



Perks For Integrity Initiative Participants

Published: March 6, 2013

The business community expects the government to give participants in the Integrity Initiative be given the first crack as suppliers and bidders for government projects but admitted they still have a long way to go in its accreditation process.

Ramon del Rosario, Jr., Chairman of the Integrity Initiative, told reporters at the Integrity Forum 11 in Makati yesterday, that the working group still has to define the parameters and identify who should qualify.

“While the intent is there to give incentives we will have to come to an agreement on how we will identify the parties who are eligible for the incentives. And part of that is the accreditation process for determining who because it is not sufficient only to have the pledge. There has to be first the assessment then the accreditation process

That’s why it’s important for us to agree on an accreditation procedure, standards,” Del Rosario explained.

The Integrity Initiative, which is already on its third year, is a five-year program and the business community led by the MBC hopes to establish an independent external entity like the ISO Certification that should be conducting the accreditation towards the end of the fourth year. The accreditation of qualified firms is expected on the final year of the initiative.

“There is still a lot of work to be done,” Del Rosario said admitting it will take a couple more years before the end result can be achieved stressing the Integrity Initiative moves from the pledge to signing the code and the assessment and then the accreditation.

“Signing is the first step that’s the easiest thing to do then you have to show that you are practicing what you pledged to do,” he said.

There are already 1,650 companies that have signed up for the Integrity Pledge and the target is double the number by September this year. To facilitate the process, the Integrity Initiative has encouraged those that signed up to conduct an online assessment. So far, 250 have already started self-assessment if they would qualify for accreditation.

Del Rosario, however, explained that what he was actually referring to when he said tax breaks for those accredited enterprises are not tax incentives per se but rather incentives in terms of ease of doing business noting the Department of Finance is very sensitive about giving incentives.

“What I should have said is that entities that are looking for tax breaks should be participants in the Integrity Initiative. What we are looking for is ease of doing business with government,” he said.

He cited some initiatives that the Bureau of Customs has undertaken like the greenlane for companies with proven integrity.

These companies have lower priority in terms of intensive scrutiny and investigation so the government has facilitated in such a such way for their enterprises. This can be done also for public works projects or being a supplier to the Department of Health.

“We’re hoping that eventually one of these criteria for accreditation of either bidders or suppliers of government contracts will be that they are an accredited participant to the Integrity Initiative, but not tax breaks per se,” he said. (BCM)

Retrieved from: <http://www.mb.com.ph/article.php?aid=2587&sid=&subid=#.UW-zIVJ0G51>