

Research Article

Police Work at Lucena City Port: Gaps, Solutions, and Paths Forward

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ABSTRACT

Seaports play a crucial role in facilitating global trade, supporting economic growth, and ensuring national security. The study aims to systematically evaluate the degree to which Philippine Ports Authority police personnel fulfill their assigned regulatory roles and identify the operational, organizational, and environmental challenges they encounter. The Philippine Ports Authority plays a critical role in managing and securing public ports across the country, including Lucena City Port. The Lucena City Port police personnel, as part of this operational framework, are tasked with upholding rules and regulations to maintain order within the port premises, ensure safe movement of goods and passengers, and safeguard the integrity of port facilities. This study analyzed the current roles and challenges of Port Police Authority police personnel in Lucena City Port to provide an empirical foundation for enhancing their training and professional development and to develop an improved and contextualized Port Police Training Manual. This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design, the design was selected to allow the researcher to systematically describe and quantify the responses of the participants without manipulating any variables, as defined by Creswell, descriptive research enabled the accurate portrayal of characteristics of a given population, particularly in relation to observed behaviors and perceptions. The researcher recommends the Philippine Ports Authority should institutionalize targeted training modules for Philippine Ports Authority police personnel, must strengthen institutional support systems and adopt and integrate the five evidence-based training components developed in this study into its existing Port Police Training Manual.

Keywords: Challenges, Current Roles, Port Police Personnel, Port Police Training Manual, Public Safety, Institutional Support System

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the complexity of port operations has increased significantly, driven by higher volumes of cargo, stricter safety protocols, and the evolving nature of maritime threats (Witte, 2021). Consequently, port police in major European ports have occupational tasks not just in “traditional policing” (crime prevention, law enforcement) but also include “environmental policing tasks” — e.g. checking compliance to environmental regulations linked to shipping and waste management (Eski, 2015). In many countries — including the Philippines — maintaining efficient, safe, and orderly port operations depends on port police and security personnel who carry a wide array of duties under difficult conditions, a reality discussed in international analyses of port policing and documented in Philippine port-security studies and PPA policy documents (Sergi, Storti, & Easton, 2021).

In the Southeast Asian region, the Philippines faces unique maritime security challenges due to its geographic composition as an archipelagic state. Within this context, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) plays a central role in regulating and overseeing public ports, as part of the broader institutional port sector framework (Ponio, Rashed, van Hassel & Verhoeven, 2022). Meanwhile, contemporary scholarship on port governance demonstrates that port-police and security personnel worldwide, and by extension in the Philippines, are required to perform a wide array of functions: from enforcing regulations and maintaining order, to facilitating safe and efficient movement of goods and passengers, and upholding facility integrity under complex, high-traffic conditions (Sergi, Reid, Storti & Easton, 2021). Their mandates are primarily anchored on the PPA Administrative Order No. 10-95 (Revised Rules and Regulations on Port Management), which sets the standard for operations, traffic control, access management, dangerous goods handling, and sanctions for violations. Additionally, depending on the port's local needs and specific characteristics, updated Port Operations Manuals are issued to guide port police personnel in their day-to-day enforcement activities (Docor, 2023).

Despite the presence of established regulatory frameworks governing Philippine port operations, research specifically examining how port police personnel enforce the General Port Rules and Regulations in regional facilities remains limited. For instance, while development studies on Lucena's Dalahican Port highlight operational constraints linked to infrastructure, management, and resource availability (Redevelopment of Dalahican Port in Lucena, Quezon Province, n.d.). National reports by

the Philippine Ports Authority likewise note persistent challenges in port operations outside major metropolitan hubs, including staffing limitations, environmental exposure, and increasing passenger and cargo demands (Philippine Ports Authority [PPA], 2023). These local conditions parallel broader international findings that port enforcement capacity is often affected by human-resource constraints, institutional complexity, and competing safety and trade and competing safety and trade imperatives. (Chen et al., 2017). Without empirical data on their actual role performance and encountered challenges, efforts to professionalize port policing and enhance maritime security risk being based on assumptions rather than evidence (Ramos & Molato, 2022).

This study focused on analyzing the roles and challenges of Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) police personnel assigned at Lucena City Port. Furthermore, the scope of the study was limited to role-related functions that were outlined in the PPA Administrative Order No. 10-95 and the Philippine Port Operations Manual, including its most recent updates through Operations Memorandum Circular No. 001-2024. The challenges explored in the study were based solely on the perceptions and self-assessments of the respondents, and no observational or external performance validation was conducted. The results served as the basis for formulating recommendations toward the development of an improved and contextualized Port Police Training Manual (Violanti, 2023).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design. It utilized two researcher-made structured questionnaires to gather data: one measured the current roles of PPA police personnel in upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations, while the other assessed the degree of challenges they encountered in performing their duties. The design was selected to allow the researcher to systematically describe and quantify the responses of the participants without manipulating any variables (Docor, 2023).

