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02 January 2014

CUSTOMS MEMORANDUM ORDER
No. 01-2014

BoC-Central Records Unit
RECEIVED
09 JAN 2014
Time 4:02 PM
By Michelle

SUBJECT: Revised Guidelines on the Accreditation of Media Practitioners covering the Bureau of Customs

I. SCOPE

This Order, which revokes Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 37-2011, dated 08 November 2011, revises the guidelines and procedures in the **accreditation of journalists and other media practitioners** who cover the Bureau of Customs (BoC) on a **regular basis** to ensure that only *bona fide* media professionals and *bona fide* media organizations or entities are allowed entry to BoC premises nationwide and cover events therein.

"Accreditation" means recognition by the Bureau of Customs of the *bona fide* media professionals for the purpose of access to sources of information in the Bureau and also to news materials released by, or on behalf of the Public Information and Assistance Division (PIAD) of the BoC. Accreditation is valid for one (1) year and is renewable. Requests are assessed regularly on the basis of the documents submitted.

"Journalists" or "media practitioners" are defined as persons who have as their main profession the dispatch, on a regular basis, of news reports, commentaries, articles, etc., to news agencies, radio/television networks or stations, newspapers, online media entities and other specialized publications.

"Regular basis," as mentioned in the previous paragraph, is defined as a journalist or media practitioner with current, continuous and sustained journalistic work about the Bureau of Customs and related stakeholders. These may include beat reporters of nationally-circulated broadsheets, correspondents of tabloids or provincial or local publications and writers or reporters of specialized or trade publications.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

It is the policy of the Bureau of Customs to provide true, objective and accurate information about the agency, its policies, orders and other directives, especially as these are imbued with public interest.

Only legitimate media practitioners and legitimate media entities shall be accredited by the Bureau of Customs. The Chief of the Public Information and Assistance Division (PIAD) shall be directly responsible for the approval or revocation of the accreditation of media practitioners nationwide.

The Chief, PIAD shall submit a list of all accredited media practitioners to the Commissioner; the Deputy Commissioners of the Intelligence Group and Enforcement Group; the Director, Enforcement and Security Service; and all District Collectors.

III. OPERATIONAL PROVISIONS

A. Procedures for accreditation - Applications for accreditation shall be filed in writing, any time from the date of effectivity of this Order with the following offices:

- 1) With the Public Information and Assistance Division (PIAD), BoC in the case of media practitioners with coverage in Metro Manila or media entities with nationwide reach or circulation.
- 2) With the office of the nearest District Collector/Port of the Bureau in the case of regional and provincial correspondents of national publication/broadcast media.

entities and members of the news/editorial staff of publications/broadcast media entities with regional, provincial, city or municipality reach or circulation. The District/Port Collector will submit to PIAD the applications of accreditation received with his/her recommendation.

