

Date: May 26, 2009

From: Executive Director, OI&T Field Operations & Development (005OP1)

Thru: Deputy CIO, OI&T Enterprise Operations and Field Development (005OP)

Subj: Integrity of the VA Enterprise/Class III Software (WebCIMS #429478)

To: VA OI&T Field Operations and Developmental Staff

1. The quality of many of the services we provide to our veterans depends directly on the availability of IT services; anything that compromises that availability reduces our effectiveness.
2. Recently, outages have occurred that are directly traceable to the deployment of Class III software¹. While such software is developed to address specific needs identified at the local, network or regional level and represents an attempt to improve service, the unregulated deployment of software presents an unacceptable risk.
3. The management of Class III software is a complicated challenge where innovation must be balanced with the need to protect the integrity of the enterprise and the security of the information it stores. As such, cross-functional groups have been assigned to establish and evolve the following programs. Updates on the progress of these programs will be issued via the IT Field Operations Newsletter <http://vaww.itfo.portal.va.gov> and follow-on policy actions.
 - a. A Field Development process will ensure field-developed solutions to address local requirements meet national standards and are adequately documented, reviewed, and tested prior to deployment;
 - b. The existing Class III to Class I process expedites conversion of Class III software to centrally managed software;
 - c. The Innovation Program will provide a safe, supported environment where new concepts can be developed/refined/tested;

¹ Class III software is defined on the IT Field Operations portal:
<http://vaww.itfo.portal.va.gov/resources/Knowledge%20Library/Class%201-3%20Definitions.doc>

- d. The implementation of Configuration Management, Change Management and Release Management Programs will ensure that standardized processes are employed to manage changes to the production environment.
4. In cooperation with VHA, a series of surveys is under way to identify existing Class III software deployed on the VA production system. Each Facility CIO will coordinate with the Facility Director to ensure full response to these surveys; data to be collected includes the following:
 - a. Identification of the software, including modified routines, files, GUIs or other components required to run this software (descriptive name/nomenclature);
 - b. Purpose of the software;
 - c. Date deployed;
 - d. Any approvals obtained prior to deploying the software; and
 - e. Impact if the software is removed from the system.
5. No new or modified Class III software and no further modifications to Class I software will be installed in the production environment unless:
 - a. The software completes the established Class III to Class I process; or
 - b. The software completes the approved IT Field Development Process; or
 - c. The software is included in the list of exemptions approved by the VA IT Executive Change Control Board.
6. No software will be removed from the production system without the agreement of the affected Administration (VHA, VBA, NCA) and OI&T. Discussions are under way to establish a process to support these Class III programs until such time as they are not needed anymore, are converted into Class I programs, or are specifically exempted from the Class III to Class I program. Class III programs that continue to reside in the production environment will be fully documented and brought into compliance with established programming standards.
7. Nationally approved and released patches/updates are not affected by this memorandum.
8. Each Facility CIO will coordinate with the Facility Director to ensure that personnel under their cognizance observe the above requirements effective the date of this memo.

9. Questions related to topics addressed in this memorandum should be directed to Kathryn Daly at Kathryn.Daly@va.gov.

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