Descriptive research enabled the accurate portrayal of characteristics of a given population, particularly in relation to observed behaviors and perceptions. This approach was appropriate for the study's objective of determining how consistently port police personnel performed their designated regulatory roles, and to what extent they experienced operational, organizational, and environmental challenges (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative nature of the study allowed for the statistical summarization of responses, which then served as the empirical basis for proposing improvements in training and policy. The design aligned with the study's goal of providing evidence-based recommendations toward the enhancement of port policing practices at Lucena City Port (Creswell, 2014).

Research Locale and Participants

The study was conducted at Lucena City Port, a regional seaport operated by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and located in Lucena City, Quezon Province. The port served as a strategic maritime gateway for Southern Luzon, handling both cargo and passenger operations, and supporting inter-island connectivity. Due to its operational significance, Lucena City Port required a strong port police presence to maintain safety, order, and regulatory enforcement within its premises. The respondents of the study were 23 Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) police personnel assigned at Lucena City Port. These individuals were directly involved in port security operations, traffic regulation, enforcement of port rules, and incident response within the port premises. Their roles placed them at the forefront of implementing the General Port Rules and Regulations, making them highly qualified to assess their own performance and identify the challenges they encountered.

Instruments

Two researcher-made structured questionnaires will be utilized in this study. The first instrument is titled "Current Roles of Port Police Personnel in Upholding General Port Rules and Regulations," a 16-item questionnaire designed to measure the extent to which port police personnel perform their roles. The items were extracted and developed based on the General Port Rules and Regulations issued by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), particularly referencing operational and administrative guidelines applicable to public port management. The second instrument is titled "Challenges Encountered by Port Police Personnel in Performing Their Duties. Both questionnaires were designed to directly reflect the functional expectations and real-world conditions experienced by PPA police personnel, ensuring alignment with the objectives of developing a contextualized Port Police Training Manual.

Data Collection

The data collection was conducted on-site at Lucena City Port. A total of 23 PPA police personnel who met the inclusion criteria were purposively selected and approached individually. Before distributing the questionnaires, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, emphasized voluntary participation, and assured the respondents of the confidentiality and academic use of their responses. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Each respondent was given a printed copy of the two questionnaires. The researcher provided clear verbal instructions and remained present during the completion process to address any questions or clarifications. The respondents were instructed to rate each item honestly based on their own experiences and perceptions. They were given ample time to complete both instruments, after which the accomplished questionnaires were collected immediately.

The completed responses were then reviewed for completeness and accuracy. The data were encoded and organized for statistical treatment using weighted mean, which was used to analyze the level of role performance and the degree of challenges encountered. All gathered information was handled with strict confidentiality and stored securely for the duration of the research.

Data Analysis

Two researcher-made structured questionnaires will be utilized in this study. The first instrument is titled "Current

Roles of Port Police Personnel in Upholding General Port Rules and Regulations," a 16-item questionnaire designed to measure the extent to which port police personnel perform their 30 roles, rated using a 4-point Likert scale (4 = Fully Performed, 3 = Performed, 2 = Minimally Performed, 1 = Not Performed). The items were extracted and developed based on the General Port Rules and Regulations issued by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), particularly referencing operational and administrative guidelines applicable to public port management.

The second instrument is titled "Challenges Encountered by Port Police Personnel in Performing Their Duties," a 9-item questionnaire that measures the degree of operational, organizational, and environmental challenges faced by the port police personnel, rated using a 4-point Likert scale (4 = Very Challenging, 3 = Challenging, 2 = Slightly Challenging, 1 = Not Challenging).

Both questionnaires were designed to directly reflect the functional expectations and real-world conditions experienced by PPA police personnel, ensuring alignment with the objectives of developing a contextualized Port Police Training Manual.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Findings and Interpretation

Description of the Respondents

The twenty-three (23) Port Police participated in the study though on-site distribution of questionnaires. The respondents have worked as Port Police for at least one (1) year.

Table 1
Description of Respondents

Code Name	Age	Rank	Gender	Experience	Roles
R1	40	Senior Port Police Inspector	Male	10 years	Oversees all port police operations as a station commander. Supervises patrol and inspection units and leads special operations.
R2	47	Port Police Officer III	Male	9 years	Conducts regular patrols, supervises gate security.
R3	29	Port Police Officer III	Female	5 years	Conducts regular patrols, assists in special operations and intelligence on illegal activities.
R4	27	Port Police Officer III	Male	4 years	Enforces port traffic regulations, inspects cargo and passenger areas for dangerous goods.
R5	34	Port Police Officer III	Female	4 years	Assist in documentation of violations and incident reports, ensure terminal cleanliness and order.
R6	31	Port Police Officer III	Female	5 years	Monitors CCTV and access system, prepares daily situation reports.
R7	27	Port Police Officer II	Female	3 years	Responds to passenger complaints, maintain peace and order in passenger terminal.
R8	26	Port Police Officer II	Male	2 years	Conducts security checks at gates, verifies vehicle passes and identification cards.
R9	25	Port Police Officer II	Male	12 years	Patrols restricted zones, supports investigations of theft or damage to port property.
R10	33	Port Police Officer II	Female	3 years	Checks cargo manifests, observes compliance with port entry policies.
R11	28	Port Police Officer II	Male	3 years	Patrols restricted zones and assist in implementation of traffic regulations.

