



## **P N P News Release**

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### **PDEA TRAINS VACC MEMBERS AS DRUG COURT WATCHERS; MOVE SEEN TO HELP PREVENT DISMISSAL OF DRUG CASES**

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) aims to solve the problem unjustified dismissal of drug cases by training members of Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) as drug court watchers.

Fifty VACC members led by VACC founding chair Dante Jimenez were trained by the PDEA Academy last Tuesday (Dec. 16) to attend and monitor trials of drug cases.

Undersecretary Anselmo S. Avenido Jr., PDEA director general, said the move is expected to help prevent the dismissal of drug cases, especially those involving big fishes in the illegal drugs trade.

"The main cause of the dismissal is the non-appearance of witnesses. This is particularly true in Metro Manila where the bulk of drug cases are now pending. With court watchers around, everybody will be alert - the judge, the prosecutor and the witnesses," Avenido said.

Avenido said they tapped the VACC because of the organization's experience will be in the courts during trials to monitor and record the proceedings. They will submit a progress report to the PDEA.

The trainees were drilled on the following subjects: national drug situation; penal provisions of Republic Act 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002; Operation: Private Eye; and case tracking and monitoring format.

Earlier, the PDEA reported that it was able to locate a total of 251 police witnesses in drug cases. These police officers were found to have been transferred to different units, preventing them from attending hearings. Through the efforts of the PDEA, these police officers are now able to attend hearings.