



## **P N P News Release**

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### **PDEA NOT REMISS IN GIVING REWARD MONEY TO INFORMANTS**

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) took exception to the allegations of non-payment of reward money to informants as mandated by law.

The alleged non-payment was brought up by Senator Robert Z. Barbers, chair of the Senate Committee on Public Order and Illegal Drugs, in the press release "Barbers Asks PDEA: Where's the Reward Money?".

"We would like to inform the public that the PDEA has not been remiss in giving rewards to informants as mandated by Republic Act 9165, or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002," said the Undersecretary Anselmo S. Avenido Jr., PDEA Director General.

Section 22, Article II, RA 9165 provides for the grant of compensation, reward and award to any person providing information and to law enforcers participating in the operation which results in the successful confiscation, seizure or surrender of dangerous drugs, plant sources of dangerous drugs and controlled precursors and essential chemicals.

Avenido said that in compliance with the provision of law, the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) issued DDB Board Regulation No. 5 Series 2003 entitled "Guidelines in the Implementation of Operation: Private Eye" which defines who are qualified to receive rewards under the program, the procedures and requirements for the reward system, and the reward schedule.

**Operation: Private Eye**

"Operation: Private Eye" is a citizen-based information collection project of the then National Drug Law Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center, or NDEP Center, launched by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on June 26, 2001.

"This project is being continued by the PDEA to counter fear and apathy in reporting illegal drug activities by granting monetary reward and anonymity to anyone who would provide information that would lead to the recovery of illegal drugs and/or discovery of clandestine laboratories," explained Avenido.

The PDEA chief said that since the start of "Operation: Private Eye," 48 informants have received rewards amounting to P4,092,641.40. In return, the PDEA and other law enforcement agencies confiscated 109.2 kilograms of methamphetamine hydrochloride, or popularly known as shabu, 50.672 kg of ephedrine and 1,861.11 grams of cocaine and dismantled two clandestine shabu laboratories.

Additionally, 19 foreign nationals and 92 Filipinos have been arrested as a result of the information given by the informants.

Total amount of drugs confiscated as a result of "Operation: Private Eye" amounted to P234,433,587.50.

Avenido said that at present the PDEA has 12 pending claims for reward under the old regulation and two under the new regulation. The PDEA is awaiting the submission of required supporting documents for these claims.

Informants who gave information that led to the confiscation of illegal drugs shall be given rewards based on the program reward schedule. The identity of the informant will be kept confidential.

Anybody who is not a member of the drug enforcement community can be a Private Eye Informant. He or she must fill up an Information Report Form (IRF) regarding illegal drug activities. The informant will use a codename and place a thumb mark on the IRF for identification. He or she must make a photocopy of PDEA Private Eye Database. IRF's may be submitted by mail to Private Eye c/o PDEA, Camp Crame, QC 1111; Fax (02) 412-0170; or drop boxes placed in strategic locations.

## **2 regulations**

At present, the PDEA is using two regulations in implementing "Operation: Private Eye". "The first regulation is the old NDEP Regulation which is applicable to all anti-drug operations and claims before September 27, 2003 which is the effectivity date of DDB Resolution No. 3. The second regulation, on the other hand, shall apply to all operations and claims starting September 27, 2003," explained Avenido.

To support the requirements of "Operation: Private Eye," the PDEA received P10 million from the Office of the President, P2.25 million from the PDEA Regular Appropriations for 2003, and P50 million from the P1 billion stand-by fund coming from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) which the President allotted for the intensified national anti-drug campaign pursuant to Executive Order No. 218. Total amount allotted for "Operation: Private Eye" is P62.25 million. With P4,092,641.40 already rewarded to informants, the PDEA still has P58,007,383.60 reward money in the bank.

## **Specific cases**

With regard to the specific cases cited by Senator Barbers, Avenido provided the following information:

Regarding the San Juan laboratory, the former NDEP Center took cognizance of the claim of the informant by the name of JEDI for the seizure of 202 kg of ephedrine in a police operation on January 18, 2002. The committee recommended to then Executive Director, NDEP Center the reward in the amount of P126,468.37 based on the market value of US\$50 per kilogram provided by the United Nations Drug Control Program based in Bangkok, Thailand. However, the informant disagrees with the amount approved and up to now not claimed the reward.

On the arrest of seven Chinese nationals, "Operation: Private Eye" does not give reward for the arrest of drug personalities. Informants, however, are given operational support from case operations funds. They are entitled to rewards if the suspects are wanted persons included in the agency and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) wanted list, which is a separate reward scheme.

The PDEA has not received any claim for reward regarding the arrest of Chinese nationals.

On the confiscation of a substantial amount of shabu in a house at the posh Horshoe Village in Quezon City, actually only 461,473.5 grams of ephedrine which is just a precursor and not shabu were seized during the operation. The claims for reward for this operation together with those for the laboratory in a beach resort in Tanza, Cavite; the seizure of ephedrine in Lancaster Homes in Pasay City; and the confiscation of shabu at the Marina Home in Parañaque City are still being deliberated on by the Operation Private Eye Reward Committee. The committee noted discrepancies that must be resolved first to protect the integrity of the system and ensure that the rightful informants are given the reward prescribed in the regulations.

There were two claims for reward submitted to the PDEA. One was signed by PSSUPT Nicasio Radovan Jr. for the Task Force Commander of PNP AIDSOTF and another submitted by PSUPT Federico Laciste Jr to the DDB and endorsed to the Director General, PDEA on August 14, 2003. In both instances, there were no civilian claimants stated in the requests. The Reward Committee convened on three occasions to deliberate on the two claims.

The initial reports covering the aforementioned anti-drug operations never mentioned any informant who provided the information for the seizure of the drugs and precursors. Instead, the report included such statements as "the successful anti-illegal drug operations is the result of document analysis and intelligence work" or "the raid was the product of extensive intelligence research, casing and surveillance by AIDSOTF Team."

These raised doubts in the minds of the committee members on whether the operations were the results of information provided by informers or the result of follow-up operations from information elicited by the police from the suspects.