August 2, 2004

NIS Memorandum 04-04A

TO: All Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) Employees

SUBJECT: Agency Computer Hardware/Software Audit

In an effort to comply with state requirements on tracking computer hardware and software licenses, Network & Information Systems (NIS) will begin a computer audit process. To accomplish this, a NIS technician will physically go to each machine in the agency and run the "Track-It!" audit program. Track-It! is an application used by NIS to perform tasks such as hardware/software inventory tracking. During this audit, a quick inventory of hardware information (speed of CPU, size of hard drive, etc.) as well as a quick inventory of installed software will be performed. This will give us a baseline audit and it is our intention that subsequent audits will be collected automatically (and remotely) on a scheduled basis.

The audits will be performed one group at a time. When it is your group’s turn, we will give you an estimate on how long we should be in your area for the first pass. During the "first pass" if you have a TTI computer at home, you will be required to bring it into the office for the audit. We will alert you on the target date to bring in those PCs.

During the audit, we will collect Hardware and Software information as well as verify that machines:
- Are properly patched
- Have the necessary anti-virus software
- Are properly joined to the domain

The process is as follows: A technician will go room-by-room (based on your group’s recently completed annual inventory certification) and locate the machines that are assigned to that office. When a machine is located, the technician will ask the user (if present) to logout. The technician will then login, run an auditing program, verify patches, anti-virus, and domain membership. If the technician finds any problems, the machine will be flagged for follow-up and resolved on a second pass. If the technician finds that a machine is running a non-standard OS (like Linux, or a Server version) the technician will skip the audit and flag the machine for a follow up call to insure that the process does not adversely affect the machine. For machines that are brought in from home, the second pass work will be completed immediately to keep you from having to bring the machine back at a later date for the second pass.

As for the installed software on your machine, it is not our intention to remove non-business related software from your PC during this process. However, all software loaded on your PC must be properly licensed. (see TTI software license policy http://ttinet.tamu.edu/network/policies/p04-09.asp). After the audit, you may be asked to provide licenses for non-core software. Unlicensed software will have to be removed. Moreover, on a similar topic, NIS is working up a list of software that will not be allowed on TTI PCs because it has shown to cause problems. These software programs are sometimes called "spyware". The list at this time (and greater detail of that type of software) can be found at http://ttinet.tamu.edu/network/policies/p04-13.asp

If you have questions, please contact NIS via e-mail to mailto:support@ttimail.tamu.edu or by calling (979) 862-1417. Your assistance and cooperation is greatly appreciated as we continue to insure compliance with recommended IT policies and practices.

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Chief Information Officer

Network & Information Systems