

PRIVILEGE SPEECH

15th Regular City Council
September 2, 2008

NO RADAR . . . NO SONAR by Councilor Pilar C. Braga, phd

Madam President, as our City continues to languish over the fate of those who have gone down with the ill-fated C-130, we turn to more realistic and practical matters on hand.

The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) has reported that the search and retrieval operation for the crashed C-130 is hampered and made more difficult by the lack of equipment.

In short, there is no radar . . . no sonar equipment being used to search for the missing C130 Hercules aircraft which plunged into the waters of Davao Gulf last Monday (Aug. 25) evening.

It has also been reported that the Air Transportation Office (ATO) control tower of the Davao International Airport has no radar to track down incoming and outgoing aircraft and has relied mainly on radio communications for air traffic control.

This is not an oversight but simply a case of neglect – in the fast pace age of computer and digital technology we can only imagine the myriads of problems emanating from one single lack of equipment – the radar. And until now despite requests and appeals in the past, the Air Transportation Office still has no radar to track down outgoing and incoming planes in the airport.

In fact, Philippine Air Force Tactical Operations Group (TOG) XI chief Colonel Isagani Silva has been quoted as saying that a radar would have been helpful in pinpointing the location where the C-130 Hercules aircraft would have gone down. He was also reported to have said that the Philippine Air Force Tactical Operations Group Region XI has no radars.

The Philippine Information Agency also reported that aside from radar, the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard also lacked sonar equipment to probe deep

into the waters of Davao Gulf. Presently the Task Force Hercules is relying on the sonar equipment of a private scuba diver.

The dismaying reality also points to that fact that even Philippine Navy ships are also lacking in sonar capability. They are outfitted with fathometers and not sonars.

The task of retrieving whatever is left of the C-130 is slow and painful. In the meantime, our International airport is still without the radar. In the event that another such tragedy occurs, God forbid, we would still have the same problems all over again confronting us.

Must we wait again for another tragedy before the government outfit the Air Transportation Office (ATO) control tower of the Davao International Airport with a radar?

Madam President, allow me to pass the necessary resolution to cover this appropriate matter later on.

Thank you.

PILAR C. BRAGA, PhD
City Councilor