



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

IN THE MATTER OF THE GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF RANDOM MANUAL AUDIT (RMA) FOR THE 13 MAY 2019 AUTOMATED SYNCHRONIZED NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS AND SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS THEREAFTER.

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Promulgated: December 5, 2018

RESOLUTION NO. 10458

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) is mandated under Section 29 of Republic Act No. 8436, as amended by Section 24 of Republic Act No. 9369, to conduct random manual audit;

WHEREAS, COMELEC promulgated Resolution No. 10078, dated 11 March 2016, entitled "In the Matter of the General Instructions for the Conduct of Random Manual Audit (RMA) for the 9 May 2016 Automated National and Local Elections and Subsequent Elections Thereafter", Resolution No. 10090, dated 13 April 2016, entitled "In the Matter of the Amendments to the General Instructions for the Conduct of Random Manual Audit (RMA) for the 9 May 2016 Automated National and Local Elections and Subsequent Elections Thereafter", and Resolution No. 10109, dated 3 May 2016, entitled "In the Matter of Further Amending the General Instructions for the Conduct of Random Manual Audit (RMA) for the 9 May 2016 Automated National and Local Elections and Subsequent Elections Thereafter";

WHEREAS, from the experience of the past three automated elections and taking into consideration recent developments, COMELEC deemed it necessary to update and amend the foregoing resolutions;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution and other existing laws, COMELEC RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES to promulgate the following *General Instructions for the conduct of Random Manual Audit relative to the 13 May 2019 Automated National and Local Elections and subsequent elections thereafter*:

SECTION 1. - *Principles and Objectives of the Random Manual Audit (RMA)*. As mandated by law, there shall be a manual audit of the precinct vote count results generated by the automated voting and/or counting machine used for the election in one

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randomly selected precinct from each of the legislative districts in the country.

The required number of random sampling of precincts to be audited implies that the coverage of the RMA is national. RMA results, whether of national or local positions, are aggregated on a national level. Audit conclusions are therefore made on a national level. Conversely, no audit conclusion can be made in relation to individualized local contests.

Manual audit refers to the visual reading and counting of votes on a paper ballot or its equivalent, without the use of a machine, and a comparison of said results to results generated by the machine count.

In an automated election that employs the Optical Mark Reader (OMR) technology, the official precinct vote count is generated using the OMR Counting Machine prescribed by COMELEC for the election. The standard that should guide the manual or visual interpretation of vote marks or shades on the paper ballot in the course of the audit must therefore be the manner by which the OMR Counting Machine was configured to interpret said vote marks or shades.

The RMA shall be transparent, participative and credible.

SECTION 2. - *The RMA Committee (RMAC).* There shall be an RMA Committee or RMAC, which shall ensure that the RMA proceeds in an efficient, credible, and transparent manner. The RMAC shall be composed of the representatives of:

- a) a Civil Society Organization (CSO) accredited as a citizens' arm, and/or recognized, by COMELEC;
- b) the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA); and
- c) the COMELEC.

The CSO representative shall be the Chairperson of the RMAC.

The COMELEC representative shall be a Senior Director, whose principal function is to manage the logistical and administrative requirements of the RMA to ensure that the objectives are achieved in an orderly, efficient, and secure process. He or she shall ensure that the integrity of the election documents that will be used in the RMA process are preserved.

A Commissioner of COMELEC may be assigned to oversee the preparation and conduct of the RMA.

The RMAC shall issue *Instructions* in execution of its mandate under this Resolution and such other resolutions which may be promulgated by COMELEC. The RMAC shall decide matters by a majority vote.

SECTION 3. *Number Precincts to be Randomly Selected for the RMA.* At least one clustered precinct in every legislative district shall be randomly selected for the RMA.

The actual number of precincts to be selected in a legislative district shall be determined by proportional allocation, that is, based on the number of clustered precincts a legislative district has in proportion to that of all the other legislative districts in the country.

The COMELEC, upon the recommendation of the RMAC, shall decide on the

maximum total number of clustered precincts to be selected based on statistical sampling principles and taking into consideration resources available.

For purposes of the 13 May 2019 National and Local Elections, the maximum total number of clustered precincts to be selected shall not be more than seven hundred and fifteen (715).

