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DIRECTORATE FOR INVESTIGATION AND DETECTIVE MANAGEMENT
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**Guidelines and Procedures in the Creation and Activation of Special
Investigation Task Group (SITG) to Handle Cases
Related to Crowd Dispersal Incidents**

1. REFERENCES:

- a. DIPO-WM Fact-Finding Report on Kidapawan Incident dated May 6, 2016;
- b. NAPOLCOM Memorandum Circular No. 2016-002, Revised Rules of Procedure before the Administrative Disciplinary Authorities and the Internal Affairs Service of the Philippine National Police dated March 7, 2016;
- c. PNP Operational Procedure (Revised) December 2013;
- d. PNP Criminal Investigation Manual Revised 2011;
- e. SOP 02/11, Procedures in the Creation and Activation of Special Investigation Task Group (SITG) to Handle Heinous and Sensational Crimes dated January 26, 2011;
- f. LOI Task Force USIG dated August 20, 2008;
- g. Batas Pambansa Bilang 880, An Act Ensuring the Free Exercise of the People of their Right Peaceably to Assemble and Petition the Government and for other Purposes;
- h. Executive Order No. 226, Institutionalization of the Doctrine of Command Responsibility dated February 17, 1995; and
- i. Article 141 (Illegal Assemblies), Revised Penal Code (RPC).

2. RATIONALE:

On April 1, 2016, more than 6,000 farmers-protesters blockaded the Davao-Cotabato Highway in Kidapawan City allegedly to seek calamity assistance from the government due to the drought in the area caused by El Niño phenomenon. The rally was organized by Bayan Muna, Gabriela, Anak-Pawis, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and Apo Sandawa Lumadnong Panaghiusasa (ASLIC).

After exhausting all peaceful remedies to persuade the protesters to disperse, the Crisis Management Committee (CMC), Kidapawan City has resolved for the immediate implementation of Law Enforcement Operations (LEO) aimed at restoring law and order and clearing the highway which was blocked for several

days. The LEO turned violent dispersal between the Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) of Cotabato PPO and the rallyists.

As a result, 96 PNP personnel suffered various injuries including three (3) personnel in serious physical conditions who sustained gunshot wound and head injuries. On the BFP augmentation, seven (7) of its personnel were injured. At least ten (10) protesters also suffered injuries and two (2) succumbed to death.

A total of 81 protesters were arrested during the incident. Consequently, three (3) suspects were charged of Direct Assault Upon an Agent of a Person in Authority with Frustrated Homicide and 78 suspects were charged of Direct Assault Upon an Agent of a Person in Authority before the Kidapawan City Prosecutor's Office.

However, although cases were filed accordingly against the suspects, the investigation of the incident could be made more efficiently and effectively if only a Special Investigation Task Group (SITG) were immediately organized and activated at the onset of the protest.

3. PURPOSE:

To strengthen and synchronize the coordinative mechanism of concerned PNP offices/units in the investigation, monitoring and prosecution of cases in relation to crowd dispersal incidents.

4. POLICIES:

a. Institution of Command Responsibility at all levels of the organization shall be highly observed. As such, respective commanders/supervisors in whose areas of jurisdiction the protests/rallies transpired are expected to personally and effectively manage their organizations by closely monitoring, supervising, directing, coordinating, and controlling the overall activities of their subordinates within their areas of jurisdiction. Hence, it shall be the policy of the PNP to empower all unit/office commanders to fully exercise their authority.

b. The PNP adheres to the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations which requires law enforcement officials to respect and protect human dignity, maintain and uphold the human rights of all persons, and limit the use of force to situations where it is strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty.

