



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
INSURANCE COMMISSION
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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

2016 BANNER YEAR FOR AGENT LICENSURE WITH IC

As of August this year, a total number of agent licensure examinees had reached 27,055, considered one of the highest by the Insurance Commission (IC), the government agency mandated to promote and regulate the country's insurance industry.

At its present rate, the IC estimates that 2016 could turn out to be a record year. If the trend continues, more than 40,000 individuals are forecast to complete examinations for insurance agents this year.

Since 2010, the highest number of examinees was recorded in 2014 with 36,798 from a low of 12,970 posted in 2010.

"So far, 2016 is turning out to be the strongest based on initial data," IC Deputy Insurance Commissioner and Officer-in-Charge Dennis B. Funa said.

Of the total number of examinees, 8,287 were applying for a life insurance sales or general agent license, 1,048 for a non-life, and 17,719 for a variable life (VUL) license.

In 2015, the IC reported a total of 61,461 licensed life insurance agents, 449 licensed non-life or general agents, and 58,308 variable life agents. In 2011, life agents numbered 36,850, general agents reached 193, and VUL agents at 8,314.

But the big leap occurred in 2014 when the life agents expanded from 32,576 in 2013 to 55,169 in the record growth rate year of 2014.

Funa said that the strong economy as seen by the strong growth in premium income in the first nine months of the year, could well justify the anticipated record of licensure examinees.

"It is a strong sign that the country's insurance industry is becoming an employment option for the expanding productive population," Funa said.

This year, the IC completed a newly designed Agent's Computerized Exam (ACE) program, and a pilot testing prior to implementation will be conducted once the questions have been reviewed and approved.

The IC likewise put in place the necessary logistics for this program including the procurement of computers to be used. As efficiency of the examination process has been enhanced, integrity and reliability of the examination are also assured.

According to Funa, the ACE aims to fully automate licensure and examinations for insurance agents. In addition to the automation of the licensure and examination, the IC developed new sets of questions, which are currently under review, to be given to applicants to effectively test their proficiency.

“We are expecting that there will be an increase in the number of insurance agents taking into consideration that we will be able to accommodate more applicants to take the licensure exam in view of the newly designed ACE,” added Funa.

Life insurers informed the IC that they were in a recruitment binge, from general agents to those armed with investment knowledge, and those suited for bancassurance operations. Bancassurance allows insurers to sell protection and investment products at bank premises through their financial advisers.

According to the Philippine Statistics Agency (PSA), the country’s employment rate expanded to 95.3 percent in October this year from 94.4 percent in the same period last year. The labor force participation rate also increased to 63.6 percent.

In its annual Total Remuneration Survey and bi-annual Market Pulse surveys, global consultancy firm Mercer said that sales and finance are the two most difficult roles to recruit and retain.

“As a result, organizations in the Philippines compete for talent regardless of industry and location. Sales and finance are the two most difficult roles to recruit and retain. The sales role cuts across different industries; hence, it has become an in-demand job, and the influx of shared services operation in the Philippines has opened up a lot of opportunities for the finance roles.”



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