Once the maximum total number of clustered precincts to be selected is determined, COMELEC shall approve the proportional allocation of the actual number of clustered precincts to be selected in each legislative district based on the recommendation of the PSA. The approval on the proportional allocation shall be made not later than ninety (90) days before the election.

SECTION 4. - *The Random Selection of Precincts for the RMA.* The random selection of the precincts for the RMA shall be conducted publicly in the following manner:

- a) At 12:00 noon on Election Day, the RMAC shall first randomly select the municipality/city from which the clustered precincts are to be selected under paragraph c of this provision.
- b) The List of the Specific Municipalities/Cities shall be released to the public at 2:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- c) At 9:00 a.m. of the day after the election, the RMAC shall randomly select, from the municipalities/cities identified earlier, the specific sample precincts for the RMA.
- d) The List of Specific Clustered Precinct/s per legislative district that have been randomly selected for RMA shall be released to the public at 10:00 a.m. on the same day.

The random selection shall be done using an automated random selection program recommended or developed by the PSA.

The RMAC shall ensure that the Regional Election Directors and Provincial Election Supervisors, who are members of the RMA Retrieval and Delivery Team (RMA-RDT) to be constituted herein, are informed of the selection made to ensure the efficient and secure turn-over of the ballot boxes to the RMA Center.

The source code of the automated random selection program may be reviewed by representatives of Registered Political Parties and Accredited Citizens' Arm Groups.

Registered Political Parties and Accredited Citizens' Arm Groups interested in conducting a Source Code Review shall signify their intent in writing, submit the methodologies which they intend to use and the name of their representative who will review the Source Code, on or before the 30th of January of the Election Year for approval of COMELEC. Registered Political Parties and Accredited Citizens' Arm Groups shall execute a Non-Disclosure Agreement before conducting the Source Code Review.

COMELEC shall provide a secure and enclosed facility/location for the conduct of the Source Code Review and shall properly record all entries to and exits from the said facility/ location.

COMELEC shall provide a read-only copy of the Source Code, which shall be viewed in a workstation inside the secured facility/location.

Registered Political Parties and Accredited Citizens' Arm Group shall not take out any copy of the Source Code or any part thereof from the secure facility/location.

COMELEC shall not permit any electronic device, including but not limited to laptops, mobile phones, camera, USB drives and other storage devices, inside the secure facility/location.

Source Code Review must be initiated by the last week of March of the Election Year but must be finished within thirty (30) days thereafter.

Each Registered Political Party or Accredited Citizens' Arm Group that conducted a Source Code Review shall submit a Report to COMELEC within ten (10) days from completion of the review.

SECTION 5. *Date and Venue of the RMA.* - The RMA proper shall start not later than two days after election and shall be held at a venue within the National Capital Region to be determined by the RMAC.

The venue selected is denominated as the RMA Center, which shall be accessible and shall allow public observation of the RMA, subject to the need to of an efficient and orderly process and security of election documents.

The RMA Team (RMAT) shall start the RMA at the RMA Center on the day determined by the RMAC. The audit shall start at 8:00 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. and shall continue from day to day until the audit is completed. The RMAT shall not adjourn for the day until the audit of the clustered precinct assigned to them is completed.

The RMAT members shall be liable if they fail to conduct the RMA in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution. Without prejudice to any administrative, criminal or civil liability incurred, COMELEC, through the RMAC, shall likewise have the authority to withhold the honoraria and transportation allowance of the members of the RMAT should they fail to conduct RMA in accordance with the the provisions of this Resolution.

The RMA shall be conducted in the presence of representatives of Registered Political Parties, Citizens' Arm Groups, Media and the Public subject to security protocols and space considerations.

The RMAC may postpone the RMA, but only upon exceptional circumstances, such as, but not limited to:

- a) the RMA Center is affected by a power interruption;
- b) fire and any other calamity in the RMA Center or within the immediate area;
- c) occurrence of violence in the RMA Center or within the immediate area; and
- d) other circumstances analogous to the foregoing.

In such event, the RMAC shall immediately direct the RMAT to continue the RMA upon cessation of the cause of postponement.

The RMAC shall appraise the observers present of their decision to postpone and continue the RMA.