R12	26	Port Police Officer II	Male	2 years	Checks cargo manifests and conducts security checks at gates.
R13	27	Port Police Officer II	Female	1 ½ years	Assist in monitoring CCTV and maintain peace and order in passenger terminal.
R14	30	Port Police Officer I	Female	3 years	Assist in baggage inspection, provides information and guidance to passengers.
R16	29	Port Police Officer I	Male	2 years	Controls access to port, assists in emergency drills and fire safety checks.
R17	27	Port Police Officer I	Male	2 years	Conduct roving patrol, reports irregularities and suspicious activities.
R18	30	Port Police Officer I	Male	2 years	Assist in crowd control during peak passenger hours, ensures order at embarkation areas.
R19	30	Port Police Officer I	Male	1 ½ years	Assist in patrol, documentation report preparation.
R20	29	Port Police Officer I	Male	1 ½ years	Assist in crowd control during peak season and conducts roving patrol.
R21	25	Port Police Officer I	Male	1 year	Assists in monitoring CCTV footage, prepares shift reports.
R22	27	Port Police Officer I	Male	1 year	Assists in baggage inspection (duty in X-Ray machine for baggage of passengers) and assists security clearance requirements.
R23	23	Port Police Officer I	Male	1 year	Assists in baggage inspection (duty in X-Ray machine for baggage of passengers) and assists security clearance requirements.

**Performance Of Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations
Permit/Pass to Person/Vehicle**

Permit/Pass to Person/Vehicle are authorization issued to individuals or vehicles allowing entry into the port premises, ensuring that only those with valid reasons or official business are granted access.

Table 2
Perform of Current Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations (Permit/Pass to Person/ Vehicle)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
1. Valid permits or identification cards are checked before allowing persons into port premises.	3.88	Fully Performed
2. Vehicles are inspected for entry passes prior to accessing restricted areas.	3.92	Fully Performed
3. Access is denied to individuals or vehicles lacking proper documentation.	3.84	Fully Performed
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.88	Fully Performed

Among the three items evaluated, the highest rating was obtained by the statement, “Vehicles are inspected for entry passes prior to accessing restricted areas,” with a weighted mean of 3.92. This indicates the consistent enforcement of vehicle access protocols by port police, ensuring that only authorized transport enters sensitive port zones. This finding aligns with

the Philippine Ports Authority's updated standards as reflected in the Port Operations Manual and PPA Administrative Order No. 10-95, which require strict control of vehicle and personnel movement for security and operational integrity.

The next highest item, "Valid permits or identification cards are checked before allowing persons into port premises," received a weighted mean of 3.88, suggesting that access control for individuals was also diligently implemented. This reflects the findings of (Karahalios, 2022), who emphasized that well-regulated entry protocols form the backbone of port security, helping prevent unauthorized access that could compromise both safety and efficiency.

Lastly, the item "Access is denied to individuals or vehicles lacking proper documentation" received a weighted mean of 3.84, still within the Fully Performed range. This indicates that PPA police personnel are assertive in denying access to non-compliant individuals and vehicles, which is consistent with (Richards, 2022) assertion that consistent enforcement of documentation requirements helps reduce port-related vulnerabilities and enhances situational control.

Licenses

Licenses are official documents or permits required for vendors, traders, and other port-related personnel to legally operate within the port premises.

Table 3
Performance of Current Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations (Licenses)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
4. Vendor and trader licenses are verified before allowing commercial activity inside the port.	3.74	Fully Performed
5. Expired or invalid permits are reported and disallowed from port operations.	3.68	Fully Performed
6. Regular checks are conducted to ensure license compliance within the port.	3.74	Fully Performed
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.72	Fully Performed

The statements "Vendor and trader licenses are verified before allowing commercial activity inside the port" and "Regular checks are conducted to ensure license compliance within the port" both yielded a weighted mean of 3.74, reflecting a consistent practice of license verification and follow-through checks by the port police. This indicates that PPA police personnel were actively ensuring that only individuals and entities with legitimate permits were allowed to conduct business within the port area, in line with the guidelines established in the PPA Port Operations Manual and Administrative Order No. 10-95, which emphasize the importance of documentation for all port-related transactions to uphold operational integrity.

The item "Expired or invalid permits are reported and disallowed from port operations" received a slightly lower, yet still commendable, weighted mean of 3.68, suggesting that the enforcement of disqualification measures was consistently applied when necessary. This aligns with findings by (Garcia & Lee, 2023), who emphasized that consistent monitoring of license validity is vital in preventing unauthorized commercial activity and minimizing risks associated with non-compliance in port zones.

The findings confirm that port police at Lucena City Port were actively involved in regulatory functions beyond basic law enforcement, notably in ensuring compliance with business licensing policies within the port environment. This reflects a broader shift in the role of port police toward administrative enforcement duties that are critical for legal order and economic regulation in maritime settings (Ahmed, 2022).

