



June 14, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads of Operating Units
Chief Information Officers

FROM: Thomas N. Pyke, Jr. 

SUBJECT: DOC Policy on Password Management

This memorandum announces issuance of the *Department of Commerce's Policy on Password Management*. It is part of the Commerce IT Management Handbook, and is applicable Department-wide. Attachment 1 is a copy of this new policy.

The use of passwords is a primary means of protecting Department of Commerce information systems and data. Passwords are used to control access to desktop workstations, or personal computers (PCs), and the data contained in PCs. Passwords also protect Commerce networks and systems connected to PCs. If passwords are not used properly to control access to all PCs, then Commerce networks and systems may be vulnerable. This policy is also applicable to all Commerce computer servers, routers, and other networking equipment.

Please give your immediate attention to reviewing, and updating as necessary, your operating unit's policies and procedures to ensure they are consistent with this new policy. Also attached is a document titled "Managing Your Passwords," which is intended for use by your PC users to inform them of their responsibilities under this new policy. This document may need to be edited if your operating unit's password requirements are more stringent than the Department's policy.

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving the Department's IT security posture. If you have questions, please call Nancy DeFrancesco, the Department's IT Security Program Manager, on (202) 482-3490 or me on (202) 482-4797.

Attachments