



The Official Newsletter of the Philippine Bureau of Customs

PORT SENTINEL

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OUTGOING PDEA CHIEF ASSUMES BOC POST

Outgoing Director General of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Isidro S. Lapeña has formally assumed the Bureau of Customs (BOC) leadership on August 30, 2017.

Lapeña received the BOC flag from former Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, during the ceremonial transfer of the BOC stewardship at the BOC Building, South Harbor, Gate 3, Port Area, Manila.

“The marching order given to me by President Rodrigo Duterte is to address the perennial problems that have beset the BOC for years. My top priority – and it should be clear to everyone- is to do away with the culture of “pasalubong” and “tara”. Strictly “No gift and no take policy,” Lapeña said, adding that he would institute changes to help regain public trust and confidence in the BOC.

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BOC intercepts python, lizards at NAIA

Two packages containing monitor lizards and albino Burmese pythons were seized by the Bureau of Customs at the Federal Express warehouse in Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on August 9.

The packages, declared as Lego toys, underwent physical check after suspicious images surfaced from the x-ray examination conducted by the NAIA Non-Intrusive Team.

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Commissioner Isidro Lapeña faces the men and women of the bureau during his first flag raising ceremony as the new head of the second highest generating agency in the country.

BOC, DOF ink trade facilitation program for honest traders

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Finance (DOF) signed Customs Administrative Order (CAO) 5-2017 on the establishment of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program.

CAO 5-2017 serves as the implementing rules and regulations of Section 1227 and 1228 of Republic Act 10863 otherwise known as the

Customs and Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA).

AEO program gives incentives to stakeholders with high level of compliance with customs rules and regulations. This CAO covers the processes, mechanism, and benefits of an AEO-accredited stakeholder.

The program has three components namely: cargo security system

which will ensure the integrity and security of the imported good; trade clearance system that enables highly compliant stakeholders to clear their goods with minimum customs border intervention; and mutual recognition arrangement (MRA) which sets process to implement and maintain mutual recognition between two or more customs administrations.

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Turn-Over Ceremony of New Commissioner

August 30, 2017





CUSTOMS 101

Alamin ang computation ng duties and taxes ng mga items na ipinapadala via express

Mga dapat malaman sa computation ng duties and taxes ng mga items na ipinapadala via express shipment:

1. Ang cost o value ng item (ex. 220 USD ng assorted cosmetics);
2. Ang insurance at shipping/freight cost (ex. Insurance na 2% of the value of the item plus 35 USD shipping fee);
3. I-add ang tatlong values upang makakuha ng Dutiable Value (DV). (220 + 4.40 + 35 = 259.40 USD). I-convert sa Philippine Peso kung nasa foreign currency ang mga values;
4. I-multiply ang DV ng Php sa Rate of Duty ng item (ex. 10%) upang makakuha ang customs duty;
5. Upang makakuha naman ang Total Landed Cost (TLC) i-add ang DV in Php, Customs Duty, brokerage fee (700Php) at Customs Documentary Stamp (15Php);
6. I-multiply ang TLC sa VAT Rate na 12% upang makuha ang VAT;
7. Ang "Total Amount Due to the Government" ay ang kabuuan ng mga sumusunod:

- ✓ Customs Duty
- ✓ VAT
- ✓ Excise Tax, if any
- ✓ Customs Documentary Stamp (CDS)

SAMPLE COMPUTATION ONLY:

Imported assorted cosmetics sent via express shipment.