Road Vehicles

Road Vehicles are all types of motorized transportation, including trucks, vans, and service vehicles, operating within the port area, subject to port traffic rules and safety regulations.

Table 4
Performance of Current Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations (Road Vehicles)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
7. Vehicles within the port are monitored for compliance with speed limits.	3.54	Fully Performed

8. Traffic orders issued by port management or security are enforced effectively.	3.62	Fully Performed
9. Unauthorized vehicles are restricted from accessing piers and warehouse areas.	3.54	Fully Performed
10. Vehicles obstructing gangways or loading/unloading zones are acted upon immediately.	3.62	Fully Performed
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.58	Fully Performed

The results show a high degree of compliance and active enforcement, with an overall weighted mean of 3.58, interpreted as Fully Performed. This indicates that port police personnel at Lucena City Port consistently implemented measures to ensure safe and orderly vehicular movement.

The items “Traffic orders issued by port management or security are enforced effectively” and “Vehicles obstructing gangways or loading/unloading zones are acted upon immediately” both received a weighted mean of 3.62, reflecting that traffic regulation and incident response were prioritized and systematically carried out. These findings affirm the critical role of port police in enforcing traffic flow protocols to prevent congestion, delays, or safety hazards in high-traffic port areas. This aligns with (Richards, 2022), who emphasized that traffic enforcement in maritime zones must be swift and consistent to reduce the risk of operational disruptions and potential security breaches.

Meanwhile, the statements “Vehicles within the port are monitored for compliance with speed limits” and “Unauthorized vehicles are restricted from accessing piers and warehouse areas” both received a weighted mean of 3.54, also interpreted as Fully Performed. These values indicate that port police were actively engaged in routine monitoring and access control. According to the PPA Port Operations Manual and Administrative Order No. 10-95, enforcing vehicular discipline is vital to reducing incidents involving cargo transport vehicles, especially during peak port operations.

This level of performance supports the assertion that proactive mobility management is one of the core responsibilities of port enforcement units and contributes to operational efficiency, especially in mixed-use port spaces where both cargo and passenger activities are present (Ahmed, 2022). Additionally, emphasized that the ability of port police to act immediately on obstructions or unauthorized access serves as a strong indicator of institutional readiness and frontline responsiveness (Garcia & Lee, 2023).

Declaration of Dangerous Goods

Declaration of Dangerous Goods is the mandatory process of declaring hazardous materials being brought into or transported within the port, including proper labeling, packaging, and classification in compliance with international safety standards.

Table 5
Performance of Current Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations (Declaration of Dangerous Goods)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
11. Cargo labeled as hazardous is checked for complete declaration and documentation.	3.34	Performed
12. Packaging and labeling of dangerous goods follow required port or IMO safety protocols.	3.34	Performed
13. Improperly declared or mislabeled hazardous materials are reported and detained.	3.62	Fully Performed
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.43	Performed

The item “Improperly declared or mislabeled hazardous materials are reported and detained” received the highest rating, with a weighted mean of 3.62, interpreted as Fully Performed. This suggests that port police personnel were responsive

and decisive in addressing clear violations involving hazardous cargo. These findings emphasized that the capacity of port enforcement units to identify and intercept non-compliant shipments plays a crucial role in mitigating maritime security risks. (Karahalios, 2022)

In contrast, the items “Cargo labeled as hazardous is checked for complete declaration and documentation” and “Packaging and labeling of dangerous goods follow required port or IMO safety protocols” both received a weighted mean of 3.34, interpreted as Performed. Although still within acceptable levels, these results imply a need for greater diligence and systematic checks during the initial stages of cargo inspection. The Philippine Port Operations Manual and relevant international frameworks such as the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code mandate that hazardous goods must be declared, labeled, and transported in accordance with global safety standards. Failure to ensure compliance at these early checkpoints can result in operational hazards or regulatory liabilities.

Insufficient training and limited access to updated classification tools often reduce frontline personnel’s ability to fully enforce complex safety regulations concerning hazardous goods (Garcia & Lee, 2023). In the context of Lucena City Port, these slightly lower ratings may point to procedural gaps, limited technical support, or the need for refresher training on the proper identification and handling of dangerous cargo.

Penalty Clause

Penalty Clause are the provision within the General Port Rules and Regulations that outlines sanctions, fines, or legal actions imposed on individuals or entities found violating port rules and operational protocols.

