

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 20 - 18 - - -
Series of 2020

To : All DTI Regional/Provincial Offices, BPS-Recognized Import
Commodity Inspection Services, Importers and Others Concerned

Subject : GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF REMOTE INSPECTION AND
SAMPLING

WHEREAS, the DTI Bureau of Philippine Standards (BPS) [formerly known as Bureau of Product Standards], as mandated by Republic Act (RA) No. 4109, RA No. 7394, Executive Order 101 s. 1967, implements Mandatory Product Certification Schemes to ensure safety and quality of consumer products for the benefit of the general public;

WHEREAS, with the recent Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Office of the President issued a Memorandum entitled "Community Quarantine Over Luzon" dated 16 March 2020;

WHEREAS, in compliance with the DTI Department Order No. 20-37, Series of 2020 entitled "Instituting an Alternative Work Arrangement in the Department of Trade and Industry while the Philippines is under the State of Public Health Emergency", BPS implemented a Work From Home (WFH) scheme and issued an Advisory on the Processing of PS/ICC Applications and Other BPS Related Services/Transactions dated 19 March 2020;

WHEREAS, consistent with the Memorandum issued by the Undersecretary of DTI Consumer Protection Group entitled "Alternative Work Arrangement for Consumer Protection Group" dated 16 March 2020, BPS has suspended the conduct of all audit and inspection activities in relation to PS license and Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) or Statement of Confirmation (SOC) applications until further notice;

WHEREAS, import shipments of covered products continue to arrive and has been issued the necessary certificate to facilitate the release from the Bureau of Customs and the importers are requesting for the immediate conduct of inspection and sampling;

WHEREAS, taking into consideration the request of some importers to have their shipments inspected while the entire Luzon island is under the Enhanced Community Quarantine, the BPS shall implement an alternative mode in conducting inspection and sampling activities.

WHEREFORE, foregoing premises considered, the following guidelines shall be implemented:

1. Responsibilities

- 1.1 The SCD QMR shall ensure that the objectives of this guidelines are effectively implemented.

- 1.2 DTI BPS/RO/PO/Recognized Import Commodity Inspection Services (ICIS) shall carry out the remote inspection and sampling in coordination and agreement with of the importer's representative.
- 1.3 The Inspector shall be responsible in guiding the importer's representative in conducting remote inspection and ensure that all documents/evidence required by BPS shall be indicated and/or attached in the reports.

2. Inspection and Sampling

- 2.1 DTI BPS/RO/PO/Recognized ICIS shall request for approval of BPS for the conduct of remote inspection and sampling, indicating the name of the importer's representative who will assist the inspector throughout the conduct of the activity. The inspection shall be conducted only after approval of BPS.
- 2.2 The inspector shall advise the importer's representative that a video call and recording shall be undertaken for integrity and proper documentation of the activity. In case the importer's representative does not agree with the said requirement, the remote inspection and sampling shall be cancelled immediately. The DTI BPS/RO/PO/Recognized ICIS shall inform BPS accordingly.
- 2.3 The assigned inspector shall coordinate with the importer's representative on how to proceed with the inspection. During the video call, the inspector shall direct the importer's representative to proceed to a particular lot of the shipment, choose product samples, and request the representative to draw the same.
- 2.4 The sampling size shall be in accordance with the sampling requirements of the relevant DAO and/or Implementing Guidelines of the product/s subject to remote inspection and sampling, and work instruction on Handling of Samples for Product Testing (WI-SCD-0032).
- 2.5 The drawn samples shall be sealed and marked accordingly by the importer's representative under close supervision by the inspector.
- 2.6 After the samples drawn were sealed and marked accordingly, the Request for Test (RFT) form shall be completely filled up by the inspector and shall be shown to the importer's representative. The batch/serial nos./date of manufacture shall also be indicated in the RFT. The importer's representative shall verbally conform to the details indicated in the RFT.
- 2.7 The inspector shall note in the RFT that remote inspection and sampling was conducted and that the signature specimen of the company is affixed in the sealed samples.

2.8 Once the RFT is prepared, the inspector shall require the importer's representative to shoot a video and take pictures of the following for proper and complete documentation purposes:

2.8.1 Warehouse/vessel location

2.8.2 The whole shipment

2.8.3 All sides of packaging/bags showing the actual markings

2.8.4 Pictures of the drawn and sealed samples

The video camera shall be panned slowly throughout the product markings to facilitate accurate documentation.

2.9 In cases wherein importer's representative refuses to assist the inspector in accordance with this guideline, DTI BPS/RO/PO/Recognized ICIS shall indicate it in the inspection report.

2.10 All information/markings required by the Consumer Act of the Philippines, relevant DAO and/or Implementing Guidelines of the product/s subject to remote inspection and sampling shall be clearly captured in the video.

2.11 Any discrepancies in information shall be indicated by the inspector in the inspection report. The inspector shall also inform the importer's representative of the findings during the inspection. The importer's representative shall verbally conform to the findings and shall be clearly captured in the video.

2.12 In cases wherein importer's representative refuses to conform in the report to be submitted, DTI BPS/RO/PO/Recognized ICIS shall indicate it in the inspection report.

Any other issues that arise during the conduct of inspection that needs to be clarified shall be communicated to BPS for proper advice or disposition.

3. Preparation of Inspection Report

3.1 The report shall follow regular inspection reporting procedures as provided in work instruction on Guidelines on the Conduct of Inspection and Sampling (WI-SCD-0032) and "remote inspection and sampling" has to be indicated in the inspection report.

3.2 Other information necessary as to the judgment of the inspector shall be indicated at the inspection report.

4. Transmittal of the Inspection Report and Request for Test to BPS

4.1 The inspection report, copy of Request for Test, and other relevant documents shall be sent to BPS within 16 working hours after the inspection. Inspection report shall also include the following:

- 4.1.1 Photos of the shipment (pictures of warehouse/vessel);
- 4.1.2 Photos of all sides of packaging/bags indicating the details of the shipment and marking – as required by the Consumer Act of the Philippines, relevant DAO and/or Implementing Guidelines of the product/s subject to remote inspection and sampling;
- 4.1.3 Photos of sealed samples;
- 4.1.4 File copy of the video of remote inspection and sampling.

This Circular shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Makati this 8th day of April in the year 2020.

Approved by:



NEIL P. CATAJAY
Director, Bureau of Philippine Standards