### Republic of the Philippines ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED PHOTOVOLTAIC MAINSTREAMING (PVM) BENCHMARK TARIFF AND ASSOCIATED MECHANISM

### ERC CASE NO. 2023-056 RC

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION, Applicant.

Promulgated: June 15, 2023

### **NOTICE OF VIRTUAL HEARING**

### TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on 07 June 2023, National Power Corporation (NPC) filed an *Application* dated 02 May 2023, seeking the Commission's approval of its proposed Photovoltaic Mainstreaming (PVM) benchmark tariff and associated mechanism, with prayer for issuance of provisional authority.

The pertinent allegations of the *Application* are hereunder quoted, as follows:

### BRIEF SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

1. In 2020, NPC started programming and preparing for the implementation of its Photovoltaic Mainstreaming ("PVM") projects in the missionary areas. Pursuant to this project, it entered into a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") with the Department of Energy ("DOE") for the Implementation of Power Supply System Project funded under FY 2021 Locally Funded Project – Total Electrification Program ("LFP–TEP"), which includes the installation of 50Wp – Solar Home System ("SHS") units to hasten the electrification of the Missionary Areas.

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A copy of the MOA between NPC and DOE is hereto attached as Annex "A" and series.

2. The said MOA is in relation to DOE Circular No. 2014-07-0012<sup>1</sup> which was issued pursuant to Section 3(c)<sup>2</sup> of Rule 13 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations ("IRR") of the Electricity Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 ("EPIRA").

A copy of the DOE Circular No. 2014-07-0012 is hereto attached as Annex "B" and series for easy reference of this Honorable Commission.

- 3. With the signing of the MOA, NPC issued NPC Circular No. 2022-026<sup>3</sup> dated 05 October 2022, governing the implementation of its PVM Projects. The said Circular states, among others:
  - a. that PVM shall be considered for New Area with load demand of 20kW and below;
  - b. Areas with dispersed Households of below 300;
  - c. Areas with dispersed Households and load survey results of below 20kw; and
  - d. Dispersed households within NPC mini-grid area which are not feasible for grid extension, connection to the nearest tapping point, not contiguous and unviable to extend the line.
- 4. Most of the programmed PVM projects are completed and/or nearest completion, hence, the need for NPC to have its own Benchmark Tariff for this type of electrification solution. With the foregoing, NPC is hereby filing the instant Application to adopt and apply the PVM Benchmark Tariff Rates in various location in the missionary areas to hasten and achieve the total electrification in the countryside which would lead to the betterment of the standard of living and livelihood opportunities of Filipinos without access to electricity.

### BACKGROUND

- 5. NPC is a government-owned and controlled corporation, created and existing under and by virtue of Republic Act No. 6395, as amended, with principal office address at NPC-OBC Building Complex, corner Quezon Avenue and BIR Road, East Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City.
- 6. Pursuant to Section 70 of R.A. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001, NPC through its Small Power Utilities Group (NPC-SPUG), with the same principal office address stated above, is responsible for providing power generation and its associated power delivery systems in areas that are not connected to the transmission system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Accelerating household electrification in off-grid and isolated areas through electricity supply by the regulated Solar Home Systems.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Section 3(c) of Rule 13 of the EPIRA-IRR states "Whenever feasible, SPUG shall utilize Renewable Energy Resources."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Policy/Implementing Guidelines for the Photovoltaic Mainstreaming (PVM) Program of NPC.

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- 7. One of the strategic initiatives of the previous Administration is the 100% Total Household Electrification in the country by 2022 based on CY 2015 Census with the ultimate objective of sustainable and inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction through provision of the basic electricity services for all Filipinos. Continuing the efforts of the previous administration, the new administration mandates the prioritization of the exploration and use of renewable energy.
- 8. Thus, NPC programmed in its previous Missionary Electrification Plans and in the 2022-2026 MEP, the PVM projects including the installation of 1,706 Solar Home System ("SHS") units as one of the electrification solutions in the missionary areas.

The electronic copy of the 2022-2026 MEP is hereto attached as Annex "C".