Table 6

Performance of Current Roles in Upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations (Penalty Clause)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
14. Violations of port regulations are documented and endorsed for appropriate sanction.	3.10	Performed
15. Offenders are informed of penalties in accordance with PPA guidelines.	3.10	Performed
16. Repeated non-compliance is escalated following administrative procedures.	3.24	Performed
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.15	Performed

The item “Repeated non-compliance is escalated following administrative procedures” received the highest mean of 3.24, suggesting that there is a clear understanding among port police of how to apply layered enforcement when dealing with habitual violators. However, the mean remains within the “Performed” category, suggesting the need for stronger reinforcement mechanisms or clearer procedural documentation for handling such cases. Consistent and escalating enforcement is crucial in establishing deterrence and promoting compliance within maritime regulatory environments. (Thompson, 2022)

Both “Violations of port regulations are documented and endorsed for appropriate sanction” and “Offenders are informed of penalties in accordance with PPA guidelines” received equal weighted means of 3.10, also interpreted as Performed. These results indicate that standard enforcement actions—such as documentation and communication of penalties—are practiced but may not always be implemented with the same level of consistency as other aspects of port policing. Administrative enforcement often encounters bottlenecks when there is a lack of updated training, insufficient inter-agency coordination, or unclear workflows (Lopez, 2023)

Synthesis of the five (5) Tables:

The findings revealed that Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) police personnel at Lucena City Port consistently performed their roles in upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations, with four out of five domains receiving an interpretation of Fully Performed. These include the enforcement of access control (Permit/Pass to Person/Vehicle), regulation of licenses, traffic and vehicle management, and response to unauthorized activities. The domain on Dangerous Goods was rated as Performed, indicating the need for enhanced compliance monitoring and training on safety protocols. Likewise, the Penalty Clause domain also received a Performed rating, suggesting that although violations were generally addressed, improvements in documentation, escalation procedures, and communication of sanctions could further reinforce enforcement outcomes. Overall, the data suggest that PPA police personnel have been fulfilling their regulatory functions effectively, although targeted interventions are needed in specific domains to strengthen consistency and operational depth in regulatory enforcement.

Challenges Faced by PPA Police Personnel in The Performance of Their Duties

Operational challenges

Operational Challenges are the difficulties encountered by port police personnel related to the execution of their

daily duties, such as resource limitations, multitasking demands, response inefficiencies, and enforcement of port security operations.

Table 7
Challenges Faced by PPA Police Personnel in The Performance of Their Duties (Operational Challenges)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
1. Limited manpower during port operations is a challenge to fulfilling my duties.	3.46	Challenging
2. Managing multiple security tasks at the same time is a challenge frequently experienced.	3.32	Challenging
3. Lack of access to updated equipment and resources is a significant operational challenge.	3.44	Challenging
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.41	Challenging

The item “Limited manpower during port operations is a challenge to fulfilling my duties” recorded the highest weighted mean of 3.46, suggesting that staff shortage was a recurring issue that placed strain on enforcement capacity. Inadequate staffing in regional ports contributes to fatigue, lowered morale, and reduced visibility of enforcement personnel, compromising the overall safety and orderliness of port operations (Docor, 2023).

The next item, “Lack of access to updated equipment and resources is a significant operational challenge,” obtained a weighted mean of 3.44, reinforcing the view that equipment constraints—such as outdated communication devices, insufficient mobility support, and limited surveillance tools—significantly impaired operational efficiency. The lack of technological investment in frontline port policing undermines rapid response, cargo verification, and port monitoring functions (Richards, 2022).

Lastly, the item “Managing multiple security tasks at the same time is a challenge frequently experienced” received a weighted mean of 3.32, also interpreted as Challenging. This points to the multitasking demands placed on PPA police personnel, who are often responsible for a range of overlapping duties, from traffic enforcement to crowd control, without role segmentation. The excessive multitasking, particularly in under- resourced environments, leads to task saturation and error-prone enforcement (Karahalios, 2022).

Organizational challenges

Organizational Challenges are issues arising from within the Philippine Ports Authority’s internal systems and structures that affect port police personnel, including lack of administrative support, inadequate communication, limited career development opportunities, and policy constraints.

Table 8
Challenges Faced by PPA Police Personnel in The Performance of Their Duties (Organizational Challenges)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
4. Inadequate administrative support from management is a challenge to performing my responsibilities effectively.	3.12	Challenging
5. Lack of clear communication channels within the organization poses a challenge to my work.	3.32	Challenging
6. Limited opportunities for career advancement create a motivational	2.74	Challenging

challenge for me as a port police personnel.

OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.06	Challenging
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The item “Lack of clear communication channels within the organization poses a challenge to my work” received the highest rating with a weighted mean of 3.32, reflecting that poor internal coordination and unclear directives adversely affected day-to-day enforcement functions. The fragmented communication systems in law enforcement agencies lead to inefficiencies, delayed responses, and low morale, particularly in high-stakes operational environments such as ports (Violanti, 2023).

The statement “Inadequate administrative support from management is a challenge to performing my responsibilities effectively” followed closely with a weighted mean of 3.12, further emphasizing the disconnect between frontline personnel and higher administrative levels. This gap may manifest in delayed logistics, lack of field guidance, or slow approval processes. The absence of responsive management structures impedes the ability of personnel to carry out their functions with autonomy and confidence, particularly in decentralized port settings (RTI International, 2024).

