fringe benefits have monetary value and are generally subject to taxation. Some examples include health & education benefits and use of a company car. Administering employee benefits is a substantial part of the HR management function.

Best practices for benefits management:

- **Take advantage of software:** Many platforms exist that can reduce the administrative burden of benefits administration, including payroll software and other comprehensive HR software.
- **Ask employees what they want:** You might assume that salary is your employees' chief concern, while your employees might be willing to trade some of that compensation for flexibility. The best way to know is to ask. You'll never please everyone, but at least you can assess your employees' priorities and tailor your package to match.

- **Communicate the full value of your offerings:** It's easy for employees to forget that your investment runs deeper than the bottom line in their paychecks. Some employers provide annual benefits statements spelling out the full compensation costs for each employee.

Function #5: Professional Development and Training

It's human nature to want to grow and learn new things, and employers who capitalize on that desire can reap substantial benefits. On-the-job training may include orientation training to introduce employees to company policies, procedures, and resources; training in job-specific skills and tools; safety training; company strategy meetings; and compliance training. Some companies provide education benefits to fund learning opportunities outside of work. These can range from conventions and seminars to college courses.

Developing employees requires an investment of employee time. Yet education and training can pay off in higher quality, productivity, engagement, and retention.

Best practices for professional development and training:

To provide development opportunities that deliver results, consider these HR best practices:

- **Invest in critical skills:** Some training is essential to your company's performance. Safety and compliance training, for example, are key to protecting your employees. Skills training may be critical to production and quality. Make sure your company is covering all the basics required to properly equip employees for their work.
- **Consider program goals:** Do you want to invest only in on-site training or open the doors to wider opportunities? Do you want to limit benefits to skills required for an employee's current job, or broaden education to include training for future opportunities? Will benefits be available to all employees? Design your training program to meet specific company goals.
- **Measure results:** Training assessments and employee surveys can help you evaluate training needs and the success of your offerings.

Function #6: Employee Relations

Employee relations are all the activities that influence a company's relationships with its employees. Positive employee relations create a happy workforce, which can provide a major competitive edge. A recent study by the World Economic Forum found that happy employees were 13% more productive than unhappy ones.

So what makes employees happy? The best way to find out what your employees want is to ask.

Best practices for employee relations:

These practices lay the foundation for a positive employee relations program:

- **Look beyond pay:** Numerous studies have shown that while pay is important, it's not the primary driver of employee happiness. Various surveys found that aside from compensation, employees valued flexible work schedules, opportunities to move into different roles, and supportive managers as the top motivators to stay with their employers.
- **Reward candor:** You can't give employees everything they want. And your employees can't always tell you what you want to hear: Creating a culture where difficult messages can be heard and handled constructively is key to a high-performing work environment.

- **Use surveys:** Employee surveys and other anonymous communication channels can help you gauge employee relations and identify areas for improvement. Responding to the results can further boost morale by showing that you took the feedback to heart.

- **Live your corporate values:** Like any relationship, employee relations are founded on core values such as honesty, loyalty, fairness, and authenticity. Make sure your company's values are embodied in your policies and practices.

Function #7: Worker Safety and Health

Providing a safe, healthy work environment is a critical function of human resource management. It includes tasks such as creating safety guidelines, providing employee wellness programs, and conducting emergency planning. Many insurers provide discounts on workers' compensation and other business coverage to employers who implement safety programs. Wellness programs may reduce your healthcare premiums. Be sure to talk to your agent and take advantage of these benefits.

Best practices for worker safety and health:

To enhance safety in your workplace, consider the following:

- **Appoint an employee safety leader:** No matter the size of your company or the nature of your work, it's important to have a point person for workplace safety.
- **Conduct emergency planning:** From first aid stations to evacuation drills, your safety program should include measures to mitigate risks to your employees' safety.
- **Address safety in every position:** While jobs in industries such as construction and manufacturing require extensive safety training and protective equipment, even desk jobs involve physical hazards that should be addressed through formal safety guidelines.
- **Require 100% reporting:** All accidents, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to a supervisor and medical attention sought when appropriate. Some safety and accident data must be recorded and reported to HR.