- 9. The afore-mentioned 2022-2026 MEP outlines the strategic directions of NPC pursuant to its mandated missionary electrification functions under Section 70 of the EPIRA. In furtherance of this mandate, the development of renewable energy programs and projects are consistent with RA 9513<sup>4</sup> and the established targets of the DOE both in increasing energy in the country's energy mix and in promoting prevalence of renewable in off-grid areas. This is further in compliance with the provisions in the Clean Air Act in terms of the energy generation mix of fossil-fueled generating sets and renewable energy.
- 10. In addition, 2022-2026 MEP discuss among others, the detailed distribution of SHS beneficiaries across the country for CY 2022 and CY 2023. This is upon coordination with DOE, National Electrification Administration ("NEA") and the Electric Cooperatives ("ECs") / Local Government Units ("LGUs") for the electrification endeavors.
- 11. NPC thru the National Government funds piloted its own PVM program, by installing 50Wp SHS units to hasten the total household electrification in the Missionary Areas.

A copy of the Executive Summary of the PVM project is hereto attached as Annex "D". Further, the sources of funds for the aforementioned 1,706 SHS units are hereto attached as Annex "E".

12. As mentioned, NPC entered into a MOA with the DOE for the electrification of unserved areas in the Missionary Areas of NPC and was funded under DOE's CY 2021 LFP-TEP.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> An Act Promoting the Development, Utilization and Commercialization of Renewable Energy Resources and for Other Purposes.

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### APPLICANT'S PVM PROGRAM AND SHS PROJECT

- 13. Objectives. The Applicant's PV Mainstreaming scheme is the provision of individual solar home system that can provide lighting and charge capability with a system for prepaid payment collection and monitoring.
- 14. Project Description. The SHS Unit of NPC's PVM program includes the following:
  - a. 50 Wp Capacity of Solar Panel
  - b. Main Unit Battery with Charge controller (with port for charging cellphones, torch lamp and AM/FM radio)
  - c. 3 pcs. 3 Watts LED Bulb (indoor)
  - d. 1 pc. 1 Watt LED Bulb (outdoor)
  - e. Torch Lamp (detachable)
  - f. Radio (detachable)
- 15. PVM/SHS Beneficiaries. The table below shows the detailed distribution of 5,401 SHS units or household customers targeted in missionary areas for CY 2022 and CY 2023 under the 2022-2026 MEP; NPC's total number of beneficiaries for the PVM program will increase in the succeeding years as NPC continues its PVM projects:

	CY 2022	CY 2023	TOTAL
		No. of Househol	ds
CAGAYAN	480	130	610
ISABELA	1034		1034
MASBATE	517		517
PALAWAN		809	809
EASTERN			
SAMAR		127	127
BOHOL	361	164	525
LEYTE		258	258
DINAGAT	214	110	324
ZAMBOANGA		70	70
SULU	379	226	605
BASILAN	235	287	522
TOTAL	3220	2181	5401

Table 1: List of New Areas for PV Mainstreaming

A copy of the list of new areas for the PV Mainstreaming is hereto attached as Annex "F".

### BENCHMARK TARIFF FOR PV MAINSTREAMING

- 16. Adopting and applying applicable provisions and principles of ERC Resolution No. 17, Series of 2017, as well as the DOE Circular No. 2014-07-0012, Applicant NPC hereto presents its own benchmark tariff mechanism and rates.
- 17. Initial Capital Cost. The initial capital cost for the PV Mainstreaming program of NPC is covered or funded by the National Government Subsidy and DOE's CY 2021 Locally

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Funded Projects – Total Electrification Program ("LFP-TEP").

- 18. Obligations to Procure, Install and Maintain the PV Mainstreaming. Applicant has the obligation to procure, install and maintain the PVM. NPC will make at least quarterly or monthly visits or as the need arises to every PVM/SHS site or member customer to inspect the system and make minor repairs. Visits for major repairs will be conducted as needed. The PVM/SHS units shall be owned by NPC and will fund the cost of replacing SHS major components as required.
- 19. NPC has already procured the Supply and Delivery of 1706 units for the PVM program. Thus, the Technical Specification and Operating Manual of the units are hereto submitted for easy reference of this Honorable Commission.