Cost: 220USD
Insurance: 4.40USD
Freight: 35USD

FOB/FCA Value	220.00
Add: Dutiable Insurance	4.40
Add: Dutiable Freight	35.00
Dutiable Value (DV)	USD 259.40
Multiply w/ Applicable Exchange Rate	51.0000
Dutiable Value (DV)	PHP 13,229.40
Multiply w/ Rate of Duty	10%
Customs Duty	PHP 1,322.94
Add the following:	
*Brokerage Fee	700.00
Customs Documentary Stamp (CDS)	15.00
Total Landed Cost (TLC)	PHP 15,267.34
Add: Excise Tax, if any	(not applicable)
Value-Added Tax (VAT) Base	15,267.34
Multiply w/ VAT Rate	12%
Value-Added Tax	PHP 1,832.08
SUMMARY:	
Customs Duty	1,323
Value-Added Tax	1,832
Excise Tax, if any	(not applicable)
Customs Documentary Stamp (CDS)	15
Total Amount Due to the Government	PHP 3,170.00

SAMPLE COMPUTATION ONLY:

Imported two (2) rubber shoes sent via express shipment.

Cost: 378USD
Insurance: 7.56USD
Freight: 60USD

FOB/FCA Value	378.00
Add: Dutiable Insurance	7.56
Add: Dutiable Freight	60.00
Dutiable Value (DV)	USD 445.56
Multiply w/ Applicable Exchange Rate	51.0000
Dutiable Value (DV)	PHP 22,723.56
Multiply w/ Rate of Duty	15%
Customs Duty	PHP 3,408.53
Add the following:	
*Brokerage Fee	700.00
Customs Documentary Stamp (CDS)	15.00
Total Landed Cost (TLC)	PHP 26,847.09
Add: Excise Tax, if any	(not applicable)
Value-Added Tax (VAT) Base	26,847.09
Multiply w/ VAT Rate	12%
Value-Added Tax	PHP 3,221.65
SUMMARY:	
Customs Duty	3,409
Value-Added Tax	3,222
Excise Tax, if any	(not applicable)
Customs Documentary Stamp (CDS)	15
Total Amount Due to the Government	PHP 6,646.00

CSC trains BOC Davao personnel on SPMS

The personnel of the Port of Davao received training on Strategic Performance Management System (SPMS) during a 4-day seminar on August 14–17, 2017 at the Waterfront Insular Hotel.

The CSC describes SPMS as an improvement to its previous performance rating systems.

Employees from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Davao Region taught newly hired employees and refreshed established personnel of the Port on the principles and underlying philosophy of the SPMS. By doing so,

the training can help the employees in implementing the system.

“Through the years, the CSC has implemented several performance evaluation/appraisal systems. These systems, however, focus only on individual appraisals,” the CSC Memorandum Circular no. 6 series of 2012 states.

According to the memorandum, the old employee’s evaluation systems used in government did not provide an objective way to link the performance of a government office with the individual performance of

employees.

The SPMS resolves the problem by rating both the office and the individual employees of the office. The total score of an office should equal to the average performance score

of all the employees in that office.

In using the SPMS, the organization first sets overall goals and rubrics on how to rate the accomplishment of each goal. After, each employee is given tasks with set requirements to accomplish. During the rating period, each employee will submit proofs of accomplishment of their assigned tasks.

The head of office shall then rate each employee’s accomplishment



using the rubrics set beforehand. This system therefore allows for the objective rating of each employee.

The SPMS ensures that promotions and bonuses given to employees are backed up with concrete evidence of performance.

“[By doing this] you can now see how each personnel contributed to the overall goals the Bureau [of Customs],” Lourdes Amerkhan, one of the trainers, said.

China: No Pinoy involved in smuggling of 605 kilos of shabu in PH

China (GACC) has already certified that no Filipino was involved in the shipment of the 605 kilos of methamphetamine hydrochloride, or shabu, which is the subject of the ongoing investigation by Congress.

In a letter to Customs Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon dated July 17, 2017, Zhang Xiaohui, head of the International Enforcement Cooperation Division-Anti-Smuggling Bureau (ASB) of the General Administration of Customs (GACC), assured that there was no other drug shipment of the illegal drug to the Philippines during that period.

“We hereby certificated (sic) that no Filipino citizen was detected by ASB to be involved in the drug smuggling and that based on our intelligence, there was only one shipment of drug destined for the Philippines and no other shipment was related to this case,” Zhang wrote.

Zhang congratulated the BOC’s Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Service (CIIS) headed by Director Neil Estrella for its prompt action on the intelligence information related by China on May 26, 2017.