Meanwhile, the item “Limited opportunities for career advancement create a motivational challenge for me as a port police personnel” recorded the lowest mean of 2.74, though still interpreted as Challenging. This suggests that while some respondents may accept the current state of their professional trajectory, others clearly view it as a source of job dissatisfaction. The lack of growth pathways contributes to employee disengagement, especially when performance and tenure are not visibly rewarded within public institutions (Garcia & Lee, 2023).

Overall, the results in Table 8 indicate that organizational issues—including communication breakdowns, limited managerial support, and weak career development structures—impacted the effectiveness and motivation of PPA police personnel. Addressing these challenges through clearer policy directives, staff development programs, and stronger administrative responsiveness may enhance institutional cohesion and workforce morale within the Philippine Ports Authority.

Environmental Challenges

Environmental Challenges are the external factors in the port setting that hinder the effective performance of port police duties, including weather disturbances, pollution, maritime environmental crimes, and infrastructure vulnerabilities.

Table 9
Challenges Faced by PPA Police Personnel in The Performance of Their Duties (Environmental Challenges)

Variable	Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
7. Adverse weather conditions during port operations are a major challenge to my assigned tasks.	3.88	Very Challenging
8. Exposure to pollution and hazardous substances in the port environment is a health challenge in my role.	3.92	Very Challenging
9. Addressing environmental violations, such as improper waste disposal, remains a challenge in enforcing port regulations.	3.82	Very Challenging
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN	3.82	Very Challenging

The item “Exposure to pollution and hazardous substances in the port environment is a health challenge in my role” recorded the highest weighted mean of 3.92, highlighting serious health-related risks encountered by port police personnel. Emphasized that port environments are typically affected by high levels of air, noise, and chemical pollution, increasing the likelihood of occupational health issues among frontline workers. For port police who spend long hours on-site, such environmental hazards create not only health challenges but also reduce their long-term work sustainability (Ports of Stockholm, 2023).

Closely following was the item “Adverse weather conditions during port operations are a major challenge to my assigned tasks,” which received a weighted mean of 3.88. This shows that severe weather—such as heavy rains, intense heat, or typhoons—disrupted operational continuity and limited the mobility and visibility of personnel. The weather-related disruptions in maritime zones pose severe limitations on routine enforcement, often leading to delays in security checks and reduced patrol effectiveness (NATO Climate and Security Impact Assessment, 2022).

The third item, “Addressing environmental violations, such as improper waste disposal, remains a challenge in

enforcing port regulations,” received a weighted mean of 3.82, further confirming that even the environmental law enforcement role of PPA police is heavily burdened by contextual limitations. Enforcing environmental regulations at ports requires inter-agency coordination, access to technical expertise, and political will—resources that are often lacking in smaller regional ports. Without sufficient support, police personnel may find it difficult to impose sanctions or initiate environmental interventions (UNODC Report, 2022).

Collectively, these findings confirmed that environmental hazards in Lucena City Port are not only persistent but significantly obstructive to port police operations. These include both natural conditions (such as climate) and man-made challenges (like pollution and non-compliance). The consistently high weighted means across all items in this domain indicate a strong need for environmental risk reduction strategies, provision of protective equipment, clearer enforcement frameworks, and inter-agency collaboration to support port police in handling ecological and health-related challenges.

Developed Evidence-Based Components for an Improved Port Police Training Manual

The findings of this study revealed that while PPA police personnel at Lucena City Port generally performed their roles in upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations at a commendable level, several areas emerged as requiring further strengthening through targeted training.

Table 10
Summary of Significant Findings for Manual Enhancement

Significant Finding	Supporting Evidence	Interpretation
1. Gaps in enforcing dangerous goods regulations	Table 5: Items 11 & 12 rated only as Performed (WM = 3.34); only Item 13 rated Fully Performed	Port police require improved training in the technical handling, documentation, and regulatory procedures for dangerous goods in line with PPA and IMO protocols.
2. Inconsistencies in implementing penalty procedures	Table 6: All items rated as Performed (WM range: 3.10–3.24)	Weaknesses exist in documenting violations, communicating sanctions, and escalating repeated offenses.
3. Operational resource limitations	Table 7: All items interpreted as Challenging (OWM = 3.41)	Training is needed in administrative enforcement.
4. Organizational support and motivation issues	Table 8: All items interpreted as Challenging (OWM = 3.06)	Personnel experienced difficulty due to limited manpower, multitasking burdens, and lack of updated equipment—affecting efficiency and enforcement quality.
5. High-level environmental hazards affecting performance	Table 9: All items interpreted as Very Challenging (WM range: 3.82–3.92)	Challenges in communication, administrative responsiveness, and career development lowered morale and institutional cohesion.
		Personnel faced physical and regulatory enforcement challenges due to weather conditions, pollution exposure, and poor environmental compliance.

