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Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Ombudsman Bldg., Agham Road, Government Center
North Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City

OFFICE ORDER NO. 327
Series of 2014

In the interest of the service and to encourage local and foreign investments in the country and improve global competitiveness through prompt action on investors' grievance and speedy resolution of investors' complaints, an Investment Ombudsman Team (Team) is hereby constituted as follows:

Investment Ombudsman: ODO Melchor Arthur H. Carandang
Assistant Investment Ombudsman: Acting Director Rafael G. Hipolito

The designation of the action officers/members of the Team shall be issued through a separate Office Order prior to the effectivity hereof.

The Investment Ombudsman (IO) shall act as the approving authority in all action documents of investment-related complaints undergoing field investigation (FF), while the Assistant Investment Ombudsman (in the case of central office) or the concerned field investigation director (in the case of area offices) shall be the reviewing/recommending authority. The IO shall maintain an updated database of investment-related complaints undergoing fact-finding investigation, and investment-related grievances treated as request for assistance.

The Assistant Investment Ombudsman (AIO) shall act as the approving authority in investment-related grievances treated as requests for assistance (RAS) in the central office, with oversight and monitoring functions over public assistance directors who shall act as the AIO's counterpart in the area offices. The AIO and the concerned public assistance directors shall coordinate and devise means to collate information on investment-related RAS.

The existing guidelines on evaluation and docketing under Memorandum Circular No. 01 (series of 2013) shall apply insofar as investment-related grievances are concerned, except that the AIO shall discharge the function of the Public Assistance Bureau in the case of the central office; while the existing guidelines under Office Order No. 183 (series of 2012) shall apply insofar as investment-related FF complaints are concerned, with the additional instruction to daily furnish the IO and AIO copies of the approved evaluation report of FF and RAS, respectively, through the fastest available means for monitoring purposes.

The Team shall take cognizance of investment-related grievances or complaints regarding the following concerns, *provided*, the complainant is an investor or potential investor:

1. Delay in the delivery of frontline services relating to the establishment or conduct of business;
2. Solicitation, demand or request by a government official or employee in exchange for the issuance of licenses, permits and certificates, the release of shipments and cargoes, as well as the arbitrary assessment of fees for the conduct of business;
3. Issuance of licenses, permits and certificates in relation to business to any person otherwise not qualified or legally entitled; and
4. Any other delay or refusal to comply with the referral or directive of the Investment Ombudsman Team.

The IO and AIO shall submit a consolidated bi-monthly report to the Ombudsman, which progress report shall be due five days (5) days from the last day of the covered period.

The institution of the appropriate administrative, criminal and forfeiture cases, if any, arising from the proceedings under this Office Order shall comply with existing procedures and guidelines.

All office issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby revoked.

This Office Order shall take effect on June 1, 2014.

SO ORDERED.

16 May 2014, Quezon City, Philippines.


CONCHITA CARPIO MORALES
Ombudsman

Cc: All OMB officials