Function #8: Labor Law Compliance

Finally, ensuring that your practices comply with the Philippine Labor Laws is critical to safeguarding your employees and your company. Your compliance program should include policies to prevent harassment or discrimination based on race, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, and genetic information. These characteristics are protected under the law.

Harassment and discrimination complaints often center on hiring and firing decisions, pay equity, promotions, employee conduct, employee leave administration, relationships among staff, and retaliation for complaints.

Best practices for labor law compliance:

The best protection against labor law complaints is to approach the laws systematically and diligently. These best practices are a good start:

- **Seek legal advice:** Your legal advisor should review or draft your policies to ensure they follow the letter of the law.
- **Communicate policies in writing:** Your handbooks should include policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment and provide a means for employees to report infractions.

- **Provide training:** Use company-wide training to explain what discrimination and harassment actually look like and how to prevent it. Managers, especially, need to fully understand the laws and how to handle complaints appropriately.

- **Encourage employees to speak up:** Prompt reporting is critical to defusing a bad situation before it gets worse. Since many complaints involve direct supervisors, employees should have more than one avenue for reporting complaints.

REPRISE:

The power of positive HR management

A positive, systematic approach to HR management starts with sound policies, runs on communication, and measures results through workforce analytics. And it is lived out through shared values such as sincerity and transparency. Get all of those things right, and your company will be able to tap the full power of its people.

People are a company's most valuable resource. They're also one of the hardest resources to manage successfully. Every employee comes to work with a unique set of abilities, needs, and expectations, yet they all need to pull together to drive success.

The role of human resource (HR) management is to assess the work required to achieve a company's goals, put the right people in the right positions to do the work, and empower them to perform at the highest possible levels.

As anyone who has worked in HR will tell you, that's as much an art as a science.

REFERENCE:

The Blue Print





NEVADA REGULATORS GREEN-LIGHT SALE OF PRIMERGY SOLAR + STORAGE PROJECT



By: Kevin Clark
Renewable Energy World

The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada approved the sale of the Iron Point and Hot Pot Solar PV and battery storage projects in Humboldt County, Nevada, northeast of Reno.

Primergy Solar owns and is developing the projects, which include 600 MW of solar paired with 480 MW of battery storage capacity. Battery chemistries were not revealed, but, assuming a standard four-hour duration, the total capacity could be around 2 GWh. The projects are planned to replace the coal-fired North Valmy Generating Station.

NV Energy sought approval from state regulators to buy the projects from Primergy in July 2021.

Iron Point Solar Project is a 250 MW system to be paired with 200 MW of storage capacity and is expected to be commissioned in December 2023. The Hot Pot Solar Project is a 350 MW system and will be paired with 280 MW of battery storage. Hot Pot is expected to be in service by December 2024. Both projects will have the capacity to power 127,000 homes in Nevada, Primergy said.

The North Valmy coal plant has two operating units and is jointly owned by NV Energy (50%) and Idaho Power (50%). Unit 1 went into service in 1981 and produces 254 MW with a Babcock & Wilcox Boiler and a Westinghouse turbine. Unit 2 went into service in 1985 and produces 268 MW with a Foster Wheeler Boiler and General Electric turbine. NV Energy and Idaho Power agreed in late-2019 to retire both units by 2025 at the latest. Since that time Idaho Power suggested it would look to retire the plant's Unit 2 "as early as year-end 2022."

With Iron Point and Hot Pot, Primergy's Nevada portfolio now exceeds 1,300 MWac of solar and 3,330 MWh of battery storage. Construction of the company's most notable project, Gemini Solar, is under way in the state, with operations scheduled to start in late 2023. The \$1.2 billion project will be one of the largest solar ventures in the U.S.

The 690 MW Gemini Solar project will include 34.5 kV overhead and underground collector lines, a 2-acre (0.8-hectare) operation and maintenance facility, three substations, internal access roads, access roads along generation tie-lines, a perimeter road, perimeter fencing, water storage tanks for fire protection, drainage control features, a potential on-site water well or a new water pipeline and improvements to the existing NV Energy facilities to support interconnection.