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SECTION 6. *The Random Manual Audit Team (RMAT), its Composition and Appointment.* –

- a) The COMELEC, through the RMAC, shall determine the total number of RMATs to be constituted. Each RMAT shall be selected and appointed simultaneously with the selection and appointment of the members of the Electoral Boards.
- b) The RMAT shall be under the direct control and supervision of the RMAC.
- c) The RMAT shall be composed of three (3) members:
 - c.1. Chairman;
 - c.2. Secretary; and
 - c.3. Third Member.
- d) RMAT members shall be public school teachers, giving preference to those who have served as members of the Electoral Board/Board of Elections Inspectors or RMAT in past Elections. If the number of public school teachers is not sufficient, the RMAC shall appoint RMAT members from the following:
 - d.1. Teachers in private schools;
 - d.2. Employees in the civil service; or
 - d.3. Members of the non-partisan COMELEC accredited Citizens' Arm Groups.
- e) The COMELEC representative to the RMAC, in coordination with the Office of the Regional Election Director of National Capital Region and the Department of Education (DepEd), shall submit a list of RMAT members in a number determined by the RMAC, including substitute members referred to in the next paragraph, not later than the date set for the constitution of Electoral Board members.
- f) In case of absence or illness of an RMAT member, the RMAT members who are present shall call upon the substitute to perform the duties of the absent member.
 - i. If the substitute is not available, the RMAC shall appoint any of the following listed below in the order of priority to temporarily fill said vacancy until the absent members appears, provided that the substitute member is qualified, non-partisan and a registered voter in the province concerned:
 - f.1.a. Teachers in public schools;
 - f.1.b. Teachers in private schools;
 - f.1.c. Employees in the civil service;
 - f.1.d. Members of the non-partisan COMELEC accredited Citizens' Arm Groups; or

ii. In case no substitution is made for the absent RMA member and no person is qualified to be a temporary member as provided for in the preceding section, the present RMA members shall proceed with the conduct of the RMA and shall decide matters only upon a unanimous vote.

g) All RMA members shall accomplish their Appointment Papers and take their Oath not later than the start of the RMA.

h) The RMAC shall determine the number of RMA members to be convened for the conduct of audit daily at the RMA Center taking into consideration its space and area.

SECTION 7. *Qualifications of the RMA.* - Members of the RMA, whether regular, substitute, or temporary, must:

a) be of good moral character, non-partisan and of irreproachable reputation;

b) be a registered voter;

c) not be related up to the fourth (4th) degree of consanguinity and affinity to any candidate, to any member of the regular Electoral Board who conducted the polls in the same clustered precinct, or to the other members of the RMA of which he/she is a part of;

d) have never been convicted of any election offense or of any other crime punishable by more than six (6) months imprisonment;

e) have no pending case against him/her filed before the Commission on Elections or Trial Court for any election offense;

f) speak, read and write English or Filipino and the local dialect; and

g) have undergone the required training for RMA members.

SECTION 8. *Honoraria of the RMA Members.* - The honorarium for each RMA member shall be equal to the honorarium of an Electoral Board member, which shall cover their remuneration for services rendered in performing the RMA, in addition to their transportation allowance. RMA members who work for more than one day shall be entitled to one transportation allowance.

The members of the RMA shall be entitled to service incentive leave as that granted to members of the Electoral Board.

SECTION 9. *RMA Validation/Verification Team.* - There shall be an RMA Validation/Verification Team (RMA-VT), which shall review and verify the findings of RMA members in instances mentioned in this Resolution. The RMA-VT shall be entitled to remuneration of Two Thousand Pesos per clustered precinct.

SECTION 10. *RMA Center Supervisory Team.* - The RMAC shall constitute an RMA Center Supervisory Team which shall:

a) act as deputies of the RMAC in the conduct, supervision and control of the RMA;

b) be responsible for the reception and security of the ballot boxes of

the randomly selected clustered precincts delivered in the RMA Center;

c) during the conduct of the RMA, maintain peace and order within the RMA Center and its premises, keep access thereto open and unobstructed, and enforce obedience to its lawful orders. If any person refuses to obey the lawful orders of the RMA Center Supervisory Team or conducts himself/herself in a disorderly manner in its presence or within its proceeding, or interrupts or disturbs the same, the RMA Center Supervisory Team may issue an Order in writing directing any peace officer to take such person into custody until adjournment of the RMA; and

d) perform such other functions prescribed by the RMAC, or under the Omnibus Election Code or by any other rules and regulations promulgated by COMELEC.

