



HEALTH AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

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MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY  
DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE  
PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR MILITARY HEALTH  
SYSTEM INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT: Military Health System Operating Systems Guidance

This memorandum supercedes Health Affairs Policy Memorandum 01-014 of June 4, 2001 and establishes Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) guidance for Military Health System (MHS) client and server operating systems. This guidance was developed by the Tri-Service Technical Integration Working Group and was coordinated and approved by the MHS Information Management Program Review Board. By limiting the number and diversity of operating systems, the MHS will achieve economies of scale, increase interoperability, and reduce complexity in network configuration. Moreover, decreasing diversity in operating systems within the MHS furthers business process reengineering by simplifying the integration of common functions and by allowing a single, integrated information management approach.

New acquisitions or upgrades of operating systems for the desktop environment should use a commercially available version of a Microsoft Windows operating system. In an effort to maintain interoperability within the MHS, all centrally managed applications should be cognizant of the current versions of desktop operating systems prior to deployment. Applications requiring a desktop operating system other than the Microsoft family are not authorized.

Server operating systems must provide for a secure operating environment. The operating system of choice should match the functional requirement. For common use servers which provide services in an Office Automation environment (such as file and print servers), continued use of the Microsoft Windows family of server operating systems is recommended.

Centrally Managed Programs should continue to analyze the operating system that best fits their functional requirements. It is anticipated that the Microsoft Windows family of server operating systems will suffice for most of the MHS computing requirements. However, for more specialized high-end processing requirements, other POSIX compliant operating systems for servers may be more appropriate. Line community standards should be consulted before selecting a non-Microsoft server operating system. A Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) should be developed to assist in determining the best operating system to utilize.

This guidance is intended for new or existing systems where the selection of an operating system will not cause an extensive redesign. Should you require additional information, please contact the Office of Technology Management, Integration and Standards at (703) 681-6779 or [tmsweb@tma.osd.mil](mailto:tmsweb@tma.osd.mil).

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Military Health System  
Chief Information Officer