Table 10 offers a clear and concise reference linking each significant finding to its quantitative basis and practical implication. In summary, while the PPA police personnel demonstrated a high level of commitment and competence, the findings clearly identified several gaps that must be addressed through the development of an enhanced, evidence-based Port Police Training Manual. These findings justify the integration of targeted modules that respond directly to the operational, organizational, and environmental realities experienced by port police at the ground level.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that PPA police personnel at Lucena City Port generally performed their regulatory roles in

upholding the General Port Rules and Regulations with consistency and competence. Most role areas, including access control, licensing, and road vehicle enforcement, were rated as Fully Performed. However, there were notable gaps in two areas: the enforcement of dangerous goods regulations and the implementation of penalty procedures, both of which were rated only as Performed. These findings indicate the need for targeted enhancement in technical knowledge and administrative enforcement protocols, revealing that certain aspects of port policing require greater specialization and structured procedural training.

It was concluded that PPA port police personnel encountered moderate to severe challenges in the performance of their duties, which impacted their operational effectiveness and professional well-being. Operational and organizational domains were found to be Challenging, highlighting issues related to manpower shortages, multitasking burdens, outdated equipment, weak administrative support, and limited communication flow. For instance, port police officers may receive inconsistent instructions regarding security inspections or enforcement of port regulations due to a lack of regular coordination meetings between management and operational units. Similarly, feedback from personnel about logistical shortages or procedural difficulties often goes unaddressed because of the absence of a structured communication channel.

To address these issues, it is recommended that the PPA establish regular weekly or biweekly briefings where officers and supervisors can discuss operational challenges, clarify directives, and share updates on port security concerns. In addition, a formal feedback mechanism—such as an internal online portal or suggestion box—should be introduced to allow personnel to submit reports or recommendations anonymously. Supervisors should be tasked to compile and present feedback summaries during monthly management meetings to ensure that staff concerns are acknowledged and acted upon. Furthermore, mentoring and team-building sessions should be conducted quarterly to strengthen interpersonal communication and collaboration among different ranks. By institutionalizing these practical measures, communication gaps can be minimized, organizational support can be visibly strengthened, and the overall performance and morale of port police personnel can significantly improve.

Environmental challenges emerged as the most pressing, with Very Challenging ratings, due to adverse weather conditions, pollution exposure, and the difficulty of enforcing ecological regulations. These constraints underscore the need for institutional support, equipment upgrades, and preparedness training to enable port police to operate more efficiently and safely. Port police personnel are regularly exposed to various forms of environmental pollution due to the nature of their duties within seaport operations. The most common types include air pollution from vessel emissions, cargo trucks, and fuel storage facilities, which can lead to respiratory illnesses such as asthma and chronic bronchitis. Water pollution also poses significant risks, as oil spills, chemical runoff, and waste discharge from ships can contaminate port waters, exposing personnel to skin irritations and infections during inspection or rescue operations. Additionally, noise pollution from ship engines, cargo-handling equipment, and heavy vehicles contributes to fatigue, stress, and potential hearing loss. Solid waste and hazardous material exposure, such as chemical fumes or improperly stored dangerous goods, further aggravate health and safety conditions in the workplace.

To mitigate these risks, the Philippine Ports Authority should prioritize the distribution of appropriate protective equipment—including masks, gloves, ear protection, and chemical-resistant uniforms—to all port police personnel. Regular health monitoring and medical checkups should also be institutionalized to detect early signs of occupational illnesses. Moreover, forming partnerships with local environmental and health agencies such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Health (DOH), and the local government's Environmental Protection Office can strengthen environmental management and health protection programs. These agencies can assist in joint monitoring, pollution control seminars, and rapid response coordination during environmental emergencies. Through these concrete measures, port police personnel can perform their duties more safely and effectively while minimizing the long-term health impacts of environmental hazards present in port areas.

Based on the findings of the study, five evidence-based components were developed for inclusion in an improved Port Police Training Manual. These components were directly informed by the identified performance gaps and recurring challenges faced by the personnel. The proposed components addressed weaknesses in hazardous cargo enforcement, administrative sanctioning, operational efficiency, organizational communication, and environmental preparedness. The development of these training modules represents a strategic and data-driven step toward professionalizing the port police force and strengthening regulatory enforcement within Lucena City Port and similar maritime settings under the Philippine Ports Authority.

1. Dangerous Goods Handling and Regulatory Compliance

Objective: To enhance the capacity of port police personnel in the proper handling, documentation, and enforcement of regulations related to hazardous cargo.

Content Description

- This module will provide in-depth training on the classification, packaging, labeling, and declaration procedures for dangerous goods based on PPA Administrative Order No. 10-95 and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. It will include practical exercises in identifying non-compliant cargo, completing documentation, and coordinating with relevant port agencies for enforcement. The component addresses the finding that performance in this domain was only rated as Performed.

2. Administrative Enforcement and Penalty Implementation Procedures

Objective: To strengthen port police competency in documenting violations, applying sanctions, and escalating repeated offenses in accordance with PPA regulations.

Content Description

- This module will cover the legal and procedural aspects of documenting infractions, issuing citations, and communicating penalties. It will include a step-by-step guide to the escalation process for repeated violations, role-playing scenarios, and sample documentation forms. This component responds to the observed inconsistencies in penalty enforcement.

3. Operational Efficiency and Resource-Conscious Enforcement

Objective: To improve strategic task execution, time management, and enforcement effectiveness under resource-constrained conditions.