NREL TO PROBE WIND TURBINE WAKES IN BID TO IMPROVE DESIGNS AND EFFICIENCY

Researchers at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will launch an international, multi-institutional wind energy field campaign called the American WAKE experiment funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Wind Energy Technologies Office, the study is intended to amass a dataset on wind energy atmospheric phenomenon, including wakes, that can cost the average wind farm about 10% of its potential energy.

NREL said that how air currents move through wind plants is not well understood. Its AWAKEN research team is using drones and lidar to map how winds flow between and around wind turbines and provide data that could help developers increase their plant's revenues and energy production.

Wind turbine blades create wakes that can change how much energy reaches downwind turbines and plants. But current energy prediction models are too imprecise to tell how much wakes cost in terms of lost energy or profits, or how to prevent that loss.

NREL previously designed models and simulations to estimate how winds might move through wind plants. But without observational data to back them up, they were unable to know how accurate their models were.

From this coming spring through October 2023, the team will gather observational data using sensors, including those mounted on aircraft, in and around operational wind farms.

The researchers will focus on five wind farms in northern Oklahoma. The location was chosen for its large number of current wind farms and great future potential. Posted on or near turbines, the sensors' laser and radar beams will reflect dust and insects. They said that because different wind speeds and paths change how those particles move, that data can help create a three-dimensional picture of how wind currents are moving around the turbines.

Large-scale wakes can persist 20 miles or more and reach entirely different wind plants, the researchers said. As a result, specialized aircraft will fly sensors from plant to plant to collect large-scale data and seek to explain how wakes from one wind plant might affect its neighbors. At the same time, drones will use faster sensors to pick up more precise data than previous tools.

Once the data are compiled in 2023, the researchers plan to map atmospheric effects and create an open-source, globally accessible dataset (to be hosted in the DOE Wind Data Archive Portal). Wind plant designs that use the data could potentially generate up to 5% more energy, the researchers said.

NREL also aims to perform a similar field campaign to map out wake effects in offshore wind plants, especially floating plants, for which little data exist.



Epifanio de los Santos y Cristóbal, sometimes known as Don Pañong or Don Panyong (April 7, 1871 – April 18, 1928) was a noted Filipino historian, journalist, and civil servant. He was considered one of the best Filipino writers and regarded as a literary genius. He has also entered politics, serving as a member of the Malolos Congress from 1898 to 1899 from Nueva Ecija and later as governor of Nueva Ecija from 1902 to 1906. As lawyer, he was named as the district attorney of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija in 1900 and later as fiscal of the provinces of Bulacan and Bataan. He was named as an assistant technical director of the Philippine Census in 1918. He was appointed Director of the Philippine Library and Museum by Governor General Leonard Wood in 1925, serving until his death in 1928.

Early life and marriage

Epifanio de los Santos was born in April 7, 1871 in Potrero, Malabon, Province of Manila to Escolastico de los Santos of Nueva Ecija and musician Antonina Cristóbal y Tongco. He studied at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila where he obtained a summa cum laude of Bachelor of Arts degree. He devoted some time for painting but music became part of his daily life and was even awarded a professorship in music. He finished his law studies in University of Sto. Tomas and topped the bar exams in 1898. Rafael Palma (1930) noticed that during his college years his collecting instinct was early manifested when he curiously dedicated himself gathering plants and flowers in the Nueva Ecija wherein he also sought the company and even communed with the rural communities. According to Agoncillo, "nobody suspected that he would someday become a literary man". As a young law student, his fascination in the study of Spanish literature was through readings of Juan Valera's novel entitled "Pepita Jimenez" and most of all his available works. Eventually, he formed a delightful and lasting friendship with this author which he met in Spain. His home in Intramuros became the meeting place of literary cliques composed of Cecilio Apostol (Catulo), Fernando Maria Guerrero (Fulvio Gil), Jose Palma, Rafael Palma, Jaime C. De Veyra, Macario Pineda, Mariano V. del Rosario, Salvador V. del Rosario, Isidro Paredes, Macario Adriatico, Jose Clemente Zulueta and Jose G. Abreu. He made a beautiful oil portrait of Rosa Sevilla and composed a melody dedicated for her.