He said the information was relayed to “Mr Rainier,” reportedly Estrella’s chief of staff, requesting quick action on the matter.

During congressional investigations, Estrella said he validated the said information and immediately formed a team of agents to raid the warehouse in Valenzuela city where the shipment landed.

“Thank you to the prompt action of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service, Bureau of Philippine Customs,

the 605 kilograms of methamphetamine hydrochloride was successfully seized. Otherwise, the drugs will go into the black market which the consequence cannot be imagined,” Zhang said.

He said the quick action which resulted in the immediate recovery of the shipment was “another example of the necessity of cooperation between China and the Philippines Customs.”

According to Zhang, his office the following information to CIIS for further investigation:

- Xiamen Anti-Smuggling Bureau started the particular anti-drug intelligence operation from January 2017 to May 2017

- United actions were carried out in Xiamen, Quanzhou, Donggua and Shenzhen, resulting in 4 suspects being captured.

- On May 25, 2017, Xiamen Anti-Smuggling Bureau investigation revealed that one shipment declared as 5 printing cylinders was suspected to conceal drugs

- The cylinders had been shipped from Shihu, Quanzhou, Xiamen Customs District to

Manila, the Philippines by its carrier, Hong Fei Logistics Company.

Zhang said his office immediately tried to get in touch with Rainier to immediately relay the information to customs officials here.

“Once again, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to your utmost attention and since cooperation and assistance,” Zhang said.

“We have a good start and I believe there is plenty of room for our future cooperation,” he added.

PBA stars Duremdes, Aquino coach public school students in BOC Hoop Clinic 2017

Retired PBA players Kenneth Duremdes and Marlou Aquino, along with the BOC Transformers, coached young basketball athletes during the BOC Hoop Clinic last July 22 at the Davao City Recreation Center.

Students of Magallanes Central Elementary School and children of Bureau of Customs Employees attended the clinic.

In a message, Davao City Mayor Sara Z. Duterte addressed the children, welcomed the activities as beneficial to her constituents.

“This basketball clinic is trying to determine your willpower and determination to follow your dream. And, this also applies to both your basketball dreams and your other pursuits,” Mayor Duterte said.

Coll. Rhea Gregorio, District Collector of the Port of Manila; and Thelma Almario, former Congresswoman of Davao Oriental attended the event to support the children.

“This is part of our social responsibility,” Atty. Erastus Sandino Austria, District Collector of the Port of Davao, describes the event. “It is our way of connecting with the community.”

The children were coached on footwork, passing, dribbling, shooting and stealing exercises. They also had the chance to steal the ball from one of the Transformers players.

The coaches first taught the children the discipline needed in the game. They were taught to assume the defensive stance after hearing one long whistle.

The children were taught to only release the defensive stance after hearing a short whistle. The parents laughed when the coaches trick the kids to sit down without sounding a short whistle.

After the clinic, BOC—Port of Davao team played against the BOC Transformers and Chamber of Customs Brokers, Inc (CCBI) basketball team.

The Davao team championed over the Transformers with the score of 87-83 after losing to the CCBI team.



Clark strengthens teamwork, camaraderie

Aimed at evaluating this year's performance and strengthening the teamwork relationship among its members, BOC-Clark organized and completed a Mid-Year Assessment/ Team Building Activity on August 19-20 at Poracay Resort, Porac,

Pampanga.

With the theme "Sama-Sama sa Pagbabago", District Collector Maritess T. Martin, in her welcome remarks, encouraged members to always remember that Port of Clark is one family towards achieving its

yearly collection target as well as in addressing the needs of its customers.

Divided into four teams (Red, Green, Blue and Yellow), officials and employees of the port actively participates in various team activities and games. Right after each activity,

feedbacks and assessment are being shared by the participants as to what makes them win or lose the game. Such feedbacks and assessment are being attributed to their actual functions as one team in the Bureau.

