

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE  
Quezon City

April 28, 2014

**REVENUE MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 43-2014**

**SUBJECT:** Publishing the Full Text of Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2014-01 Dated January 22, 2014 by the Office of the Presidential Spokesperson (OPS), Secretary of Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and Undersecretary of Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office (PCDSPO), Entitled “Open Data Philippines (ODP)”

**TO : All Internal Revenue Officials, Employees and Others Concerned**

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For the information and guidance of all concerned, quoted hereunder is the full text of Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2014-01 dated January 22, 2014 by the Office of the Presidential Spokesperson (OPS), Secretary of Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and Undersecretary of Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office (PCDSPO):

**“REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**JOINT MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2014-01**

**22 January 2014**

**TO:** All Heads of Departments, Bureaus, Offices, and other Agencies of the National Government, including State Universities and Colleges, and Government-Owned and/or -Controlled Corporations, Congress of the Philippines, the Judiciary, Constitutional Commissions, and the Office of the Ombudsman

**SUBJECT :** Open Data Philippines (ODP)

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

- 1.0 Data is a valuable resource to the government, its partners, and the public. To ensure that the Government of the Philippines (GPH) takes full advantage of its data resources, government agencies, in managing data as an asset throughout its life cycle, must promote openness

and reusability.<sup>1</sup> To support this, the GPH developed and launched data.gov.ph, a portal to make government datasets searchable, understandable, and accessible. This portal serves as the platform for an Open Government Data ecosystem, which includes harmonizing data disclosure policies. Ultimately, this is a strategic program in supporting the Key Result Area of transparent, accountable, and participatory governance as laid out in Executive Order No. 43, Series of 2011.

- 2.0 Through this Joint Memorandum Circular, the Office of the Presidential Spokesperson (OPS), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office (PCDSPO) endeavor to formalize a Task Force to lead the Open Data Philippines (OGDP).

## **STATEMENT OF POLICIES**

- 3.0 The OPS is mandated to report directly to the President to give advice on all matters and concerns related to the Presidency as it may affect the information demands of the public (Memorandum Order No. 57, Series of 1999).
- 4.0 The DBM is mandated to promote the sound, efficient, and effective management and utilization of government resources as instruments in the achievement of national socioeconomic and political development goals (Executive Order No. 21, Series of 1936).
- 5.0 The PCDSPO is mandated to formulate editorial guidelines and policies for state media and assist in the formulation and implementation of new media strategies for the Office of the President (Executive Order No. 4, Series of 2010).
- 6.0 The mandate of these agencies support the very intent of harmonizing policies on data as a government resource and developing and maintaining an online centralized platform for the publication of government data.

## **PURPOSE**

- 7.0 This Circular aims to inform agencies of the Open Data Philippines (Open Data) and the roles and responsibilities of each agency thereto.

## **COVERAGE**

- 8.0 This Circular covers all Departments, Agencies, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), and Government-Owned and/or –Controlled Corporations (GOCCs).
- 9.0 The Congress, Judiciary, Constitutional Commissions, and Office of the Ombudsman are encouraged to participate in this initiative.

<sup>1</sup> Open Data Policy – Managing Information as an Asset, Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies issued on 9 May 2013, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, United States Government

## DEFINITION

- 10.0 A *dataset* is an organized collection of data. The most basic representation of a dataset is data elements presented in tabular form. Each column represents a particular variable. Each row corresponds to a given value of that column's variable. A dataset may also present information in a variety of non-tabular formats, such as an extensible mark-up language (XML) file, a geospatial data file, or an image file etc.<sup>2</sup>
- 11.0 *Open Data* is data that can be freely used, reused, and redistributed by anyone – subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute.<sup>3</sup> More often, this refers to the overall initiative or program to make release data in open formats.