SECTION 12. *The RMA Proper.* – On the day determined by the RMAC, the RMA members shall be at the RMA Center not later than 7:00 a.m. The RMA shall await the clustered precinct which shall be assigned by the RMA Center Supervisory Team for audit.

While awaiting the assignment of the specific clustered precinct, the RMA members shall take out all forms in their RMA Kit.

a) The Chairman shall take in his/her possession the three (3) copies of the Minutes of the RMA.

b) The Secretary shall hold the six (6) copies of the Audit Returns.

c) The Third Member shall post the Tally Board in its proper place.

Upon receipt of the the assigned clustered precinct, the RMA shall commence the conduct of the audit following the procedure referred in the next provision.

SECTION 13. *Procedure for the RMA.* – In case COMELEC decides to use Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) Voting Machines instead of the paper-based OMR Counting Machines, the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) receipts are taken to be the material equivalent of ballots for purposes of this Resolution.

At the start of the RMA, the Chairman shall:

a) Proceed with the RMA by presenting the ballot box to all those who are present.

b) Verify the condition of the following items to check if the integrity is maintained:

b.1. Ballot box; and

b.2. Security seals attached to the ballot box.

c) Break the security seals and open the ballot box.

d) Retrieve the sealed envelopes containing the Minutes of Testing and Sealing, the Minutes of Voting and Counting the copy of the Election Returns, and the receptacle for VVPAT receipts from the ballot box.

e) Break the Security seals and open the envelopes containing the Minutes of

Testing and Sealing, the Minutes of Voting and Counting and the copy of the Election Returns.

The Secretary shall:

f) Verify if serial numbers of the Security seals attached ballot box is the same as that indicated in the Minutes of Voting and Counting. The results of such verification or any discrepancy whatsoever shall be recorded in the provided checklist.

g) Inventory the contents of the ballot box using the provided checklist ensuring that every event is recorded therein; provided that, if there is any article that the Electoral Board should have placed inside the ballot box and that is found missing, the RMA shall note such fact in the provided checklist.

In the event the copy of the Election Returns for the ballot box is missing therein, the RMA shall inform the RMA Center Supervisory Team which shall provide them any authentic copy of the Election Returns.

h) Retrieve the valid ballots from the ballot box, perform a physical count and compare if the number of valid ballots found inside the ballot box is equal to the number of valid ballots counted as indicated in the Election Returns.

The Third Member shall, after the physical count by the Secretary and the total number of valid ballots does not match the number of valid ballots counted, determine whether valid ballots were mixed with rejected ballots by referring to the Minutes of Testing and Sealing and Minutes of Voting and Counting of the Electoral Board. If the valid ballots were not mixed with rejected ballots, the Third Member shall inform the RMA Center Supervisory Team.

The RMA Center Supervisory Team shall then inform the RMAC which shall decide whether the RMA members are to proceed with the conduct of the audit.

SECTION 14. Guidelines on Readings of Votes. - The Chairman, prior to reading the votes cast, shall:

a) Check the number of votes for each position subject to RMA.

a.1. In case there is an over-vote, such fact shall be recorded in the Audit Returns by the Secretary, but the vote shall not be counted for any candidate for that position. An over-vote is an incident when a voter selects more than the allowed number of seats allowed, i.e. an over-vote for senators is the fact of over-voting in any position will not invalidate the entire ballot or receipt. It shall remain valid and votes for other positions (that are not over-voted) shall be counted.

a.2. In case there is an under-vote, such fact shall similarly be recorded in the Audit Returns by the Secretary. An under-vote pertains to the situation where the voter chooses less than the allowed maximum number of seats for a position, i.e. if there are twelve (12) seats for a position with only one (1) seat. The fact of under-voting in any position will not invalidate the votes for that position.