- 3) PIAD shall process the applications for accreditation and act upon these within five (5) days from the submission of complete requirements. Upon approval, PIAD shall prepare and issue BoC Identification Cards to the accredited media practitioners to be signed by the Commissioner within 5 days from date of accreditation, subject to the schedule of ID cards issuances by the Internal Administration Group of the Bureau
 - 4) Only two (2) journalists/media practitioners per media organization/publication can be accredited per year, which includes photographers. In the case of re-assignment, resignation or any other circumstance that creates a vacancy in the accredited media practitioners for a particular media organization/publication within a given year, the PIAD can process accreditation for their replacements, subject to compliance with the requirements and rules stated in this Order
- B. Requirements for accreditation – All journalists or media practitioners applying for accreditation should complete the Application Form and submit this together with the following documents
- 1) Publication/Media Entity
 - a. For partnerships/corporations – Certified True Copies of Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration, Articles of Partnership/Incorporation, By-Laws and latest General Information Sheet (GIS)
For Sole Proprietorships – Certified True Copy of Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) Registration
 - b. Certified True Copy of Mayor's Permit
 - c. Certified True Copy of Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Certificate of Registration
 - d. Certificate of Registration or proof of membership in the Publisher's Association of the Philippines (PAPI) and/or the Philippine Press Institute (PPI)
 - e. Proof that the publication has been consistently in circulation for at least six (6) months through the submission of original copies of all issues published from July 2013 to the most recent issue prior to the date of submission of application for accreditation
 - f. Proof that the publication has a circulation of at least 1,500 copies per issue through the submission of Certified True Copies of Purchase Orders and/or Original Receipt from the printer
 - g. Online media entities (which may include news outlets and blogs), must meet the following requirements, in addition to Items a-c above
 - i. The website must belong to a recognized media organization and have a verifiable office address, telephone number and other contact details
 - ii. The website must be updated at least twice a week
 - h. Disclosure of related parties
 - i. Business interests, affiliate or associated companies or entities that has dealings or transactions with the Bureau of Customs
 - 2) Reporter/Writer/Correspondent
 - a. A recent letter (original, not copy) from the publisher, executive editor or editor-in-chief printed on the official letterhead of the media organization stating that the applicant for accreditation is designated or assigned to cover news or reportage about the Bureau of Customs
 - b. Clear photocopies of government-issued identification (e.g. valid passport, driver's license, Unified National ID, Bureau of Internal Revenue Identification Card)
 - c. Two (2) pieces 2x2" ID pictures
 - d. For print and online media practitioners – proof of five (5) published by-lined articles within the past three (3) months
For broadcast media practitioners – proof of four (4) broadcast reports (e.g. voice-over reports or spot/live reports) aired within the past two (2) months

- e. Disclosure of related parties
 - i. Relatives (up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity) working with the Bureau of Customs or the Department of Finance
 - ii. Business interests (consultancy, investor, shareholder or partner) in any entity or venture that has dealings or transactions with the Bureau of Customs
- 3) Photographer/Videographer/Multi-media producer
- a. A recent letter (original, not copy) from the publisher, executive editor or editor-in-chief printed on the official letterhead of the media organization stating that the applicant for accreditation is the assigned to cover at the Bureau of Customs
 - b. Clear photocopies of government-issued identification (e.g. valid passport, driver's license, Unified National ID, Bureau of Internal Revenue Identification Card)
 - c. Two (2) pieces 2x2" ID pictures
 - d. Original tear sheets or photos with credits published within the past three (3) months
 - e. Disclosure of related parties
 - i. Relatives (up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity) working with the Bureau of Customs or the Department of Finance
 - ii. Business interests (consultancy, investor, shareholder or partner) in any entity or venture that has dealings or transactions with the Bureau of Customs
- C. Issuance of *Ad Hoc*/Temporary Passes – *Bona fide* journalists and other media practitioners from *bona fide* media organizations or entities who do not cover the Bureau of Customs on a regular basis are allowed entry to BoC premises nationwide, provided
- 1) That the journalists/media practitioners have a specific purpose for entering BoC premises. These may include conducting one-on-one interviews, attending briefings, meetings or other events, shooting video for documentaries, or taking photographs for publications
 - 2) That media organizations who are doing documentaries and other special reports on the BoC submit a synopsis of the report, list of crew and equipment, and shot list
 - 3) Issuance of the *Ad Hoc*/Temporary Pass shall be done through the PIAD

IV. DENIAL OF ACCREDITATION — The Public Information and Assistance Division (PIAD) must be satisfied that the individuals applying for accreditation are *bona fide* media professionals and represent *bona fide* media organizations. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis and the decisions of the PIAD are final

- A. Applicants for accreditation must not have any derogatory record with the Customs Police
- B. Applicants with business dealings of any kind with organizations, entities or companies who transact with the Bureau of Customs can be accredited, provided that proper, accurate and relevant disclosures are made
- C. Applicants may be required to submit proof of payment for regular and sustained journalistic work that clearly shows that the application for accreditation and coverage at the Bureau of Customs is not merely a cover for other activities

IV. CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION — The Bureau of Customs, through the PIAD, reserves the right to cancel or revoke or withdraw accreditation of journalists/media practitioners whose activities run counter to ethical practices and conduct as professional journalists/media practitioners, or who abuse the privileges so extended or put the accreditation to improper use