## PROGRAM BRIEF

- 12.0 The GPH is a founding member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a new multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. One of the commitments of the GPH to the OGP is to launch its own Open Data initiative in line with international best practices. Other governments that have already launched their open data portals are the United States (data.gov), United Kingdom (data.gov.uk), India (data.gov.in), and Singapore (data.gov.sg), among many others.
- 13.0 The OPS, DBM, and PCDSPO constituted an ad-hoc Task Force last April 2013 to begin development of data.gov.ph. The World Bank offered technical assistance to the Task Force and is a partner in the development of the Open Data Philippines and a resource in its rollout.
- 14.0 The program recognizes that government agencies have rich sets of exciting, but untapped, public data. These data – everything from education to agriculture to budget – are generated over the course of normal work and implementation of agency projects. Opening up of these public datasets, by making them easy to view and use, also opens up new possibilities for both the government and the public. Open government data initiatives in other countries have led to the development of new ways to view and analyze data, generation of innovative applications and services that empower the public to make informed decisions, and a more efficient and transparent government. The OGDP Task Force aims to work with all government agencies to populate data.gov.ph with their datasets in order to tender this as the definitive website for public government data. This initiative aims to make Philippine public government data searchable, understandable, and accessible.
- 14.1 Searchable. The portal is intended to consolidate the datasets sent by different agencies, allowing site users to find specific information from the rich collection of public datasets made available by agencies.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.data.gov/glossary](http://www.data.gov/glossary)

<sup>3</sup> <http://opendefinition.org/>

- 14.2 Understandable. The portal features up-to-date infographics and other applications based on public data that make the information easy to understand. These visualizations are powered by the latest data uploaded to the website by agencies and updated as soon as new data comes in.
- 14.3 Accessible. Users of the portal will not only be able to view the data, but also share it and download it in open spreadsheet and other formats. This encourages innovation by harnessing local Filipino talent and allowing people to easily use the datasets in new, unexpected ways to help the public.
- 14.0 Open Data is not an entirely new program. Individual agencies have separately launched parallel open data portals and programs such as the DBM's *Budget ng Bayan* ([budgetngbayan.com](http://budgetngbayan.com)), Department of the Interior Local Government's (DILG) Full Disclosure Policy Portal ([fdpp.blgs.gov.ph](http://fdpp.blgs.gov.ph)), and the Department of Transportation and Communications' (DOTC) Philippine Transit App Challenge, among others. Aside from the development of [data.gov.ph](http://data.gov.ph), this program aims to bring together all existing initiatives under the brand of the Open Data Philippines.
- 15.0 In July 2013, the Task Force engaged select agencies for an orientation and consultation on this initiative. As a step forward, the Task Force, through this Circular, intends to roll out this initiative to the entire National Government. Both the portal and program were publicly launched in 16 January 2014.
- 16.0 As much as Open Data should be driven by supply – government pushing out as much data as it can to the public – this program is intended to be demand-driven as well. The Task Force will be engaging Civil Society Organizations, technology communities, academe, and the private sector not only to consult if the datasets being pushed out are relevant, but also to sustain Open Data as government's platform in attending to the right of the people to information on matters of public concern.

## **CONSTITUENT UNITS**

- 17.0 The Open Government Data Philippines Task Force shall be comprised of:
  - 17.1 Secretary Edwin Lacierda, Presidential Spokesperson, who shall be the Chairperson of the Task Force;
  - 17.2 DBM Undersecretary Richard E. Moya; and
  - 17.3 PCDSCO Undersecretary Manuel L. Quezon III,
- 18.0 The Task Force shall ensure the effective implementation of the Open Data Philippines by, among others:
  - 18.1 Overseeing the development of the Open Government Data portal, [data.gov.ph](http://data.gov.ph);