5. GUIDELINES:

a. As a matter of policy, the SITG shall be immediately organized and activated whenever there is an impending or ongoing mass protest/demonstration in a public place purposely to conduct proactive and aggressive investigation. It shall be headed by the concerned Deputy District/Provincial/City Director for Operations (DDDO/DPDO/DCPO) or the Deputy Regional Director for Operations (DRDO) depending on the gravity of the situation.

b. The concerned Chief of Police (COP) or Station Commander shall immediately assess the situation and communicate to the DD/PD/CD the attendant

circumstances and its updates which will be the basis of the DD/PD/CD for recommending to the Regional Director (RD) whether or not there is a need to activate an SITG.

c. If the protest/rally can be easily resolved at City/Municipal Police Station (C/MPS/) Station level wherein the issues were immediately addressed, the creation of SITG becomes unnecessary.

d. The concerned RPHRDD (R-1) shall issue orders organizing the District/PPO/CPO SITG indicating specifically the ranks and names of its personnel.

e. Composition and Organization of SITG:

1) Regional Level (If protesters are more than 1,000)

SITG Comdr	- DRDO
Asst Comdr	- DDDO/DPDO/DCPO
Spokesperson	- Chief, Regional PIO
Members	- C, RIDMD
	- Chief, RCIDU
	- Chief, Regional Intelligence Division
	- Chief, Regional Legal Office
	- Chief, Regional Crime Laboratory
	- COP, C/MPS/Station Comdr
	- Investigator-on-Case (Evidence Custodian)

2) District/PPO/CPO Level (If protesters are less than 1,000)

SITG Supervisor	- DRDO
SITG Comdr	- Deputy DD/PD/CD for Operations
Asst Comdr	- PO/Field Officer CIDT
Spokesperson	- Chief, PIO (District/PPO/CPO
Members	- Chief, PIDMDB
	- Chief, RCIDU
	- Provincial/City Legal Office
	- Provincial/City Intelligence Branch
	- Chief, Provincial Crime Laboratory
	- COP, C/MPS/Station Comdr
	- Investigator-on-Case

f. The SITG shall form part as component/staff of the Incident Command System (ICS) or Critical Incident Management Task Group (CIMTG), Crisis Management Committee (CMC).

g. The concerned RD shall provide logistical and financial support to the SITG.

6. PROCEDURES:

a. At the first sign of the public assembly, the SITG shall immediately cause the deployment of investigators, conduct of verification whether the rally has a

valid permit, gathering of relevant documents, taking of pictures and video coverage, and liaising with other law enforcement/government agencies.

b. The SITG shall conduct profiling on the group/protesters/rallyists particularly leaders/marshalls/coordinators, and establish an On-Scene Command Post (OSCP) near the scene to get first hand of any development of the situation and to conduct on-scene or on-the-ground investigation.

c. The C/MPS which has jurisdiction over the area shall be utilized as alternate OSCP of the SITG.

d. When the protest/dispersal turned violent and resulted in the death and injuries of persons and damage to property at the scene, the SITG shall immediately perform investigation responses enumerated in the Protocols, Chapter 1 of the 2011 Revised Criminal Investigation Manual.

e. More importantly, the place of incident must be secured and preserved for investigation purposes. The SITG investigators should take the lead on this area of concern.

f. The SITG Investigator-on-Case (IOC) shall serve as the evidence custodian, except for pieces of evidence wherein it needs to be submitted to the Crime Laboratory and other technical agencies for examination and analysis. The strict observance of the rule on chain of custody of evidence must be ensured.

g. The SITG shall prepare the case folder for eventual filing/referral before the Prosecutor's Office. Included in the case folder are the investigation reports, affidavit of witnesses and results of forensic examinations made on the pieces of evidence, among others.

h. Arrest should be made on leaders/organizers/participants only when there is a violation of law. Violators shall be brought to the nearest police station and be charged accordingly.

i. All case folders including pertinent documents must be kept and encoded in the Case Information Database Management System (CIDMS) by the IOC who shall conduct case tracking until the final disposition of the case.

j. The SITG shall be deactivated upon solution of the particular case being investigated and handled by the SITG.

7. RESPONSIBILITY:

Unit Commanders shall be held responsible and accountable under the Principle of Command Responsibility, Executive Order No. 226 in the strict implementation of this Investigative Directive.


8. PENAL CLAUSE:

Any violation of this Investigative Directive shall be dealt with administratively for Neglect of Duty under NAPOLCOM Memorandum Circular No.

2016-002. Likewise, criminal complaints shall be filed against those who commit acts or omissions punishable under the Revised Penal Code (RPC) or Special Laws.

9. EFFECTIVITY:

This Investigative Directive takes effect immediately upon approval.


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Police Chief Superintendent

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