BOC-Clark joins PJEPA Rules of Origin Seminar-Workshop for Stakeholders

The Bureau of Customs Export Division in partnership with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) conducted PJEPA Rules of Origin Seminar-Workshop for Stakeholders on August 23 at Royce Hotel, Clark.

Former Port of Manila (POM) Export Division chief lawyer Louis C. Adviento provided the overview of the Philippine-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (PJEPA) and discussed the Rules of Origin under PJEPA.

District Collector Maritess Martin said knowledge of stakeholders regarding the criteria for goods to be eligible for preferential treatment was expanded.

POM's Acting Chief of Export Division Ms. Ma. Rosario S.

Acosta explained the Operational Certification Procedures under Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Moreover, Customs Memorandum 16-2011 relative to the Retro-Verification Procedures in Certificate of Origin utilization was discussed by Ms. Corneila P. Casiano, Former Chief of Formal Entry Division of POM.

Finally, Mr. Shozo Suzuki, Investment and EPA Advisor of JETRO enlightened participants on preferring the best preferential treatment among the various trade agreements.

All participants were given a copy of the Primer on JPEPA which contains all information and guidelines on Certificate of Origin and Rules of Origin which was developed through the support of JICA and JETRO.

Customs Clark reviews Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) Pampanga Field Office has recently concluded a Refresher Seminar on Republic Act (RA) 6713: Code of Conduct of Public Officials and Employees to BOC-Clark personnel on August 16, 2017.

Field Director Dulce J. Cochon of CSC Pampanga Field Office facilitated the seminar and conducted various interactive activities that assessed the performance of personnel's roles and functions in accordance with RA 6713.

Customs officials and employees of the port have reviewed and updated their learnings on the code of conduct and ethical standards which they need to develop and improve as public servants.

Said seminar is relative to the previous seminar on Frontline Service Provider Seminar-Workshop which aimed at reducing transaction time of customers while this seminar aspires to uphold integrity, transparency and professionalism towards dealing and transacting with customers.



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PORT SENTINEL

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OUTGOING

The new BOC chief vows to institutionalize reforms for a more organized and systematic customs administration to improve revenue collection efficiency, and at the same time maintain close monitoring of inbound and outbound cargoes through formal channels to prevent illegal smuggling.

“Similar to what I did with PDEA, I will implement a ‘one-strike policy’ to boost internal cleansing, which of course, shall be supported by intensified counter-intelligence efforts. I intend to give each of you a

clean slate, so we can move forward. Just do your work. Prove your worth, and I will back you up. But once I receive reports of your involvement with corrupt practices and such reports are validated: I will not think twice. Pasensiyahan tayo,” Lapeña said.

“I am now issuing a stern warning to unscrupulous individuals who plan to use my name to collect money and/or ask favor/s to circumvent laws and regulations: I will get you. If anyone uses my name to facilitate unlawful activities, do not hesitate

to apprehend them under citizen’s arrest and you will be given a reward. I will exercise zero tolerance against corruption in the bureau,” he said.

“I am also appealing to all stakeholders, especially the importers, to support and cooperate with us by adhering only to legitimate procedures. Part of our job is trade facilitation. Do not give us reasons to hold your shipment and I assure you that under my term as Customs Commissioner, we will collect what is legally proper and correct dues. No more “tara”. Do not be duped into

becoming instruments that contribute to breeding corruption in the bureau,” Lapeña added.

“To my BOC family, I seek your support and cooperation. Help me do my job. I cannot do it alone. I need everyone to be on board with me. I still believe that many good men and women remain here in the bureau. Do not let the unscrupulous few continue to destroy the name of the BOC. If you are not with me, step aside because I am looking to steamroll major changes across the bureau,” the new BOC chief concluded.

BOC-Tacloban hits target for cy 2017 in seven months, posts 5.7% surplus collection

TACLOBAN CITY – The Bureau of Customs Collection District VIII proudly announced that as of July 31, 2017, it has not only hit its given target for the first and second quarter, but has already surpassed its target collection by 5.65 percent for Calendar Year (CY) 2017.

