



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER

February 10, 2010

Ms. Nancy L. Zimpher, PhD
Chancellor
State University of New York
State University Plaza
Albany, NY 12246

Re: Network Security Controls
Report 2009-S-3

Dear Chancellor Zimpher:

According to the State Comptroller's authority as set forth in Article V, Section 1 of the State Constitution and Article II, Section 8 of the State Finance Law, we audited selected aspects of the security controls in place over the State University of New York College at Oneonta's computer network. Our audit covered the period January 21, 2009 through July 20, 2009.

A. Background

Oneonta is a four-year SUNY college that has a computer Network with about 13,000 users and 90 servers, some of which store student records. There are over 700 desktop computers in various labs and department facilities, including a computer lab open 24 hours a day in each residence hall on campus. The college has online resources (web applications) available via the Internet to students so they can register for classes, get grades and transcripts, pay bills and update personal information, among other things. In addition, Oneonta has a wireless connection available in all of its buildings.

Oneonta's President's Cabinet issued a Policy that defines the minimum security requirements that Oneonta must meet to comply with State and Federal directives. Oneonta established a security management team (Security Management), which is led by the Associate Vice President for Administration and Technology, to ensure compliance. Security Management includes the Departments of Administrative Computing and Telecommunications (Computing Departments) and the Information Security Officer. According to the Policy, Oneonta's Information Security Officer has overall responsibility for implementing, enhancing, monitoring and enforcing of Network security. The Policy further states the Computing Departments must maintain a secure network and participate in identifying and selecting appropriate security controls and procedures, and in protecting assets.

SUNY System Administration has also established Information Security Guidelines (Guidelines) all State colleges must follow. The Guidelines outline the needed information security and procedures colleges should implement to protect sensitive data.

B. Audit Scope, Objective and Methodology

We did our performance audit according to generally accepted government auditing standards. We audited selected aspects of the security controls in place over the Network for the period January 21, 2009 through July 20, 2009.

We reviewed Oneonta policies and procedures we deemed important to the control and maintenance of Network security. We interviewed agency technical staff responsible for Network security and operations. We also examined records and reports pertinent to our audit scope. We tested security controls by determining whether there is a risk someone could gain unauthorized access to the Network. These tests were performed on some, but not all, devices on the external and internal Network. In performing these assessments, we used various tools and techniques to identify Network weaknesses and to determine how these weaknesses could be exploited. Our testing included scanning for weaknesses on specific servers and Oneonta web applications, and more in-depth testing of select servers and applications where we deemed it appropriate.

In addition to being the State Auditor, the Comptroller performs certain other constitutionally and statutorily mandated duties as the chief fiscal officer of New York State. These include operating the State's accounting system; preparing the State's financial statements; and approving State contracts, refunds, and other payments. In addition, the Comptroller appoints members to certain boards, commissions and public authorities, some of whom have minority voting rights. These duties may be considered management functions for purposes of evaluating organizational independence under generally accepted government auditing standards. In our opinion, these functions do not affect our ability to conduct independent audits of program performance.

C. Results of Audit

We identified certain areas in which the controls needed to be improved to ensure Oneonta's data and resources are not at risk. Detailed results of our audit were provided to Oneonta officials during our audit. The details of our findings and recommendations are not included here due to the sensitivity of the information and the potential risk associated with the release of such information. Oneonta officials stated that they have begun to make improvements.

Recommendation

Implement the specific recommendations for strengthening Oneonta's network security that were provided to Oneonta officials during the audit.

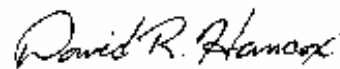
We provided a draft copy of this report to Oneonta officials for their review and comment. Their comments were considered in preparing this report and are included as Appendix A.

Within 90 days of the final release of this report, as required by Section 170 of the Executive Law, the Chancellor of the State University of New York shall report to the Governor, the State Comptroller and the leader of the Legislature and Fiscal Committees, advising what steps were taken to implement the recommendation contained herein, and where recommendations were not implemented, the reason therefor.

Major contributors to this report include Brian Reilly, Nadine Morrell, Mark Ren, Jennifer Van Tassell, Corey Harrell, Mark Abraham, and Sue Gold.

We wish to thank the management and staff of the College at Oneonta for the courtesy and cooperation extended to our auditors during this audit.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David R. Hancox". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David R. Hancox
Audit Director

cc: Tom Lukacs, Division of the Budget



THE STATE UNIVERSITY of NEW YORK

Office of the
Vice Chancellor and
Chief Financial Officer

December 30, 2009

University Auditor
State University Plaza
Albany, New York
12246

518 443 5533
fax - 518 443 5536

www.suny.edu

Mr. David R. Hancox
Audit Director
State of New York
Office of the State Comptroller
110 State Street
Albany NY 12236

Dear Mr. Hancox:

Re: Network Security Controls Report 2009-S-3

We have reviewed the findings and recommendations of your recent audit of network security controls at SUNY Oneonta with campus officials. The OSC audit recommended that the campus; "Implement the specific recommendations for strengthening Oneonta's network security that were provided to Oneonta officials during the audit."

The Oneonta campus officials report that IT security is a high priority and the campus is committed to the protection of its network and the campus' information assets. While the campus clarified some of the detailed findings in the audit, Oneonta is in strong position to move forward with the specific OSC recommendations regarding risk assessment and vulnerability scanning. Both of these represent major projects that are incorporated in Oneonta's IT Security program and will enhance its efforts to maintain a secure network.

We would like to acknowledge the audit team for their thoroughness and professionalism throughout the course of this audit. We appreciate the information they shared with the campus regarding their tools and methods.

Sincerely,

Curtis Lloyd
Associate Vice Chancellor
for Finance and Administration

UNIVERSITY CENTERS AND DOCTORAL DEGREE GRANTING INSTITUTIONS University at Albany • Binghamton University • University at Buffalo • Stony Brook University • SUNY Downstate Medical Center • Upstate Medical University • College of Environmental Science and Forestry • College of Optometry • NYS College of Ceramics at Alfred University • NYS College of Agriculture/Life Sciences at Cornell University • NYS College of Human Ecology at Cornell University • NYS College of Industrial/Labor Relations at Cornell University • NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University UNIVERSITY COLLEGES SUNY Brockport • Buffalo State College • SUNY Cortland • Empire State College • SUNY Fredonia • SUNY Geneseo • SUNY New Paltz • SUNY Old Westbury • College at Oneonta • SUNY Oswego • SUNY Plattsburgh • SUNY Potsdam • Purchase College TECHNOLOGY COLLEGES Alfred State College • SUNY Canton • SUNY Cobleskill • SUNY Delhi • Farmingdale State College • Maritime College • Morrisville State College • SUNY Institute of Technology COMMUNITY COLLEGES Adirondack • Broome • Cayuga County • Clinton • Columbia-Greene • Corning • Dutchess • Erie • Fashion Institute of Technology • Finger Lakes • Fulton-Montgomery • Genesee • Herkimer County • Hudson Valley • Jamestown • Jefferson • Mohawk Valley • Monroe • Nassau • Niagara County • North Country • Onondaga • Orange County • Rockland • Schenectady County • Suffolk County • Sullivan County • Tompkins Cortland • Ulster County • Westchester

Copy: Chancellor Zimpher
President Kleniewski
Mr. Abbott
Mr. DeMarco
Dr. Hartmark
Mr. McGrath
Mr. Foreman
Mr. Bidwell