

## Office of the Government Corporate Counsel: The Statutory Legal Counsel

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OGCC, GOCC, LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES V.  
*TERESITA PANLILIO-LUCIANO*

The Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) took 70 years to evolve into the institution that it is now. In fact, the OGCC started merely as a Corporate Counsel Division within the DOJ by virtue of a Memorandum Order in 1946 and is today vested with full control and supervision over all legal divisions of GOCCs with respect to handling legal matters. Republic Act Nos. 3834 and 6000 affirmed the OGCC's capacity to act as a legal counsel of GOCCs by providing it with the necessary legal machinery.

The OGCC is the mediator or arbitrator of disputes between or among GOCCs. This vital function began when then President Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree No. 242 in 1973. Also, there are several laws responsible for the continual transformation of the OGCC's role and authority. However, the leading case of *Land Bank of the Philippines v. Teresita Panlilio-Luciano* stressed that the OGCC is not just the principal legal counsel of the GOCCs but is an overseer of all the legal departments of the GOCCs. This ruling was reiterated in *Phividec Industrial Authority v. Capitol Steel Corporation*.

Certainly, after a series of transformations brought about by the enactment of laws, the OGCC has become an institution adaptive and proactive to change. Its past, present, and future are geared towards the fulfillment of its mandate as the statutory legal counsel of GOCCs, unless the President or Congress finds it necessary to again redefine its role.