From January to July 2017, its total collection has already reached P236.4 million, above its P223.7 million target for the whole year.

Furthermore, it is P10 million higher from its P236.17 million actual collection in CY 2016, despite the increase in target by P60 million or 27 percent.

For the month of July alone, it reported a total collection of P60.6 million, with an excess of P41.5 million over its P19 million monthly target or a collection efficiency of 317.7 percent.

Moreover, the combined collections of the Port of Tacloban, Sub-port of Isabel and Sub-port of Catbalogan in April increased to 377.9 percent with P67.1 million actual collection from its P17 million target, while in June, it posted a double-digit collection growth with P11.3 million from its P18.9 million target.

Likewise, from January

to March 2017, the Port of Tacloban has collected P57.6 million, 53 percent higher from its P37.6 million target; Support of Isabel with P11.8 million, 22.6 percent higher from its P9.6 million target; and Support of Catbalogan with P5.16 million, 7.4 percent higher from its P4.8 million target.

Meanwhile, OIC District Collector Avelino C. Alberca attributed the collection district’s notable achievement to the importation of cement

and petroleum products such as diesel, unleaded and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by SEA OIL Phils. Inc. at VISPET oil Depot, in Babatngon, Leyte.

He also lauded the port and sub-ports for its collective efforts in the efficient implementation of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (RA 10863).

Moreover, he vowed to continuously work hard to maintain Collection District VIII’s exemplary performance in tax collection.



BOC, DOF

Under the CAO, stakeholders who may apply for accreditation are the following:

1. Importers;
2. Exporters;
3. Customs Bonded Warehouse (CBW) and Customs Facility Warehouse (CFW);
4. Customs Brokers;
5. NVOCC, local and international freight forwarders with offices in the Philippines;
6. Shipping lines or airlines and their agents;
7. Authorized Agent Banks (AAB);
8. Local transport operators; and
9. Foreign suppliers, manufacturers, and other entities in the logistics and international supply chain accredited as AEO by another country with which the Philippines has a Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

“Applicants must meet the standard of reliability and trustworthiness, which shall be measured by its level of risk, the nature of the business and the conduct of its importation as against customs revenue, compliance, and cargo security,” the CAO provided on the accreditation criteria of the interested applicants.

Some of the benefits provided in the CAO are the exemption from renewal of accreditation, processing and selectivity lane for AEO shipment with no documentary, physical and non-intrusive examination, advance cargo clearance, one-time exemption certificate, and the expedition of customs clearance for exports.

The CAO provided that any false or misleading information in the documents submitted as well as the commission of customs laws violation shall be grounds for denial of the application.

The bureau calls on all credible and honest stakeholders who are qualified to the said program to submit their applications.

The CAO has been published on August 23 and shall be effective 15 days after said publication.

BOC seizes P1.35M worth of iPhones at NAIA

The Bureau of Customs recently intercepted P1.35 million worth of iPhone 7 Plus units at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1.

NAIA Customs personnel stopped a Chinese passenger on board Xiamen Airlines Flight MF 819, Su Miaoquiao after his baggage showed image irregularity during the x-ray examination.

The customs examiner, who conducted the check in the presence of the customs appraisers and an x-ray inspector from BOC Xray Inspection Project (XIP), found 30 units of undeclared iPhone 7 Plus model #A1660 after conducting 100% physical examination.

“The importation of smartphones is considered legal if the importer declared it as taxable items and can present the proper National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) import permit to the customs authorities,” Maj. Jaybee Raul Cometa, XIP head, said.

“However, Miaoquiao violated Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) and the NTC regulation after failing to declare the Apple smartphones and failing to present the corresponding permit,” he added

Arsenia Ilagan, the Deputy Collector for Passenger Services, recommended a warrant of seizure and detention to NAIA District Collector Edgar Macabeo for violation of a National Telecommunications Commission memorandum circular and the customs law.

The mobile units are now at the In-Bond Room at Terminal 1 while the investigation is still pending.

