



March 2007

Proposed Amendment to the Public Communications Policy of the Asian Development Bank

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
OAG	–	Office of the Auditor General
PCP	–	public communications policy
PPRA	–	project procurement-related audit

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In April 2005, the Board of Directors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a public communications policy (PCP),¹ which took effect on 1 September 2005. The PCP requires ADB to review its external relations and disclosure activities every year. The PCP annual report, *Assessment of the Implementation of the Public Communications Policy September 2005–August 2006*, has been forwarded to the Board of Directors separately.

2. The PCP also calls for ADB to review and amend the provisions of the policy to reflect experience in implementation, reviews of other ADB policies and strategies, and evolving disclosure practices elsewhere. It states that ADB may amend the policy from time to time, following approval by the Board.² Based on experience during the first year of implementation, ADB has identified the need for an amendment to the exceptions to presumed disclosure to allow the disclosure of project procurement-related audit (PPRA) reports.

II. PROPOSED AMENDMENT

3. The exceptions to presumed disclosure³ currently include audit reports generated by Office of the Auditor General (OAG). OAG would like to distinguish between the Integrity Division's PPRA reports and all other audit reports prepared by OAG. PPRAs are project-related and, therefore, there is a greater public interest in their disclosure. Under the PCP, the Integrity Division can release a PPRA report only if it is determined that the public interest in disclosing the information significantly outweighs the harm that may be caused by such disclosure, or if an ADB member requests ADB to do so according to its own law.⁴ The Integrity Division would like to make it easier to release PPRA reports.

III. RECOMMENDATION

4. The President recommends that the Board approve a minor amendment to the public communications policy to read as follows (amendment in bold):

Para 126 (item 16): "Audit reports prepared by the Office of the Auditor General **(with the exception of project procurement-related audits)** and ADB's external auditor."

¹ ADB. 2005. *Public Communications Policy of the Asian Development Bank: Disclosure and Exchange of Information*. Manila.

² PCP, para. 164.

³ PCP, para. 126 (item 16).

⁴ PCP, para. 129.