- A. Grounds for cancellation or revocation of accreditation
 - 1) Violation of any of the guidelines set forth in this Order
 - 2) Violation of the Philippine Journalists' Code of Ethics
 - 3) Involvement in smuggling activities
 - 4) Involvement in altercations or any acts that violate the rules and regulations inside BoC premises

- 5) Use of accreditation as proof of professional qualifications or as authorization or credential to conduct any other transaction with the Bureau of Customs
- 6) Wilfully allowing another person to use his/her BoC-issued ID
- 7) Other offenses similar to the above-mentioned

B. Procedures for cancellation or revocation of accreditation

- 1) A valid complaint must be filed against the concerned BoC-accredited media practitioner by any interested party with the PIAD
- 2) The complaint shall be deliberated by a Grievance Committee composed of the following:
 - a. Chief, PIAD
 - b. Representative from Legal Service
 - c. Representative from the Office of the Commissioner
- 3) The Grievance Committee shall set the case for hearing within five (5) days from receipt of the complaint
- 4) After due notice and hearing, the Grievance Committee shall render its decision on the basis of evidence presented and the testimonies/statements of the parties concerned
- 5) Notice of the Decision shall be sent to all parties concerned
- 6) Revocation of the accreditation of the journalist/media practitioner concerned shall result in the confiscation of his/her BoC-issued ID. Formal notice shall also be sent to the publisher and/or editor-in-chief of the dis-accredited journalist/media practitioner

IV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. Wearing of BoC-issued IDs

- 1) The Bureau shall strictly enforce the "NO ID, NO ENTRY" policy. BoC-issued media IDs must be visibly worn at all times while inside BoC premises
- 2) Should a BoC-accredited journalist/media practitioner forgets or misplaces his/her ID, he/she shall be required to secure an Ad Hoc/Temporary Pass on a daily basis
- 3) In case of loss of the BoC-issued media ID, it is the responsibility of the BoC-accredited journalist/media practitioner to inform the PIAD and to file an Affidavit of Loss to secure a replacement ID

B. Duly-accredited BoC journalists/media practitioners have the following privileges

- 1) Use of the BoC Media Lounge and its facilities
- 2) Access to the PIAD Office to browse media archives or for research purposes
- 3) Request BoC officials and other key personnel for interview or briefing on customs-related issues/matters, provided, that interviews are pre-arranged to avoid disruption of work
- 4) Inclusion in the email/text list of PIAD for Media Advisories/Invitations to BoC events and activities, press releases and other items for external communication
- 5) Access to photographs and other video materials of the PIAD that have been cleared for external release

C. Access to BoC offices and facilities

- 1) Aside from the Media Lounge and the PIAD office, all journalists and media practitioners, whether or not they are BoC-accredited, are not authorized to enter any office/area within the BoC offices nationwide. Loitering within BoC premises nationwide is strictly prohibited
- 2) Prior authorization for access by any journalist or media practitioner, whether or not they are BoC-accredited, to other areas/offices within BoC premises nationwide are to be given on a case-to-case basis.
- 3) Units/Divisions/Groups under the BoC reserve the right to identify areas where all media is restricted for security purposes and to avoid disruptions in operations

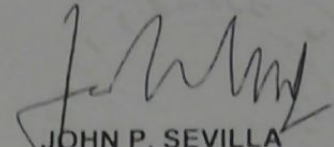
- D. Privacy policy** — Required information provided to the PIAD is used solely for accreditation and record-keeping purposes. These are confidential and will not be published for general access. The Bureau of Customs, however, assumes no responsibility for the security of this information.

V. REPEALING CLAUSE – All Memoranda, Orders and other Issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed/superseded and/or modified accordingly

VI. DISSEMINATION – The Public Information and Assistance Division (PIAD) shall furnish the Office of the Press Secretary, the Department of Finance, Philippine Information Agency, the ROC

Press Corps and all relevant media organizations copies of this Order. The Order shall also be posted in the BoC website.

VII. EFFECTIVITY — This Order shall take effect immediately and shall last until revoked



JOHN P. SEVILLA
Commissioner
H-00083
9-JAN-2014