Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: JAN 2 6 2007

To: Management Board

From: Dave Bowen, Assistant Administrator for Information Services
           and Chief Information Officer, AIO-1

           James H. Washington, Vice President, Acquisition
           and Business Services, AJO-0

Subject: Acquisition Policy regarding Microsoft "Vista" Operating Systems,
           Office 2007 and Internet Explorer 7

Purpose

This memo provides guidance to FAA Lines of Business (LOBs) and Staff Offices (SOs) about acquiring Microsoft's new "Vista" operating system and Office 2007 Productivity Suite for desktop and laptop computers.

Background

Microsoft, Inc. has announced that its new "Vista" operating system and Office 2007 Productivity Suite software will become generally available in the marketplace on January 31, 2007. We anticipate that this introduction will be accompanied by significant advertising "hype" and salesperson activity. Microsoft Internet Explorer, version 7 is currently available.

FAA CIOs were briefed on the "Vista" operating system, Office 2007 and Internet Explorer 7 on December 14, 2006, by the Research and Development group within AIO. This briefing pointed out a number of issues relating to these Microsoft products:

1. "Vista" requires twice the memory (1Gb) than that currently specified in the FAA Desktop standard configuration.
2. "Vista" requires a faster processor (1 Ghz) than that currently specified in the FAA Desktop standard configuration (800Mhz).
3. "Vista" requires a graphics card to assist in graphics processing. This is not part of the current FAA PC standard, although PCs purchased recently are likely to have a compatible graphics card.

4. "Vista" requires a DVD drive which differs from the currently specified FAA PC standard CD drive.
5. Office 2007 uses a different (and proprietary) file format, Document Open Format, than the current Office Software. This format is not currently supported by the FAA's Lotus Notes email.
6. Internet Explorer 7 is not compatible with some of the FAA's web-based applications.

The FAA CIO and CIO Council have asked the R&D group to develop an estimate of the cost impact to the FAA of converting to these new Microsoft products, to recommend the best way to do this, and to evaluate business benefits and alternative courses of action. Information technology experts, such as Gartner Group, Inc., recommend that companies study the issues surrounding these products carefully and research their implications before committing to acquire these Microsoft products.

Inquiries of the OMB and Federal CIO Council produce no definitive position on these new products nor advice for Federal Agencies contemplating their acquisition.

Policy

The FAA CIO and the Vice President, Acquisition and Business Services, with agreement from the CIO Council, are requiring LOBs and SOs to refrain from acquiring Microsoft's "Vista" operating system and Office 2007 products when they become available at the end of January, 2007 and continue to order Microsoft's XP operating system and Office 2003, the current FAA standards We are also requiring FAA LOBs and SOs to refrain from acquiring Microsoft's Internet Explorer 7. LOBs and SOs may obtain a waiver of this policy from the FAA CIO by documenting a current business requirement that only these new Microsoft products can meet.

Questions and Comments

Address questions and comments to the Office of the Assistant Administrator for Information Services and Chief Information Officer at 202-493-4570.