Epifanio's first wife was Doña Ursula Paez of Malabon; his second was Margarita Torralba of Malolos. Jose, his son to his first wife, became a historian, biographer; and collector. His brother; Escolastico, became a pianist for silent films and has made artistic contributions as a poet and a realist story teller in Philippine magazines and newspapers. Socrates, his son from second wife, became a leading Pentagon aeronautics engineer in his time. He has two lines of descendants with four children on his first wife Ursula Paez namely Jose, Rosario, Escolastico and Antonio and eight children on his second wife Margarita Torralba namely Leticia, Fernando, Socrates, Federico, Hipatia Patria, Espacia Lydia, Gliceria Ruth & Margarita.

Literary and scholarly works

Epifanio was considered one of the best Filipino writers in Spanish of his time and regarded as a literary genius. When he was young, he was the first Filipino to become a member of the Spanish Royal Academy of Language, Spanish Royal Academy of Literature and Spanish Royal Academy of History in Madrid. It was the admiration of his writings that Marcelino Menendez y Pelayo asked the Real Academia Española to open its door to the benevolent young native scholar.

Epifanio was a young associate editor of the revolutionary paper "La Independencia" (1898), writing in prose under the pen name G. Solon and also a member of the Malolos Congress. He also co-founded other newspapers like La Libertad, El Renacimiento, La Democracia, La Patria and Malaysia. He also made valuable publications namely; Algo de Prosa (1909), Literatura Tagala (1911), El Teatro Tagala (1911) Nuestra Literatura (1913), El Proceso del Dr. José Rizal (1914), Folklore Musical de Filipinas (1920). He also authored Filipinos y filipinistas (Filipinos and Filipinists), Filipinas para los Filipinos, Cuentos y paisajes Filipinos (Philippine Stories and Scenes) and Criminality in the Philippines (1903–1908).

He was a member of Samahan ng mga Mananagalog which was initiated by Felipe Calderon in 1904, and it includes active members with the likes of Lope K. Santos, Rosa Sevilla, Hermenegildo Cruz, Jaime C. De Veyra and Patricio Mariano. He was a polyglot, being fluent in Spanish, English, French, German, Ita, Tingian, and Ibalao. He notably translated Florante and Laura classically into sonorous Castilian. As one of the brilliant writers in the Golden Age of Fil-Hispanic literature who had published numerous titles and books, he was an honorary member of the Academia Filipina de la Lengua Española. As a versatile researcher; he also contributed to early Philippine studies on anthropology, ethnology, archeology, linguistics and demographics.

Epifanio de los Santos traveled to many places in Europe, Asia, and Americas searching for rare Philippine documents in museums, archives, and libraries. He collected almost 200 paintings and sculpted pieces done by Juan Luna, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Fabian de la Rosa, Juan Arellano, Pablo Amorsolo, Fernando Amorsolo, Graciano Nepomoceno and Guillermo Tolentino, musical literatures, opera records, valuable printed materials, documents and manuscripts on the revolution and historical pictures. According to Zaide, his famous Filipiniana collection was rated by foreign scholars as the best in the world. In Europe, he was recognized as the philologist and writer of biographical matters about the Philippines.

According to Zaide, there are documents and printed matter in his collection that cannot be found elsewhere, not even in the Filipiniana Division of The National Library nor in any library the world over; the Library of Congress of the United States included. The best years of his life were spent in looking for them only to find them after an almost "wild goose chase" of a lifetime. His Rizaliana collections were greatly acknowledged by W.E. Retana, James A. Le-Roy, and Austin Craig.

In all, there are 115 printed matter and 213 documents in the collection dealing with Philippine Revolution.

After de los Santos's death, the Philippine legislature, by virtue of the Philippine Clarin Act, negotiated with the widow and heirs of the great collector for the purchase of the collection and library. The Philippine government bought the priceless collections for P 19,250.00.

