

Ref: 48902

VIA E-MAIL

Date: September 4, 2007

To: Assistant Deputy Ministers of Corporate Services, Chief Information Officer Council,  
Alternative Service Delivery Secretariat.

Re: Encryption of Personal Information on Contractor Laptops

There have been a number of preventable privacy breaches involving government contractors who have not implemented reasonable security measures for personal information stored on their laptops. In connection with these incidents, Ministry staff have expressed concern about the expense and practical challenges of ensuring that private contractors encrypt sensitive information on laptops used to perform services for government.

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, government has a duty to protect the personal information in its care using reasonable security measures. In response to the 2006 loss of 41 data tapes, government determined that reasonable security measures for the protection of personal information included encrypting personal information on portable storage devices. The June 2, 2006 "Memorandum 44692 – Use of Portable Storage Devices" reminded staff, contractors and service providers of their responsibility to protect government information and the need to encrypt sensitive or personal information on portable storage devices including laptops.

To ensure that reasonable security measures are applied to the protection of personal information:

- Government contracts involving personal information must include Schedule E (Personal Privacy Schedule). This Schedule provides direction for the contractor on the information handling requirements for providing government services using personal information. The Information Security Branch has also developed Schedule G (Security Schedule) to assist contractors in understanding security responsibilities while providing services to, or for, government.
- As required by legislation and government policy, contractors must encrypt personal information on portable storage devices including laptops. If for any reason the contractor

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does not comply, or anticipates that it will be unable to comply, the contractor must promptly notify the Province (clause 21, Privacy Protection Schedule). The protection and prudent management of personal information in government's care is of paramount concern.

- As provided by the Privacy Protection Schedule (clause 18) Contract Managers can, and should, verify that contractors have implemented reasonable security measures for the protection of personal information stored on laptops or other portable storage devices.

Please refer questions on the encryption standard used for portable storage devices including laptops to Mr. Henry Lee, Information Security Branch, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Thank you for your diligence in managing government information commensurate with its value and sensitivity.

*Original Signed By:*

Dave Nikolejsin  
Chief Information Officer

cc: Ms. Lori Wanamaker, Deputy Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services

Ms. Barbara Hibbins, Chief Information Security Officer

Mr. Bob Duggan, Executive Director, Architecture and Standards

Ms. Sharon Plater, Director, IM/IT Privacy and Legislation

Ms. Lori Bulmer, Director, Security Strategies

Mr. Brent Grover, Senior Manager, IM/IT Governance

Mr. Henry Lee, Manager, Security Policy and Research