The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will launch the iTow application on Friday in a bid to stop anomalous practices of tow truck operators.

MMDA Chairman Emerson Carlos said the iTow application, through the PureForce Citizens app, which will be made available in both Android and iOS platforms, to provide an online venue dedicated to towing operations.

“Motorists will now have extra protection against illegal towing operations through this app. As such, they can immediately report or complain anomalous activities,” Carlos said.

Users of the iTow app can report illegal towing operations directly to the MMDA Command Center and motorists can also ask for assistance for any emergency, particularly on the road, through the app.

The areas initially covered by the app are those included in the Mabuhay Lanes, where the agency has been doing operations on illegally parked vehicles.

According to the MMDA chief, the app, incorporated in the PureForce Emergency Response System, will rely primarily on CCTV cameras of MMDA as well as reports sent by traffic enforcers and field personnel, particularly in areas where there are no surveillance cameras.

Traffic enforcers, as well as accredited private towing companies, will be provided with tablets with the app which is linked to MMDA’s Metrobase. Photos of vehicles to be towed must be taken using the tablet, then sent to Metrobase for verification. If the vehicle must be towed, a reference number will be sent to the tow truck operators / traffic enforcers by the dispatcher from Metrobase.

The public can download the app for free.

In related development, MMDA has decided to disaccredit Arcson Towing Services after the agency’s Legal and Legislative Staff Affairs found out that there was no proof the car owned by
complainant Kirsten Uy De Baron was illegally parked in front of Savemore in Broadway, Quezon City last May 23.

MMDA’s Legal and Legislative Staff also maintained that Arcson Towing Services’ personnel gravely abused their authority in the conduct of towing and impounding complainant’s vehicle.

With the resolution to take out the accreditation of the private towing company, the MMDA subsequently ordered Arcson to immediately stop its operations.

The MMDA had repeatedly invited Arcson personnel involved in towing the complainant’s car to air their side but they failed to show up to defend their case.

"May this case be a lesson to all abusive tow truck personnel and strictly follow the proper procedures in hauling vehicles because the Authority will not tolerate such illegal acts,” Carlos said.

Earlier, as part of the re-assessment of accredited towing firms MMDA the towing personnel will undergo drug test, lectures, seminars and diagnostic exam that they have to pass.

After the seminar, MMDA said they will be given an exam and must get a 100-percent rating in order to pass.

Carlos said these procedures are prerequisites for accreditation and would ensure that only qualified and decent people will be allowed to operate tow trucks in the metropolis.

According to Carlos, those towing personnel found to be using illegal drugs were immediately terminated by their respective companies and were put on blacklist and are now banned from entering the MMDA impounding area.

“‘We need to cleanse the ranks of tow truck operators. Those isolated unscrupulous incidents are hurting the image of MMDA, since we are the one issuing the accreditations,” Carlos said.

Aside from regular drug testing, the MMDA also subjects tow trucks to smoke emission tests.

The move is in response to the increase in complaints against towing companies, including illegal towing, charging of high fees, and alleged extortion.


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