Content Description

- Designed to address the challenges of multitasking, limited manpower, and equipment constraints, this component will train personnel on prioritization, deployment strategies, and improvisation in the absence of ideal resources. Scenario-based simulations will help port police adapt operational tactics based on real-time conditions. This component is grounded in the “Challenging” rating of operational difficulties.

EVIDENCE-BASED COMPONENTS FOR AN IMPROVED PORT POLICE TRAINING MANUAL

4. Organizational Communication and Professional Development Support

Objective: To foster stronger internal coordination and increase awareness of career development pathways within the port policing structure.

Content Description

- This module will address communication barriers and motivational gaps by introducing structured communication channels, briefing/reporting protocols, and guidelines for coordination with port administration. It will also introduce personnel to existing and potential career progression pathways within the PPA system. This directly responds to organizational challenges related to communication breakdowns and limited support.

5. Environmental Risk Preparedness and Compliance Enforcement

Objective: To equip port police with knowledge and skills in environmental hazard response, safety protection, and enforcement of ecological regulations.

Content Description

- This module will cover the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), weather-related operational adjustments, handling of environmental violations (e.g., improper waste disposal), and coordination with environmental authorities. It will also include emergency preparedness drills and health protection practices in polluted port settings. This responds to the “Very Challenging” rating of environmental factors in the study.

Figure 1. Proposed development of Evidence-Based Components for an Improved Port Police Training Manual. Provide

Table 11
Proposed Training Priorities and implementation Plan for Lucena City PPA Port Police Personnel

Significant Findings (Identified Gaps/ Issues)	Training Topics to be Prioritized	Responsible Agency/ Trainer	Evaluation of Training Improvement after Implementation	Concrete steps for Continuous Improvement (Schedule, Feedback, Responsibilities)
1. Gaps in enforcing Dangerous Goods Regulations	Dangerous Goods handling Port and Port Safety Compliance	Maritime Authority (MARINA) Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Philippine Port Authority (PPA) Safety Division	Post-training inspection audits. Reduction in incidents involving cargo. Evaluation reports by Safety Officers.	Conduct refresher every six (6) months. Require certification renewal for hazardous cargo handlers. Assign Safety Officer to oversee enforcement compliance. Develop online feedback form for cargo handlers.
2. Inconsistencies in implementing penalty procedures	Legal Procedure, evidence handling and administrative sanctions	Philippine Port Authority (PPA) Division Department of Justice (DOJ) PNP Legal Service	Pre-and post-training knowledge tests. Monitoring of case documentation accuracy. Internal audit of implemented penalties.	Conduct legal refresher every twelve (12) months. Establish a standardized checklist for violation procedures. Assign Legal Affairs Officer for compliance tracking. Gather anonymous feedback from personnel about clarity of procedures.
3. Operational resource limitations (Equipment, Manpower and Logistics)	Resource Management, Logistics Planning	Philippine Port Authority (PPA) Logistic Division	Evaluation of efficiency during operations.	Conduct annual resource management workshop. Create quarterly reports on equipment usage.

	and Equipment Utilization	Civil Service Commission (CSC)	Reduction in resource wastage Feedback from unit leaders.	Assign Logistics Officer to monitor resource allocation. Hold feedback meetings every quarter to address shortages.
4. Organizational support and motivation issues	Leadership Development, Team Cohesion and Motivation Techniques	Philippine Port Authority (PPA) Human resource Management Division Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) Civil Service Commission (CSC)	360 degrees leadership feedback Staff satisfaction surveys. Decrease in absenteeism and turnover rate.	Conduct leadership and motivation training every twelve (12) months. Create recognition program for best-performing officers. Assign HR Officer to oversee morale-boosting programs. Establish anonymous feedback platform for personnel support issues.
5. High-level environmental hazards affecting performance	Emergency Risk Management and Emergency Response	Philippine Port Authority (PPA) Emergency Response Unit Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Office of Civil Defense (OCD)	Post-drill performance ratings. Response time during actual events. External observer assessments.	Conduct emergency drills quarterly. Update risks maps and contingency plans annually. Assign Emergency Response Officer as focal person. Collect post-drill feedback for improvement actions.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The researcher observed strict ethical standards throughout the conduct of the study. Prior to data collection, formal approval was secured from the management of Lucena City Port and the Philippine Ports Authority to administer the questionnaires and interact with the assigned port police personnel. Each respondent was informed of the purpose of the study and was assured that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences.

Informed consent was obtained from all 23 respondents before the questionnaires were distributed. The confidentiality of all responses was guaranteed, and no names or personal identifiers were included in the final reporting of the data. The researcher ensured that all information gathered was used solely for academic purposes and was stored securely to protect respondent privacy.

During the administration of the questionnaires, the researcher remained neutral and avoided any influence on the participants' answers. No form of coercion, inducement, or pressure was exerted during the data gathering. The entire process complied with ethical principles governing human participation in research, particularly in the areas of respect, voluntary consent, and data protection.

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