Public service

Epifanio de los Santos was elected the Malolos Congress in September 1898, serving as one of the three representatives from Nueva Ecija until November 1899. In 1900, he was appointed district attorney of the town of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. He was later elected as governor of Nueva Ecija in 1902 and again in 1904, serving until 1906. His election victory made him the first democratically elected provincial governor and head of the Federal Party in Nueva Ecija. A member of the Philippine Commission, he was immediately considered as one of those Filipino intellectuals to represent the Saint Louis World's Fair in 1904. He was later appointed provincial fiscal of Bulacan and Bataan provinces. He wrote a treatise on electoral fraud "Electoral Fraud and its Remedies" (Fraudes Electorales y Sus Remedios) in 1907 for the Philippine Assembly. On the side, he devoted his spare time to researches in Philippine history and literature. Portions of his collections where destroyed when fires hit his house in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. According to Agoncillo and Palma, his interest lies not in politics. In 1918, he was appointed by Governor General Francis Burton Harrison as Assistant Technical Director of the Philippine Census.

The last and most significant position de los Santos held was Director of the Philippine Library and Museum, to which he was appointed by Governor General Leonard Wood in 1925. He succeeded his colleague Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, who died on March 26, 1925. He was also elected as third President of the Philippine Library Association (now Philippine Librarians Association, Inc.), becoming the first Filipino of native parentage to assume such position professionally for Philippine library science. As a director of the Philippine Library, he immersed himself in his work and, according to bibliographer Gabriel Bernardo, gave up "all his other avocations except music and bibliophily."

Death and legacy

He died in office on April 18, 1928, 11 days after his 57th birthday. The Philippine government paid him a tribute to a stately funeral. Local and foreign scholars lamented to a loss to what has been described by them as "Great among the Great Filipino Scholars."

Epifanio De los Santos Avenue (commonly known as EDSA), the main road through Metro Manila, was named after him. Several schools, streets, a college, a hospital, a printing press and an auditorium in National Library of the Philippines were also named in his honor.
SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA



FEDERAL JUDGE THROWS OUT OIL LEASE SALE IN GULF OF MEXICO. HERE'S WHY.

WASHINGTON — A federal court has rejected a plan to lease millions of acres in the Gulf of Mexico for offshore oil drilling, saying the Biden administration did not adequately take into account the lease sale's effect on planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions, violating a bedrock environmental law.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Rudolph Contreras in Washington on Thursday sends the proposed lease sale back to the Interior Department to decide next steps. The judge said it was up to Interior to decide whether to go forward with the sale after a revised review, scrap it or take other steps.

Environmental groups hailed the decision and said the ruling gave President Joe Biden a chance to follow through on a campaign promise to stop offshore leasing in federal waters. The decision was released on the one-year anniversary of a federal leasing moratorium Biden ordered as part of his efforts to combat climate change.

More: Future of Gulf of Mexico oil and gas drilling splits U.S. House panel along party lines

"We are pleased that the court invalidated Interior's illegal lease sale," said Brettny Hardy, a senior attorney for Earthjustice, one of the environmental groups that challenged the sale.

"This administration must meet this critical moment and honor the campaign promises President Biden made by stopping offshore leasing once and for all," Hardy added. "We simply cannot continue to make investments in the fossil fuel industry to the peril of our communities and increasingly warming planet."

Louisiana oil industry groups panned the decision.

The Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association is "concerned for the potential impacts for the economy and environment of the Gulf region," Tommy Faucheux, the industry group's president, said in a news release. "Offshore energy development is vital to our national energy security, our local and national economy, and the primary source of funding for our state's coastal program and are critical for Louisiana's coastal restoration and hurricane protection projects."

He restated industry groups' longstanding contention that threats to energy development in the Gulf will mean the nation's energy supply will be met by foreign oil produced with less-restrictive environmental standards.

Louisiana Oil and Gas Association President Mike Moncla said the judge's decision is "disappointing for industry but even a bigger blow to the American consumer." Moncla characterized it as a continuation of Biden administration policies that have driven up the price of oil and gasoline.

A spokeswoman for Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said the agency was reviewing the decision.

The administration was "compelled to proceed with Lease Sale 257" following a court ruling in Louisiana, spokeswoman Melissa Schwartz said.

Interior has "documented serious deficiencies in the federal oil and gas program," Schwartz said, and Haaland has recommended an overhaul of the nation's oil and gas leasing program to limit areas available for energy development and raise costs for energy companies to drill on public land and water.