A copy of the Notice of Award of Contract No. LOGMSSP 2022-03-019-ZCT" for the Supply and Delivery of 1706 units of PVM is hereto attached as Annex "G" and series. Further, the Technical Specification of the units is hereto attached as Annex "H" and series. Lastly, the PVM Operating Manual is hereto attached as Annex "I" and series, respectively.

- 20. Basis of Benchmark PV Mainstreaming Tariff. The tariff shall be based on the best approximation of the operating and capital costs that an efficient distribution utility ("DU") would expect to incur in providing an ongoing service to all SHS member-customers, including replacing components as necessary, and covering both direct and indirect overhead costs.
- 21. Cost Zone. NPC adopt the cost zone of 45 km and beyond the nearest SPUG office for purposes of uniformity or cost zone applicable to small islands and islets. As such, there was no incremental cost adjustment in the allocation of the salary and per diem of the personnel in all areas.

### METHODOLOGY / RATE SETTING OF THE PROPOSED PVM BENCHMARK TARIFF

22. Applicant hereby proposes a calculation of the PVM benchmark tariff to be charged to its customers in missionary areas as fixed monthly charge and adopts the imposition of 50WP and cost Zone C or 45 km distance to where the customer is located. The cost components and assumptions used by the Applicant are as follows:

Parameter	Value
Total No. of Households	5401
Total No. of Sites	31
Average No. of Site per Region	10
No. of Region (LuzViMinda)	3
No. of Visits, Scheduled	4
No. of Visits Unscheduled	1
No. of Days, including travel	4

#### Table 2: Parameters of NPC's PV Mainstreaming

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Salary, Technician 1 (PhP/month) <sup>1</sup>	22,829.40
Salary, Technician 2 (PhP/month) <sup>1</sup>	21,156.30
Travel Allowance (PhP/day) <sup>2</sup>	2,200.00 0.30%
Insurance Cost (% of the total CAPEX)	
Equipment Fund (Replacement), Solar Panel, 50 Wp (PhP)	17,014.34
Equipment Fund (Replacement), Battery, (PhP)	13,691.54
Equipment Fund (Replacement), Controller, (PhP)	4,894.12
Economic Life, Solar Panel (Years)	25
Economic Life, Battery (Years)	10
Economic Life, Controller (Years)	5

Note: 1 - based on NPC's Salary Scale for 2020 Contract of Service (COS).

The description with breakdown/components of the proposed PVM Benchmark Tariff is hereto attached as Annex "J" and series.

- I. Base Operating Cost
- 23. The base operating cost is composed of the following:
  - Salaries and Per Diem of Technician 1 and Technician 2 for each region or equivalent to six (6) personnel; and
  - Insurance Cost.
- 24. Salaries were based on NPC's Salary Scale for 2020 Contract of Service ("COS"), a copy of which is hereto attached as Annex "J-1". Salaries are composed of Technician 1 and Technician 2 for each region or equivalent to six (6) personnel. Also attached as Annex "J-2" and series is the National Power Board approval of the NPC's Salary Scale dated 04 September 2019.
- 25. On the other hand, per diem is based on the highest rate prescribe in Executive Order no. 77 series of 2019 or equivalent to PhP2,200 per day. Per diem is computed using four (4) scheduled (quarterly) and one (1) unscheduled visit of two (2) personnel in each grid or equivalent to six (6) personnel.

A copy of the Allowable per diem per Executive Order No. 77 is hereto attached as Annex "J-3" and series.

