

Contractor suspends crane services to Rota Terminal

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INTERNATIONAL Bridge & Construction Marianas Inc., the contractor that provides equipment to Rota Terminal & Transfer, has informed the Commonwealth Ports Authority that it has suspended its crane services to the stevedoring company.



In his letter to CPA Executive Director Leo Tudela, IBCM Inc. President Robert W. Toelkes said that due to the non-payment of crane services and RT&T's failure to respond to their demand letters on Feb. 15, 2024 and April 10, 2024, IBCM "is left with no alternative but to suspend crane services to Rota Terminal & Transfer until such time as IBCM has received a minimum of \$100,000 of the past due amount."

Toelkes said the total amount due currently is more than \$200,000. He said they regret having to take such drastic action but has no choice as IBCM cannot continue to provide services without compensation.

Tudela on Tuesday confirmed that he did receive the letter from Toelkes, but he was not aware if RT&T had made a payment already.

Earlier this month, Registrar of Corporation Remedio C. Mafnas of the Department of Commerce issued an official notification informing RT&T that her office had terminated the stevedoring company's legal existence and prohibited it from conducting any business at Rota seaport.

Mafnas told Rota Terminal President Victor B. Hocog and the company's secretary, Lola H. Marasigan, that Commerce records indicated that RT&T was delinquent in filing its annual corporation reports for the years 2018 to 2023. She said RT&T's failure to submit annual reports violated the CNMI Business Corporation Regulation Act.

For her part, RT&T office manager Viola H. Atalig said they had filed the 2018 and 2019 corporation reports, and were working on filing the 2020 to 2023 reports.

Variety learned that CPA is looking at a "Plan B" to ensure that stevedoring services on Rota will continue. CPA intends to "reach out" to a Saipan-based stevedoring company that is also operating on Tinian, and ask it to take over the stevedoring services on Rota.

Urgently needed

Meanwhile, Marianas Water Works has asked CPA to be allowed to dock at West Harbor despite the unavailability of crane services.

Marianas Water Works President Lorraine Manglona told Tudela, "I believe there are concerns with the availability of a crane at the dock to offload our cargo consisting of more than 40 each of 55-gallon drums of lubricating oil for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp."

"This is urgently needed to be transported down to Rota," she told Tudela, adding that she appreciates CPA's consideration of an urgent matter.

Emmanuel Erediano

Reporter

A bachelor of arts in journalism graduate, he started his career as a police beat reporter. Loves to cook. Eats death threats for breakfast.