Department of Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: OCT 0 5 2006

From: Deputy Secretary (001)

Subi: IT Directive 06-5, Use of Personal Computing Equipment (WebCIMS 365111)

To: See Distribution Below

- 1. On June 7, 2006, VA Directive 6504, titled "Restriction on Transmission, Transportation and Use of and Access to VA Data Outside VA Facilities," was issued. A key provision of this Directive is that only VA-owned Government furnished equipment (VAGFE), including laptops and handheld computers, may be used when accessing the VA intranet remotely. However, to allow for uninterrupted delivery of health care and provision of benefits to veterans, temporary waivers permitting the use of non-VA owned Other Equipment (OE) were approved for the three Administrations.
- 2. All addresses are hereby reminded that these waivers do not relieve the Administrations from other provisions of Directive 6504 -- one of which is: "If an employee uses VAGFE or non-VAOE in a mobile environment (e.g., laptop or PDA carried out of a VA office or a PC in an alternate worksite) and VAPI is stored on the computer, file or electronic storage media, approved encryption software must be used." Users/owners of such equipment are responsible for ensuring the above provision of Directive 6504 is followed.
- 3. As you know, we are in the process of encrypting VA equipment and during FY 07 will eliminate the use of non-VA owned OE by replacing it with VAGFE -- or in some instances disallowing its use completely. In the interim users of non-VA owned OE, operating as described in Directive 6504, <u>must</u> use approved encryption software. This encryption software will not be provided by VA. As stated above, it is incumbent on the owner/user of the device to ensure the proper protection.
- 4. Addressees are to remind their workforce of this critical provision of Directive 6504 regarding the protection of personal equipment and stored sensitive data -and ensure it is being followed. Although we need to temporarily permit the use of personal equipment, we will ultimately eliminate such use. In the meantime, I expect the protection policy mandated in Directive 6504 to be followed. This will greatly reduce the risk that sensitive data might be exposed.

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5. We are developing the plans for replacement of personal equipment in FY 07 and will be communicating these procedures to you within the next several weeks.

Gordon H. Mansfield

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