"Especially in the face of the climate crisis, we need to take the time to make significant and long overdue programmatic reforms," Schwartz said. "Our public lands and waters must be protected for generations to come."

More: A massive oil spill helped one Louisiana billionaire avoid paying income tax for 14 years

Energy companies including Shell, BP, Chevron and ExxonMobil offered a combined \$192 million for drilling rights on federal oil and gas reserves in the Gulf of Mexico in November.

The Interior Department auction came after attorneys general from Republican states led by Louisiana successfully challenged a suspension on sales that Biden imposed when he took office.

Companies bid on 308 tracts totaling nearly 2,700 square miles. It marked the largest acreage and second-highest bid total since Gulf-wide bidding resumed in 2017.

The auction was conducted even as Biden has tried to cajole other world leaders into strengthening efforts against global warming, including at United Nations climate talks in Scotland in early November. While Biden has taken a number of actions on climate change, he has faced resistance in Congress, and a sweeping \$2 trillion social and environmental spending package remains stalled.

The so-called "Build Back Better" plan contains \$550 billion in spending and tax credits aimed at promoting clean energy.

In his 68-page ruling, Contreras said Interior failed to consider the greenhouse gas emissions that would result from the lease sale, violating the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental law.

"Barreling full-steam ahead with blinders on was simply not a reasonable action for BOEM to have taken here," he said, referring to Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

More: Oil industry and Biden administration clash over latest proposals

Environmental reviews of the lease auction — conducted under former President Donald Trump and affirmed under Biden — reached the unlikely conclusion that extracting and burning more oil and gas from the Gulf would result in fewer climate-changing emissions than leaving it.

Similar claims in two other cases, in Alaska, were rejected by federal courts after challenges from environmentalists.

Federal officials have since changed their emissions modeling methods but said it was too late to use that approach for the November auction.

The National Ocean Industries Association, which represents the offshore industry, slammed the ruling and called U.S. oil and gas production crucial to curbing inflation and strengthening national security.

"The U.S. offshore region is vital to American energy security, and continued leases are essential in keeping energy flowing from this strategic national asset," said Erik Milito, the group's president. "Uncertainty around the future of the U.S. federal offshore leasing program" would benefit Russia and other adversaries, he said.

The administration has proposed another round of oil and gas sales in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana and other states. Interior Department officials proceeded despite concluding that burning the fuels could lead to billions of dollars in potential future climate damage.

Emissions from burning and extracting fossil fuels from public lands and waters account for about a quarter of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

A report issued by Haaland in November stopped short of recommending an end to oil and gas leasing on public lands, as many environmental groups have urged. But officials said the report would lead to a more responsible leasing process that provides a better return to U.S. taxpayers.

The Courier and Daily Comet and Associated Press writer Matthew Brown in Billings, Mont., contributed to this story.



REPATRIATION

On December 30, 2021, Mr. TEODORO CEPILLO was repatriated from Louisiana, USA due to medical emergency. Upon arrival, he was immediately transferred to Manila Doctors Hospital along United Nations Ave. in Manila.

He underwent a prostate operation and stayed in the hospital until January 29, 2022 where our Operation Department's Front liners, Mssrs. Ricky Ramos and Ronald Ybañez provided a meeting service and transfer for his travel back home to Batangas.

Mr. Cepillo, 51 years old is one of our pioneer workers being deployed to our offshore projects in New Orleans. He's been with DNR/GIS since 2005 as a Rigger.

It is part of our company's obligation to extend all the necessary assistance to all our overseas crew members especially during medical emergencies and other circumstances. Keeping up with our US Partner/Principal's motto "Putting People First."

Once a crew member is admitted to our company, he/she is assured of a fair treatment and accepted as a family member; not only well-protected by both Local and International law but also entitled to all other benefits DNR Offshore can provide.

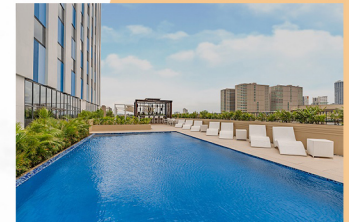


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