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DANIEL D. HOGAN
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

June 23, 2005

TO: State Agency Heads

FROM: Daniel D. Hogan

SUBJECT: **Secure Disposal and Transfer of Surplus IT Equipment**

I am writing to advise you about an important issue – the secure disposal and transfer of surplus IT equipment – and ask for your cooperation to minimize the risk to state government and private citizens. When agencies dispose of obsolete or unneeded electronic equipment, it is essential that proper steps be taken to prevent the inadvertent transfer of sensitive and personal information to unauthorized parties.

The Office of General Services is statutorily responsible for the disposition of state surplus property including computer and other electronic equipment. As agencies update their inventories, a high volume of surplus is generated. When we receive these items, we may make them available to other agencies, pass them on to schools through Project Create, or sell them, usually in large lots, to private parties through our E-bay site.

Before agencies forward their surplus items to the OGS Surplus Property program, we expect those items with memory to be wiped clean of all data. OGS has revised the form that the source agency submits when turning over their surplus items (CS-201, see attachment). It now includes an Information Security Certification statement that an agency official must sign. This will assure us that the sanitizing has occurred before OGS accepts responsibility. We have also introduced a random checking process.

Recognizing that agencies may use avenues other than OGS Surplus Property, I encourage you and your agency CIOs, working with your IT departments and surplus property coordinators, to ensure that *all* avenues of disposition are covered by data cleansing policies and procedures. To accomplish the cleaning and recycling of electronic equipment, many agencies routinely use the services of outside firms. A list of such resources is attached for your information.

This advisory is consistent with the New York State Information Security Policy (P03-002), issued by the Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination (CSCIC). Following is an excerpt from Part 7 of that policy (version 2):

There is a risk of disclosure of sensitive information through careless disposal or re-use of equipment. Formal processes must be established to minimize this risk. Storage devices such as hard disk drives and other media (e.g., tapes, diskettes, CDs, DVDs, cell phone, digital copiers or other devices that store information) or paper containing sensitive information must be physically destroyed or securely overwritten to prevent unauthorized disclosure of sensitive SE [state entity] information.

For questions about OGS' requirements for surplusing, you are welcome to contact Ron Ottman, Director of Properties and Fleet, at (518) 457-1744. Barry Russell, OGS Deputy Commissioner for Information Technology and Procurement Services, at (518) 473-3933, can advise you about procuring outside services. I refer you to CSCIC if you have questions about the policy cited above.

Clearly, we all share in the responsibility to safeguard sensitive information. One thing every agency can do is to have secure disposal procedures in place and ensure that appropriate employees have the right tools, training and resources to properly sanitize IT equipment. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Attachments

Cc: James Dillon
William Pelgrin
Michael McCormack