July 15, 2005

NETWORK & INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NIS) MEMORANDUM 05-06

TO: All Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) Employees

SUBJECT: Administrator Privileges on TTI Desktop Computers

As a result of the Texas A&M University System auditor’s Information Technology security audit, it was their recommendation that we remove administrative rights from all users, where feasible. Administrative rights give users full access to install software, change system settings, and can also open the network up to security risks. After testing the removal of these privileges for a few employees and presenting the recommendation to the NIS Advisory council, it was decided that we would phase in the removal of administrator privileges starting with graduate and undergraduate students. We will notify individuals as the practice is phased in. Not all programs require administrator rights to install. When needed, NIS can install any business-related software that is needed. NIS purchased Core software licenses for the agency and is responsible for installation on TTI computers.

By tightening the security on TTI’s network at the desktop level, Network & Information Systems will decrease time spent trouble-shooting malicious spy ware and related issues that may exist on individual computers (Please review TTI’s Adware & Spyware Removal Guidelines on TTINet).

If you have any questions, please contact NIS via e-mail to support@ttimail.tamu.edu or by calling (979) 862-1417.

Kassandra Agee-Letton
Chief Information Officer