The Chairman shall set aside ballots with over-votes and those with under-votes in the respective envelopes so denominated. If a ballot has an over-vote and an under-vote, the ballot should be placed in the Envelope for Ballots with Over-votes.

b) If an oval of a ballot is not shaded fully or contains other ambiguous marks

(such as checks or crosses), the appreciation of vote corresponding to the candidate as either counted or not counted shall be subject to the specific guidelines to be issued by the RMAC. The subject ballot shall then be placed in an RMA envelope for Ballots with Ambiguous Marks.

If a ballot has an over-vote and/or under-vote and contains ambiguous marks, said ballot should be placed in the Envelope for Ballots with Over-votes.

c) In case of the Elections utilize as DRE Voting Machine, the Chairman shall read the votes on the receipt as they are and make no appreciation thereof.

SECTION 15. Manner of Counting of Votes. – a) The RMAC shall proceed with the counting of votes for the following positions:

a.1. For Presidential Elections: President, Vice-President, Member House of Representatives, Governor and Mayor; and

a.2. For Midterm Election: Senators, Member House of Representatives and Mayor.

b) The Chairman shall form separate piles of fifty (50) ballots.

c) The Chairman shall take the ballots of the first pile one by one and read first the number assigned to the candidate followed by the candidate's name.

d) For every ballot, the Chairman shall announce the votes cast.

e) The Secretary shall accomplish the six (6) copies of the Audit Returns and respectively record thereon each vote read by the Chairman, while the Third Member does the same on the Tally Board.

Each vote shall be recorded by a vertical line, except every fifth vote which shall be recorded by a diagonal line crossing the previous four (4) vertical lines (taras).

f) After each pile has been read, the votes obtained by each candidate shall be added and the sum recorded and encircled on the space immediately after the last vote recorded.

g) The same procedure shall be followed with the succeeding piles.

h) After all the ballots or receipts have been read, the Secretary and Third Member shall compute and record, in words and figures, the total number of votes obtained by each candidate in the Audit Returns and the Tally Board. The Secretary and Third Member shall then compare if their tallies are the same; otherwise, they shall repeat the counting procedure until their tallies are the same.

i) The Chairman shall enter the AES results, as reflected in the Election Returns, for President, Vice-President, Senators, Member House of Representatives, Governor and Mayor as the case may be, in the Audit Minutes.

The Chairman shall then compare the AES results with the RMA results to determine if discrepancy exists.

j) In case the RMA results do not match the AES results, all the RMAC members shall review the entries of the Audit Returns in order to exclude the possibility of human error.

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After determination that human error was not committed as having caused the discrepancy, the Chairman shall determine if the total number of VVPAT receipts is equal to the total number of valid ballots. If so, the RMAT members shall use the VVPAT receipts to count the votes counted in favor of the candidate with the reported discrepancy/ies.

k) If a discrepancy still exists, the Chairman shall note this down and the probable reasons therefor in the RMA Minutes (i.e. rejected or spoiled ballots).

l) If the discrepancy between the AES and RMA results which exceeds the allowable margin of an aggregate difference of ten (10) votes, the RMAT members shall inform the RMA Center Supervisory Team, which shall immediately call the Validation/Verification Team for the conduct of the verification procedure.

During the counting, the RMAT shall position themselves in such a way as to give the watchers and the public an unimpeded view of the ballot or receipt, as the case may be, being read by the Chairman, as well as of the Audit Returns and Tally Board being simultaneously accomplished by the Secretary and Third Member, respectively.

The table to be used by the RMAT shall be cleared of all unnecessary things.

Lawyers, Watchers or Representatives of Political Parties and/or Candidates and the Public shall not touch any RMA documents/paraphernalia. Any violation hereof shall constitute an election offense and shall be penalized in accordance with Batas Pambansa Blg. 881. Lawyers, Watchers or Representative of Political Parties and/or Candidates shall not be involved in the proceedings of the RMA except as observers.

Upon conclusion of the RMA, all RMAT members shall affix their signature on the RMA Minutes, Tally Board and Audit Returns attesting to the contents thereof. Watchers shall witness the recording of entries and affixing of signatures of the RMAT members. The Chairman shall immediately notify the RMA Center Supervisory Team of the results of the RMA, who in turn, shall report the same to the RMAC.

The RMAT shall be provided with security personnel until the RMA is finished and shall ensure the safety and security of the RMAT and its proceedings.

