March 22, 2007

M-07-11

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Clay Johnson
             Deputy Director for Management

SUBJECT: Implementation of Commonly Accepted Security Configurations for
             Windows Operating Systems

To improve information security and reduce overall IT operating costs, agencies who have Windows XP ^{TM} deployed and plan to upgrade to the Vista^{TM} operating system, are directed to adopt the security configurations developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The recent release of the Vista^{TM} operating system provides a unique opportunity for agencies to deploy secure configurations for the first time when an operating system is released. Therefore, it is critical for all Federal agencies to put in place the proper governance structure with appropriate policies to ensure a very small number of secure configurations are allowed to be used.

DoD has worked with NIST and DHS to reach a consensus agreement on secure configurations of the Vista^{TM} operating system, and to deploy standard secure desk tops for Windows XP^{TM}. Information is more secure, overall network performance is improved, and overall operating costs are lower.

Agencies with these operating systems and/or plans to upgrade to these operating systems must adopt these standard security configurations by February 1, 2008. Agencies are requested to submit their draft implementation plans by May 1, 2007 at fisma@omb.eop.gov. With your endorsement we will work with your CIOs on this effort to improve our security for government information. If you have questions about this requirement, please contact Karen Evans, Administrator, E-Government and Information Technology at (202)395-1181 or at fisma@omb.eop.gov.