Port of Davao attends BIMP-EAGA meeting

Atty. Erastus Sandino B. Austria, District Collector of Bureau of Customs Davao, together with DTI Region XI's Regional Director Maria Belenda Ambi, Provincial Director Romeo Castañaga and Division Chief Marilou Laguting represented the Philippines during a Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) meeting last August 14–16, 2017 at Balikpapan, Indonesia.

BIMP-EAGA is an economic cooperation between the 4 member states. BIMP-EAGA aims to promote economic development in the underdeveloped and remote parts of its member countries.



FROM PAGE 1

BOC INTERCEPTS

The customs examiner, who conducted the check in the presence of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) representatives, found three monitor lizards and 12 albino Burmese pythons concealed in plastic bottles.

The BOC reported that the intercepted

parcels, consigned to certain Jerry and Alen Lin, were bound for Rawang and Panang, Malaysia. The sender was identified as Patrece Hernandez from Las Piñas City. The animals were turned over to DENR-NCR for safekeeping and proper disposition.

Charges will be filed against the

suspect for violation of Republic Act 10863, otherwise known as the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act of 2016 (CMTA), and Republic Act 9147 or An Act Providing for the Conservation and Protection of Wildlife Resources and their Habitats.





Estrella: Let the court decide who's telling the truth

A ranking official of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Wednesday expressed confidence that he would be able to redeem his name in the ongoing congressional investigation into the smuggling of P6.4-billion worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride, or shabu, due to inconsistencies of the witness.

Neil Estrella, chief of the BOC- Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) said that the August 9 Senate Blue Ribbon Committee hearing on the issue showed that Mark Ruben Taguba II was only telling a half-truth.

In the last House hearing, Taguba pointed to Estrella, Import Assessment Service (IAS) Director Milo Maestrecampo, and other ranking BOC officials as supposed recipients of bribe money through dummies in exchange for the speedy facilitation of his cargo although he did not include the CIIS director on the list he submitted to congressmen.

Later in the day, however, Taguba admitted he did not know Estrella and Maestrecampo and that he was not sure whether the two did receive the money.

Maestrecampo resigned from his post out of protest for his inclusion in the list of supposed BOC shenanigans.

During the Senate hearing, Taguba was asked why the list he submitted to the House did not match the one he gave to the Senate. In both lists, Taguba merely listed the Office of the CIIS Director and IAS.

"We expect the truth now that it is becoming clear... the people who were involved in the importations that included shabu," Estrella said.

Estrella appealed to the public to have an open mind and continue listening to all sides of the story.

"Let's not prejudice the case. Let the court decide who's telling the truth," he said.

Estrella acknowledged having committed administrative lapses in carrying out his mission to retrieve the shabu shipment from a warehouse in Valenzuela City as soon as the intelligence information was relayed by Chinese customs.

"That as far as my men and I were concerned, there was urgency in the recovery of the shabu shipment from a warehouse in Valenzuela city," Estrella said.

"Our mission is to seize the drugs. We accomplished it. I hope people will give credit to whom it is due," he stressed.

Faeldon: Former PBA, volleyball players not BOC employees

Customs Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon on August 4 clarified the issue which came out during the congressional hearing last August 2 concerning the appointment of former Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) and volleyball players at the Bureau of Customs (BOC).

In a statement, Faeldon said the players are not BOC employees because they were hired under contract of services.

Thus, their services shall not be considered as part of government service under the Bureau, Faeldon said. The contract stated that there is no 'employer-employee' relationship between them.

Also, these athletes cannot perform functions that fall within the job description reserved for regular employees.

Faeldon said that apart from sports development activities, the athletes also perform other tasks, such as support services or clerical works at the offices where they are assigned.

The athletes were also contracted because their qualifications matched their

role as Technical Assistant for personnel development under the Bureau's special activities, Faeldon added.

Faeldon said these players were also hired to send a message to the public that the BOC is serious in rebuilding its image in order to reverse public perception of being a corrupt agency.

Faeldon said the athletes are "effective communicators of the bureau's reforms that is why they were assigned to the committee on personnel development.