SECTION 16. Minutes and Audit Returns of RMA. -

Minutes of the RMA:

a) The Chairman shall accomplish three (3) copies of the Minutes of the RMA, accurately entering therein all data requires as they become available and all acts or events as they occur.

b) Copies of the Minutes shall be signed by all RMAT members and scaled in separate clearly labeled envelopes for distribution, as follows:

b.1. The original copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box.

b.2. One (1) intended for the Commission on Election shall be delivered to the Records and Statistics Division (RSD) of the Election Records and Statistics Department (ERSD), COMELEC, Intramuros, Manila.

b.3. One (1) intended for the RMA Committee shall be delivered to the RCG-RMA Center. *h*

Audit Returns:

a) The Secretary shall accomplish six (6) copies of the Audit Returns by accurately entering therein the votes obtained by each candidate.

b) Copies of the Audit Returns shall be signed by all RMAT members and sealed in separate clearly labeled envelopes for distribution, as follows:

b.1. The original copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box.

b.2. One (1) intended for the Commission shall be delivered to the Records and Statistics Division (RSD) of the Election Records and Statistics Department (ERSD), COMELEC, Intramuros, Manila.

b.3. One (1) intended for the RMA Committee shall be delivered to the RCG-RMA Center.

b.4. One (1) copy for the Dominant Majority Political Party.

b.5. One (1) copy for the Dominant Minority Political Party.

b.6. One (1) copy for the Accredited Citizens' Arm Group accredited to assist COMELEC in conducting RMA.

The Accredited Citizens' Arm Group referred to in the preceding paragraph shall furnish copies of the Audit Returns to the Accredited Citizens' Arm Group authorized by COMELEC to receive one of the first eight copies of the Election Returns and to conduct an unofficial parallel count.

SECTION 17. *Closing Procedure.* – The following shall be observed:

a) The RMAT shall return the ballots in the ballot box.

b) All Electoral Board reports, documents, forms, the Minutes of Testing and Sealing, the Minutes of Voting and Counting, and the receptacle for VVPAT receipts previously opened shall be resealed using the security seals provided in the RMA Kit.

c) One (1) copy of the Audit Returns used during the conduct of the RMA shall be sealed in a clearly labelled envelop and placed inside the ballot box. The Tally Board shall also be placed in the ballot box.

d) The Chairman shall lock the ballot box with security seals. The serial number of the security seal shall be recorded in the RMA Minutes before closing the ballot box.

e) RMAT members shall turn over the ballot box to the RMA Center Supervisory Team for safekeeping.

SECTION 18. *Discrepancy Between AES and RMA.* – In the event that the RMAT reports a discrepancy between the AES and RMA results which exceeds the allowable margin of an aggregate difference of ten (10) votes, the Validation/Verification Team shall:

a) Analyze the findings of the RMAT;

b) Perform manual counting of ballots or receipts for the position with discrepancy in the RMA and the AES count following the procedure determined by the RMAC; *h*

c) Record manual counting activity in the RMA Minutes;

d) Return the box to the RMA Center Supervisory Team upon a finding that the discrepancy does not actually exist or a mere mathematical error; and

e) In the event of a finding that the discrepancy exists or is not due to mere mathematical error, the RMAC shall turn over the ballot box to the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) for determination of the root cause in case the finding is that the discrepancy is valid.

SECTION 19. *Effect of Discrepancy Between AES and RMA.* - In no way shall the results of the RMA delay the proclamation of the winning candidates based on the results reached by the AES.

SECTION 20. *Retrieval Reception and Transport of Ballot Boxes.* -

a) Each province, and in the National Capital Region, each city or municipality shall have an RMA-RDT. Highly urbanized cities outside the National Capital Region shall not have a separate RMA-RDT but shall be consolidated with the relevant province.

b) The Regional Election Directors of the Commission shall be obligated to:

b.1. constitute the RMA-RDT in each province, and in the National Capital Region, each city or municipality;

b.2. submit **Retrieval and Delivery Plans**, which consider the terrain and peculiarity of each province, and in the National Capital Region, each city or municipality, to the RMAC on or before the last week of January of the Election Year; and

b.3. assign three permanent employees of COMELEC who shall act as the Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT.

c) The RMA-RDT shall be composed of the following officials:

c.1. the Regional Election Director, as head of the Team;

c.2. the Provincial Election Supervisor, for provinces; and

c.3. the Election Officer/s and Treasurer/s of the randomly selected city/municipality.

