



27 August 2015

CUSTOMS MEMORANDUM ORDER
NO. 27-2015

**SUBJECT: Revised Rules and Regulations on the Importation of
"Balikbayan Boxes" from Overseas Filipino Workers**

I. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 To prescribe simplified customs procedures for our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) sending "balikbayan boxes" to the Philippines;
- 1.2 To protect the legitimate interests of OFWs in sending balikbayan boxes as tangible sign of their love and concern for their family members; and
- 1.3 To contribute to the enforcement efforts in suppressing unscrupulous individuals using the balikbayan boxes privilege to smuggle goods.

II. COVERAGE

This Order shall apply to all non-commercial inbound consolidated shipments of OFWs and for returning OFWs bringing in personal and household effects as provided under Section 105 (f) of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines (TCCP), as amended.

III. OPERATIONAL PROVISIONS

- 3.1 Balikbayan Boxes of OFWs shall not be subjected to random or arbitrary physical inspection. Instead they shall only undergo mandatory X-ray scanning.
- 3.2 Mandatory container X-ray scanning shall be conducted at the X-ray Inspection Project (XIP) Designated Examination Area (DEA) for preliminary examination of non-commercial inbound consolidated shipment.
- 3.3 In cases of non-commercial inbound consolidated shipment tagged "suspect" after X-ray scanning, the XIP image analysis inspector shall identify the Balikbayan box/es with possible violation and recommend the issuance of an Alert Order. For Balikbayan box/es without violation, it shall be segregated and provisionally released to allow its continuous processing.
- 3.4 Balikbayan box/es which are Alerted shall be subjected to 100% physical examination at the authorized examination area to be conducted by a Customs Examiner in the presence of the apprehending officers, freight forwarder consolidator, representatives of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and/or a designated officer of an OFW Association be present.

- 3.5 For purposes of trade facilitation and to address port congestion, the BOC may allow the 100% examination of Alerted shipments under this Order to be conducted at the warehouse of the freight forwarder/consolidator upon submission of an Affidavit of Undertaking subject to existing customs laws, rules and regulations.
- 3.6 The BOC shall endeavor to acquire K-9 units and install CCTVs in all authorized inspection/examination areas.
- 3.7 Failure on the part of the responsible customs official or personnel to comply with any of the directives stated in this Order shall be dealt with in accordance with Section 3604 of the TCCP, as amended, and appropriate civil service rules and regulations.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The Bureau of Customs may cause the production and printing of information, notices, leaflets on the new Rules and Regulations for the importation of Balikbayan boxes in order to provide OFWs with clear information on the simplified customs procedure prescribed under this Order.

V. REPEALING CLAUSE

All orders, circulars, memoranda and other issuances inconsistent or in conflict with this order are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

VII. EFFECTIVITY

This Order shall take effect immediately.

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ALBERTO D. LINA
Commissioner
Bureau of Customs
ALBERTO D. LINA
Commissioner
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