- 26. Insurance Cost is equivalent to 0.30% of the capital cost of the equipment necessary for the maintenance of SHS equipment to cover damages that are not caused by its usual wear and tear.
- 27. <u>The Monthly Base Operating Costs shall be calculated based</u> <u>on the following</u>:

MoBOC = MoS + MoPD + MoI

Where,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> – Per Diem based on the highest rate prescribe in Executive Order No. 77, series of 2019

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MoBOC – Monthly Base Operating Costs per SHS unit
MoS – Monthly Salaries of Personnel per SHS unit
MoPD – Monthly Per Diem for the scheduled and
unscheduled visits to maintain the SHS
per SHS unit
MoI – Monthly Insurance

• Monthly Salaries of Personnel for the PVM are computed as follows:

Technician 1= PhP22,829.40 per month
MoS1 = (Salary Rate x # of personnel) / PVM units
= (PhP22,829.40 x 3) / 5,401
= PhP68.488.20 / 5,401
= PhP12.68 per month
Technician $2 = PhP_{21,156.30}$ per month
MoS2 = (Salary Rate x # of personnel) / PVM units
= (PhP21,156.30 x 3) / 5,401
= PhP63,468.90 / 5,401
= PhP11.75 per month
• Monthly Per Diem for the PVM is computed as follows:
Per diem = PhP2,200 per day
MoPD = Amount x # of sites x total # visits per
day, including travel time x # of visit
per year / 12 months /PVM units
= PhP2,200 x 31 sites x 4 x 5 / 12 months
= PhP113,666.67 / 5,401
= PhP21.05 per month each for Technician
1 and Technician 2
• Monthly Insurance for the PVM is computed as follows:
Total Capital Cost = solar panel + battery + controller
= PhP17.014.34 + 13.691.54 + 4.894.12

Total Capital Cost – solar panel + battery + controller	
= PhP17,014.34 + 13,691.54 + 4,894.12	
= PhP35,600.00	
MoI = total contract price x 0.30% / 12 months = PhP106.80 / 12 months = PhP8.90 per month	

- II. Capital Cost
- 28. There was no capital cost considered in this instant Application considering that the PVM projects were funded under National Government Subsidy and the CY 2021 DOE LFP-TEP.
- III. Equipment or Replacement Cost Fund
- 29. Though SHS were subsidized by DOE and National Government, and that ownership will be transferred after the installation, the Applicant shall be responsible for the

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maintenance and subsequent replacement of all major components of the SHS (module, mounting, battery, controller).

- 30. Attached as Annex "K" is the computation of equipment or replacement cost fund for the solar panel, battery and controller. The costs of replacements will be covered by a separate and ring-fenced Replacement Cost Fund (RCF).
- 31. The RCF charges shall be determined as the sum of the replacement costs of the individual components of an individual PVM divided by their expected life (in months).
- 32. <u>The Equipment or Replacement Costs Fund shall be</u> <u>calculated based on the following</u>:

Where,

MoRCF – Monthly Replacement Costs Fund MoAICSP – Monthly Allowable Investment Costs for Solar Panel MoAICB – Monthly Allowable Investment Costs for Battery MoAICC – Monthly Allowable Investment Costs for Controller

1)	Solar Panel Investment Cost = PhP17,014.34 x 33%
	MoAICSP = [Investment cost x 33%] / economic life
	/ 12 months
	= PhP17,014.34 x 33 % / 25 /12
	= PhP18.72 per month
2)	Battery Investment Cost= PhP13,691.54 x 95% x 80%
	MoAICB = [Investment cost x 95%] x 80% / economic
	life /12 months
	= PhP13,691.54 / 10 / 12
	= $PhP86.71$ per month
3)	Controller Investment Cost = PhP4,894.
	MoAICC = Investment cost / economic life / 12 months
	= PhP4,894.12 / 5 / 12
	= PhP81.57 per month
4)	MORCF = MoAICSP + MoAICB + MoAICC

= PhP18.72 + PhP86.71 + PhP81.57

= PhP187.00 per month

33. Applicant NPC adopts the following equipment or replacement cost fund components and parameters:

Component	Investment cost per unit	Economic Life	Other Details
Solar Panel Capacity (Wp)	17,014.34	25	33% of the cost shall be needed to replace/maintain

Table 3: Component of replacement costs fund

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			the solar panel, with 25-year design life
Battery (Ah)	13,691.54	10	Cost is based on 95% supplier listed price and assumes 80%, with 10-year design life
Controller (A)	4,894.12	5	Cost is based on 100%, with 5-year design life