"The BOC is known as one of the most corrupt government agencies for more than a century," the commissioner said. "We must change this perception by convincing the public and encouraging our employees to help reform the agency. We need these players to do that."

Likewise, the athletes do office works under the supervision of lawyer Roy Lawagan, head of the BOC committee for special activities which organizes various personnel development activities such as fun run, basketball clinic in this bureau.

BOC-Davao now using new Balikbayan Box Monitoring System

The Bureau of Customs-Port of Davao is now using the Balikbayan Box Monitoring System (BBMS) after the system has been set in place and personnel that will handle it completed their training.

Officers, assessment division employees, and administrative division staff of the Port of Davao underwent training from officers from the Management Information Systems Technology Group (MISTG) on how to use the system. The port began using the BBMS last August 1, 2017.

Liberty B. Plana, chief of the Systems Development Division, Sheila Micelle M. Lagat, Rowena V. Matienzo, and Gil K. Manlapaz Jr led the training held on July 26-28, 2017 at the Davao Customshouse.

The new system, designed to simplify the clearance procedures of Balikbayan

Boxes, ensures that the principles, standards, and regulations set are implemented well.

The BBMS will allow the information about the OFW's balikbayan boxes electronically available to authorized customs officers. This means that the number of balikbayan boxes sends during the year, and the total amount of the boxes are properly monitored.

The system also allows for the quick retrieval of information as the data filled by the OFW in the required information sheets are stored digitally.

The BBMS was developed by the Systems Development Division of MISTG which is tasked to implement Information Systems that helps the Bureau in delivering faster service while still adhering to the best practices set by the law.

Estrella: Taguba a polluted witness

The chief of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on August 8 lashed out at private broker Mark Taguba whom he described as a "polluted" witness in the ongoing congressional investigation into the smuggling of 605 kilos of methamphetamine hydrochloride, or shabu, in May this year.

Neil Estrella, a former Marine colonel, said it was unfortunate that Taguba was given all the leeway to smear some ranking BOC officials, including those appointed by the Office of the President, during Monday's hearing of the committee on illegal drugs by the House of Representatives.

He said his trial by publicity was unfair not only to him and to his family but also to the CIIS men who worked hard to retrieve the illegal drug shipment from a warehouse in Valenzuela City.

"Puwede ba naman iyon na basta na lang magtuturo on televised hearing tapos wala naman hawak na ebidensya? It was so unfair. Kahit sinong tao hindi papayag ng ganoon," Estrella asked.

Estrella assumed as CIIS chief in December last year only. He was among those pinpointed by Taguba during Monday's televised congressional hearing as among ranking BOC officials who allegedly received bribes from him.

Other BOC officials implicated were:

- Intelligence Group deputy commissioner Teddy Raval
- Import Assessment Services (IAS) Director Milo Maestrecampo

- Manila International Container Port (MCIP) district collector Vincent Philip Maronilla
- CIIS officer Teddy Sagaral
- A certain "Major Gutierrez" who passed away last July
- A certain "Maita Acebedo"
- A certain "Jason" of X-ray division
- A certain "Jojo"
- A certain "Gerry"
- A certain "Alex"
- A certain "Sandra"
- A certain "Alfred"

Estrella said he categorically denied Taguba's accusations but he said he would be willing to submit himself to any investigation.

"Kung tumatangap kami, bakit hinuli namin ang shipment (If we received payoffs, why did we raid the shipment)?" Estrella said after Taguba tagged him as one of BOC's corrupt officials. He acknowledged that it would be difficult for him to regain the trust of the public because of what happened.

"I'm sure the drug lords are having a good laugh at what is happening to us in the BOC. The question is who really owns that 605 kilos of shabu? Sino ang mga nasagasaan namin dito?" he said.

"My name was not on his (Taguba), only the name of my office. Yet, Taguba was forced to stand and point to us because the line of questioning was leading. Who is the head of that office receiving money from him? It appeared to be that way," Estrella further said.