

RESCINDED



Comptroller of the Currency
Administrator of National Banks
US Department of the Treasury

OCC 2003-4 has been replaced by OCC 2006-31

OCC 2003-4

Subject: FFIEC Information Security Booklet
Date: February 5, 2003

**To: Chief Executive Officers of All National Banks,
Federal Branches and Agencies, Technology Service
Providers and Software Vendors, Department and
Division Heads, and All Examining Personnel**

Description: Information Security Guidance

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) has released updated information security guidance in the form of a new Information Security Booklet. The Information Security Booklet is the first in a series of booklets that will completely update and replace the *1996 FFIEC Information Systems Examination Handbook*.

Reliance on technology in all aspects of banking by bankers, consumers, and corporations has increased both the potential for, and likely impact of, security threats to national banks. Widespread adoption of effective security processes can help ensure that the banking industry maintains effective safeguards against such threats and, by doing so, helps preserve the public trust. The Information Security Booklet provides a comprehensive security framework for national banks and their technology service providers. The framework focuses on implementing a security risk management process that identifies risks, develops and implements a security strategy, tests key controls, and monitors the risk environment. This framework also stresses the important roles that senior management and boards of directors play in this process by emphasizing their responsibility to recognize security risks in their banks and to assign appropriate roles and responsibilities to their managers and employees.

To facilitate clear communication of various key points, action summaries are incorporated throughout the narrative to highlight high-level control considerations applicable to all banks. The booklet also makes clear that financial institutions or technology service providers that outsource some or all information processing are expected to incorporate the oversight of their service providers into this process to ensure that they implement a similar risk management process. Examiners will use the booklet's work program as expanded examination procedures, as appropriate, based on the risk and complexity of the bank or technology service provider's operations.

The booklet also consolidates guidance from prior issuances and rescinds the following:

- Chapter 14, Security – Physical and Data, 1996 FFIEC IT Examination Handbook
- OCC 99-9 – Infrastructure Threats from Cyber terrorists
- BC 229 – Information Security

The attached FFIEC press release describes the handbook update process and provides the following link <http://www.ffiec.gov/guides> to an electronic version of the Information Security Booklet. To accommodate banks with limited access to the Internet, the OCC will also include the booklet in the next release of e-files, the CD-based library of OCC publications provided to all national banks. Any bank that is not able to download the booklet may order a printed copy. Please send your request to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 250 E Street, SW, Mail Stop 4-8, Washington, DC 20219. If you need assistance, please contact the OCC's Communications Division at (202) 874-4700.

Questions regarding this booklet should be directed to your supervisory office or the Bank Technology Division at (202) 874-5920.

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Related Links

- [FFIEC Press Release](#)

Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council

Press Release

For Immediate Release

January 29, 2003

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REGULATORS RELEASE INFORMATION SECURITY BOOKLET,
FIRST IN A SERIES

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council today issued revised guidance for examiners and financial institutions to use in identifying information security risks and evaluating the adequacy of controls and applicable risk management practices of financial institutions.

The safety and soundness of the federal financial industry and the privacy of customer information depend on the security practices of banks, thrifts and credit unions. The Information Security Booklet describes how an institution should protect and secure the systems and facilities that process and maintain information. The booklet calls for financial institutions and technology service providers (TSPs) to maintain effective security programs, tailored to the complexity of their operations.

Today's guidance is the first in a series of updates to the 1996 FFIEC Information Systems (IS) Examination Handbook. These updates will address significant changes in technology since 1996 and incorporate a risk-based examination approach.

The FFIEC currently plans to issue the updates in separate booklets that will ultimately replace all chapters of the 1996 Handbook and comprise the new FFIEC Information Technology (IT) Examination Handbook. In addition to the booklet on information security issued today, future booklets will address business continuity planning, supervision of technology service providers, electronic banking, IT audit, payment systems, outsourcing, IT management, computer operations, and systems development and acquisition.

The FFIEC agencies plan to distribute these booklets electronically to financial institutions and TSPs. The documents will be available on the Internet through the FFIEC's InfoBase application. InfoBase will include each booklet in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format, as well as an online version with links to various resource materials, and an orientation to the handbook update process.

The electronic version of the Information Security Booklet is available at www.ffiec.gov/guides.htm.

The FFIEC is composed of the five federal financial regulators: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union Administration, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Office of Thrift Supervision.

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Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union Administration, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Office of Thrift Supervision