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(PE2 Note: Manila Standard's Alena Mae Flores reports on PE2's recommendation to intensify planning efforts toward reducing or shifting the 3.3 GW peak demand caused by rising temperatures.)

The Philippine Energy Efficiency Alliance (PE2) called for a strategic shift to address the tight power supply by managing peak demand as a prerequisite to planning new generating and transmission capacities.

PE2 president Alexander Ablaza said in a statement a significant portion of the country-wide 3,340 megawatt rise in summer demand could actually be flattened through either peak-shaving or load-shifting toward off-peak hours.

"While it would be theoretically impossible to achieve a totally flat demand curve, our energy-use economy should at least aspire to reduce the 3.3 GW bump in peak demand every summer," Ablaza said.

Ablaza said it is imperative to initially exhaust all opportunities to flatten daily and seasonal peak demand curves prior to the planning of new power plants.

He said PE2 believes that the thinning of power reserves every summer is always brought about by the vicious cycle where the end-use economy perpetually requires more energy when ambient temperatures soar.

"The hotter the weather, the more energy is required to provide cooling through air conditioning and refrigeration," Ablaza said.

"PE2 believes that our limited power supply capacities can be optimally planned and dispatched if we try to flatten our steep peak demand curves as an initial step. There is so much talk about beefing up our thinning reserves by accelerating the addition of new power plants, but there are no conscious and concerted efforts toward shaving or shifting peak demand toward off-peak periods," he said.

He said the grids always plan for the April-May summer peak demand for available generating capacities, which have recently risen by up to 27 percent from the annual low demand every January.

Ablaza said the permanent peak shaving could be achieved through aggressive replacement of energy-intensive systems in the commercial, industrial, transport and government sectors with more efficient technologies.

A portion of the current peak demand can be shifted to off-peak hours or periods through a wide range of energy storage technologies, which now include thermal, kinetic and battery energy storage systems, he said.



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He said the more energy-efficient cooling technologies such as district or centralized systems, variable refrigerant flow, inverter and solar thermal cooling should replace conventional cooling systems to reduce peak demand for cooling especially through the mid-day and early afternoon peak hours of several highly urbanized cities.

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