- 34. The Applicant would like to take note that the above cost is based on the contract price for the supply and delivery of 1706 SHS units while the assumptions and the economic life used were all based on the approved benchmark tariff of the Electric Cooperatives under ERC Case No. 2014-003 RM.
- IV. Cost Zone and Adjustment
- 35. NPC filed for a cost zone of 45 km and beyond the nearest SPUG office for purposes of uniformity in the island or offgrid areas. As such, there was no adjustment in the allocation of the salary and per diem of the personnel in all areas. The cost zone used was similar to Zone C of the ECs under the above-mentioned Decision on 2014-003 RM.
- V. Benchmark Tariff
- 36. Considering all the foregoing, Applicant arrived at the following tariff computation:

Particulars	PhP/ month
Base Operating Costs	
Salary	
Technician 1	12.68
Technician 2	11.75
Per Diem	
Technician 1	21.05
Technician 2	21.05
Total Payroll	66.52
Insurance	8.90
Total Operating Costs	75.42
Replacement Costs Fund	
Solar Panel Capacity (WP)	18.72
Battery (Ah)	86.71
Controller (A)	81.57
Total EF	187.00
Total PVM Tariff	262.42

37. Applicant proposes the benchmark tariff as follows:

Туре	Zone	Duration	PhP/month*
1	50 Wp	30 days	262.00

\*rounded-off figures

- 38. To support the above calculation, the Applicant hereto attached the proposed PVM/SHS Tariff to be charged to the customers as Annex "L".
- 39. These PVM tariff to be charged in the off-grid customers will be supported by a pre-paid loading scheme.

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- 40. In support of the PV Mainstreaming Program, the Applicant hereto attached as Annex "M", the electronic copy of the forms signed by the PVM/SHS beneficiaries that are willing to avail the PVM Program and to pay the PVM/SHS Tariff as well.
- 41. The National Power Board approved the filing of this PVM Benchmark Tariff application as evidenced by the National Power Board Resolution No. 2023-11 dated 08 March 2023, hereto attached as Annex "N".

### ADDITIONAL ALLEGATIONS IN SUPPORT FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

- 42. Applicant NPC respectfully pleads, adopts and incorporates the foregoing allegations in the proposed PVM benchmark tariff of NPC in so far as they may be applicable.
- Out of 1,706 units, the 30% or 517 SHS units located at 43. Masbate areas were already placed and awaiting implementation as early as July 2022, the 34% allocation for Bohol and Dinagat areas were completed in January 2023 and the rest of 36% intended for Sulu and Basilan areas were already delivered and now laid down in Zamboanga due to peace and order situation in the Western Mindanao region. The 993 DOE funded SHS funded units are scheduled for installation in the 1st quarter of 2023. In addition, the supply and delivery for another 651 SHS units for missionary areas in Cagayan and Isabela are in process. While the Terms of Reference ("TOR") for another 1,358 units are already completed and ready for procurement process.
- 44. Therefore, to enable NPC to efficiently operate to ensure the successful implementation of these NPC's renewable energy program thru the Photovoltaic Mainstreaming or Solar Home Systems and to provide electrification to these off-grid and far-flung households, there is an urgent need for the issuance of a provisional authority.
- 45. The issuance of provisional authority is allowed under Section 3 Rule 14 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure. Likewise, the authority of the Honorable Commission to issue a provisional authority is confirmed by the Supreme Court in the case of Freedom from Debt Coalition, et al., vs ERC, et. Al., G.R. No. 16113 (June 15, 2004), when it held that "the power to approve provisional rate increases is included among the powers transferred to the ERC by virtue of Section 44 since the grant of that authority is not inconsistent with the EPIRA; rather, it is in full harmony with the thrust of the law which is to strengthen the ERC as the new regulatory body".
- 46. NPC is thus imploring the kind consideration of this Honorable Commission and respectfully prays that the Honorable Commission approves the proposed benchmark tariff for NPC's photovoltaic mainstreaming (PVM) program. It is likewise respectfully prayed that a provisional authority

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based on the foregoing premises be issued by this Honorable Commission.

### PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Applicant National Power Corporation, most respectfully prays that this Honorable Commission issue an Order:

- a. Approving r the photovoltaic mainstreaming (PVM) or solar home system (SHS) units of the NPC-SPUG areas; and
- b. Issuing a provisional authority for the adoption of the applied rates while this Application is being heard before the Commission.

Other reliefs, just and equitable, are likewise prayed for.

The Commission hereby sets the instant *Application* for determination of compliance with the jurisdictional requirements, expository presentation, Pre-Trial Conference and presentation of evidence on the following dates and venue, or online platform for the conduct thereof, pursuant to Resolution No. 09, Series of 2020<sup>5</sup> and Resolution No. 01, Series of 2021<sup>6</sup> (ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure):

Date and Time	Platform	Activity
<b>29 August 2023</b> ( <b>Tuesday</b> ) at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.)	Microsoft Teams or Zoom Application	Determination of compliance with the jurisdictional requirements, and Expository Presentation
<b>05 September</b> <b>2023 (Tuesday)</b> at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.)		Pre-trial Conference and presentation of evidence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A Resolution Adopting the Guidelines Governing Electronic Applications, Filings and Virtual Hearings Before the Energy Regulatory Commission.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> A Resolution Adopting the Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Energy Regulatory Commission.

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Any interested stakeholder may submit its comments and/or clarifications **at least one (1) calendar day** prior to the scheduled virtual hearing, via electronic mail (e-mail) at <u>docket@erc.ph</u>, and copy furnish the Legal Service through <u>legal@erc.ph</u>. The Commission shall give priority to the stakeholders who have duly submitted their respective comments and/or clarifications, to discuss the same and propound questions during the course of the expository presentation.

Moreover, any person who has an interest in the subject matter of the instant case may become a party by filing with the Commission via e-mail at <u>docket@erc.ph</u>, and copy furnishing the Legal Service through <u>legal@erc.ph</u>, a verified Petition to Intervene **at least five (5) calendar days** prior to the date of the initial virtual hearing. The verified Petition to Intervene must follow the requirements under Rule 9 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure, indicate therein the docket number and title of the case, and state the following:

- 1) The petitioner's name, mailing address, and e-mail address;
- 2) The nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding; and
- 3) A statement of the relief desired.

Likewise, all other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the case may file through e-mail at <u>docket@erc.ph</u>, and copy furnish the Legal Service through <u>legal@erc.ph</u>, their Opposition or Comment **at least five (5) calendar days** prior to the initial virtual hearing. Rule 9 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure shall govern. No particular form of Opposition or Comment is required, but the document, letter, or writing should contain the following:

- 1) The name, mailing address, and e-mail address of such person;
- 2) A concise statement of the Opposition or Comment; and
- 3) The grounds relied upon.

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All interested parties filing their Petition to Intervene, Opposition or Comment are required to submit the hard copies thereof through personal service, registered mail, or ordinary mail/private courier, within five (5) working days from the date that the same were electronically submitted, as reflected in the acknowledgment receipt e-mail sent by the Commission.

Any of the persons mentioned in the preceding paragraphs may access the copy of the *Application* on the Commission's official website at <u>www.erc.gov.ph.</u>

Finally, all interested persons may be allowed to join the scheduled initial virtual hearings by providing the Commission, thru <u>legal.virtualhearings@erc.ph</u>, with their respective e-mail addresses and indicating therein the case number of the instant *Application*. The Commission will send the access link/s to the aforementioned hearing platform within five (5) working days prior to the scheduled hearings.

WITNESS, the Honorable Commissioners ALEXIS M. LUMBATAN, CATHERINE P. MACEDA, FLORESINDA G. BALDO-DIGAL, and MARKO ROMEO L. FUENTES, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023 in Pasig City.

MONALISA C. DIMALANTA Chairperson and CEO

ERC Office of the Chairperson and CEO

MCD2023-004558