- 18.2 Coordinating with agencies of the GPH for the following:
    - (1) promotion of the program, its objectives, and operations;
    - (2) publication of government datasets;
    - (3) harmonization of existing portals and initiatives akin to Open Government Data;
  - 18.3 Formulating harmonized data disclosure policies of government;
  - 18.4 Building and deepening engagement with stakeholders, such as the academe, developers, civil society, media, among others;
  - 18.5 Aligning the program with the following:
    - (1) Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Plan and initiatives of the Cabinet Cluster on GGAC;
    - (2) commitments of the GPH to the Open Government Partnership;
    - (3) best international practices of Open Data and public sector information disclosure
  - 18.6 Crafting and issuing an Action Plan to guide the program's implementation until 2016.
- 19.0 The Task Force shall be supported by a Project Management Office (PMO), an inter-agency secretariat unit comprised of personnel from the OPS, DBM, and PCDSPO. The PMO shall provide the necessary logistical, informational, and documentary assistance to the Task Force and the participating agencies in relation to Open Data. Inquiries and concerns may be addressed to open@data.gov.ph.
  - 20.0 The functions of the agency-members of the Task Force shall be guided as follows:
    - 20.1 The OPS shall be responsible in the following areas:
      - (a) overall and policy direction of the program;
      - (b) monitoring and evaluation of the program; and
      - (c) engagement with partners from the international open data community.
    - 20.2 The DBM shall be responsible in the following areas:
      - (a) coordination with the Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Cabinet Cluster Secretariat;
      - (b) implementation of outreach engagements and activities such as CSO consultations, tech-sector events, and capacity-building for government; and
      - (c) collection of datasets from participating agencies.
    - 20.3 The PCDSPO shall be responsible in the following areas:
      - (a) communication strategies for the program;
      - (b) development and maintenance of data.gov.ph; and
      - (c) content management for data.gov.ph and other new media tools.

- 21.0 The Participating Agencies shall be comprised of all Departments, Agencies, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Government-Owned and/or – Controlled Corporations (GOCCs). The participation of Congress, the Judiciary, Constitutional Commissions, and the Office of the Ombudsman are highly encouraged.
- 22.0 The Participating Agencies shall cooperate and actively support Open Data by, among others:
  - 20.1 Designating an Open Data Champion who should have the capacity and the competency to make pertinent executive decisions on behalf of the agency with regard to this initiative. The champion may or may not be the Head of Agency but should have a rank not lower than Assistant Director or equivalent. He/she is recommended to be the agency's Chief Information Officer or head of its data, statistics, and/or research unit.
  - 20.2 Provide the following details of the Open Data Champion: (a) Agency Name; (b) Agency Address; (c) Name of Champion; (d) Position; (e) Email Address/es; (f) Landline Number/s; (g) Fax Number. These details should be emailed to open@data.gov.ph on or before 15 February 2014.
  - 20.3 Provide a list of datasets the agency is willing to publish through data.gov.ph. Such list may contain datasets already published in the agency's website. Agencies are also encouraged to publish internal datasets that are used for management decision-making and no legal prohibition exists for its publication. This list should be emailed to open@data.gov.ph on or before 15 February 2014.
  - 20.4 Upon engagement, the PMO will be communicating with the Champions the qualifications for an ideal dataset and the process for its publication. As a caveat, the PMO will ensure that no dataset will be published without the approval of the Head of Agency.

#### **VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE**

- 23.0 This Circular shall not be construed as a policy for mandatory disclosure of any and all government datasets. Agencies holding datasets directly related to national security or defense and other datasets disclosure of which is prohibited by law and other existing regulations shall not be required to submit these for disclosure through this program.

#### **FUND SOURCE**

- 24.0 Funding for the program shall be sourced from the budget of the DBM and PCDSPO in the 2014 General Appropriations Act.

#### **SEPARABILITY CLAUSE**

- 25.0 If any clause, sentence, or provision of this Circular shall be invalid or unconstitutional, its remaining parts shall not be affected thereby.

#### **REPEALING CLAUSE**

26.0 All orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Circular are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

#### **EFFECTIVITY**

27.0 This Circular shall take effect immediately.

(Original Signed)  
**EDWIN LACIERDA**  
Presidential Spokesperson

(Original Signed)  
**FLORENCIO B. ABAD**  
Secretary  
Department of Budget and Management

(Original Signed)  
**MANUEL L. QUEZON III**  
Undersecretary  
Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office"

All concerned are hereby enjoined to be guided accordingly and give this Circular a wide publicity as possible.

(Original Signed)  
**KIM S. JACINTO - HENARES**  
Commissioner of Internal Revenue