




U.S. Department of Justice

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MEMORANDUM FOR FEDERAL AGENCY CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS

FROM: Mark A. Boster 
Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Information Resources Management, DOJ
Chair
CIO Council Security Committee

SUBJECT: NIST SECURITY PLANNING GUIDE

The CIO Council Security Committee is encouraging federal agencies to take advantage of a new security planning document published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

The document, NIST Special Publication 800-18, *Guide for Developing Security Plans for Information Technology Systems*, provides guidance for preparing system security plans as required by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*, Appendix III, *Security of Federal Automated Information Resources*.

Special Publication 800-18 provides a guideline that federal agencies can use when developing security plans that document the management, technical, and operational controls intended to protect agency information technology (IT) systems. The guide provides a general structure and content that may be followed by agencies in organizing and writing their plans. The guide is the result of collaborative work among members of the Federal Computer Security Program Managers Forum and NIST. Thus, the guidance offered is based on the "real world" experience of agency information security managers.

Most agencies will also be conducting vulnerability analyses of mission critical systems in accordance with Presidential Decision Directive 63 (PDD 63). The process of conducting these analyses should be made easier as a result of agencies' system security plans, since the controls suggested in guidance for PDD-63 vulnerability analyses are consistent with those required or suggested in Circular A-130 and the NIST special publication. Thus, use of this guide will be a significant step both in securing agency IT systems and in achieving the goals of the PDD.

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The CIO Council Security Committee encourages all agencies to consider this guide. A copy of NIST Special Publication 800-18 is attached. The document is also available in digital form on NIST's Computer Security Resource Center (CSRC) at <http://csrc.nist.gov/pubs>. Any questions on this NIST guideline may be directed to Ms. Marianne Swanson on 301-975-3293 or email: marianne.swanson@nist.gov.

Attachment