All the members of the RMA-RDT shall be jointly responsible to ensure the secure and transparent retrieval and delivery of ballot boxes of the randomly selected clustered precincts for audit to the RMA Center.

The Retrieval and Delivery Plan/s shall be made public in accordance with paragraph (g) hereof. Representatives of Registered Political Parties, Accredited Citizen's Arm Groups, and candidates may witness all the processes and movement of the ballot boxes of the randomly selected clustered precincts from the Treasurers' Offices to the RMA Center provided that they follow security protocols and shoulder costs of observation.

c) The **Retrieval and Delivery Plans** shall indicate the specific time of retrieval of ballot boxes of the randomly selected clustered precinct/s from the relevant Treasurer's Offices, specific location within their jurisdiction where the Reception and Custody

Group of the RMA-RDT shall receive the ballot box/es, the method of transport from the Treasurer's Office to the Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT and other relevant information.

d) Immediately upon receipt of the specific list of randomly selected clustered precinct/s to be audited under their jurisdiction from the Provincial Election Supervisor, the Election Officer and Treasurer members of the RMA-RDT shall proceed to secure the relevant ballot box/es and place two RMA Stickers on each side thereof.

The Election Officer and Treasurer members of the RMA-RDT shall deliver the ballot box of the randomly selected clustered precinct/s to the Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT, which shall be stationed at the Office of the Provincial Election Supervisor or Office of the Election Officer, in case of National Capital Region, or in some other office designated in the Retrieval and Delivery Plan.

The Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT shall issue a Certification to the Election Officer and Treasurer members of the RMA-RDT upon receipt of the ballot boxes.


e) The Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT shall strictly maintain a record of the delivery and receipt of ballot boxes indicating the following:

- e.1. date and time of receipt;
- e.2. randomly selected city/municipality;
- e.3. voting center;
- e.4. barangay;
- e.5. randomly selected clustered precinct/s;
- e.6. number of clustered precinct/s;
- e.7. names and signatures of the persons who delivered the ballot box/es;
- e.8. names and signatures of representatives of Registered Political Parties, Accredited Citizen's Arm Groups, and candidates who witnessed the delivery of the ballot box/es.

All three permanent employees who acted as the Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT shall sign the record.

The Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT shall complete all ballot boxes of the randomly selected clustered precincts in the province, or city/municipality in the National Capital Region prior to transportation to the RMA Center.

f) The Provincial Election Supervisor, or in case of the National Capital Region, the Election Officer member of the RMA-RDT shall deliver the following to the RMA Center:

- f.1. the complete number of ballot boxes of the randomly selected clustered precincts under his jurisdiction; and
- f.2. the duly-accomplished record of deliveries and receipt maintained by the Reception and Custody Group of the RMA-RDT under paragraph e hereof. 

In the event of their unavailability due to other pressing functions, the Provincial Election Supervisor, or in case of the National Capital Region, the Election Officer member of the RMA-RDT may designate another permanent employee of the Commission to deliver the ballot boxes provided that they inform the RMA Center Supervisory Team.

g) All Offices of the Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors, and Election Officers shall post in their bulletin boards and implement other methods to inform stakeholders of the Retrieval and Delivery Plan/s, which cover/s the area of the jurisdiction.

h) All Retrieval and Delivery Plans required herein shall be incorporated in the Regional Joint Security Control Centers, Provincial Joint Security Control Centers, City Joint Security Control Centers and Municipal Security Control Centers Security Plans.

SECTION 21. Effectivity and Dissemination. - This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution and shall furnish copies thereof to all Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors and Elections Officers, as well as to COMELEC Accredited Citizens' Arm Groups.


SO ORDERED.



SHERIFF M. ABAS
1000,103141
Chairman


AL A. PARREÑO
Commissioner


LUE TITO F. GUIA
Commissioner


MA. ROWENA AMELIA V.
GUANZON
Commissioner

On Official Business
SOCORRO B. INTING 
Commissioner

VOTED IN FAVOR
MARLON S. CASQUEJO 
Commissioner


ANTONIO T. KHO, JR.
Commissioner