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COMPUTER SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE

AIM

1. Control and co-operate all acquisition of computers with their associated software and peripherals.
2. To maintain a standard configuration on all computers.
3. To ensure efficient and effective use of computers by all users throughout Council.

ACQUISITIONS

With the increasing number of staff using the computer systems available to them whether it be the HP300, HP9000 or Personal Computers (PCs), the number of requests for hardware and other associated equipment is also increasing.

(Note: HP3000 is the mainframe computer system which consists of Oracle and GenaCIS Applications, eg Property, Rates, Finance etc HP 9000 is a "Unix" based computer system which consists of Genamap and acts as a server for the network software, Lan Manager.)

Guidelines need to be established to ensure Council's Computer environment is running smoothly, efficiently and harmoniously. To reach this aim in designing Council's Computer environment, certain considerations and investigations must take place.

Before making a request for any hardware, such as Personal Computers (PCs), terminals, printers, etc, the user will need to identify and justify the need for that particular computer hardware.

A list of things the user should give some thought to are as follows:

- Would it help improve services;
- Would it help improve quality;
- Would it be cost effective.

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All enquires are to be made to Council's Information Technology Department to determine whether or not a system already exists and to ensure compatibility with Council's existing systems.

If a system is available on the mainframe computer (HP3000), then it becomes obtainable by all users rather for individual use. As Council has installed the HP3000 system, it is essential all resources available are effectively utilised and no duplication of application exists.

As part of the thought and investigation process, consideration should also be given to the following:

- Where is the PC going to be located for access to cabling;
- What software packages will be required;
- What are the printing requirements; and
- What other special communication software will be required to be able to communicate with Council's environment, ie, HP9000, HP3000 and Network.

All written requests are requested to be submitted to the "Computer Group". It would then be the Committee's objective to put the requests from all Departments in priority order for inclusion onto Council's Computer System, and define these needs into the Budget for consideration by Council.

Any software or hardware subsequently approved by Council, would then be purchased by the Information Technology Department.

STANDARDS

The following is a typical configuration for a PC you will find throughout Council.

- Any Technical PC requirements are 486DX machines with a minimum of 8 meg ram.
- All other PCs are 486SX machines with a minimum of 8 meg ram.
- Floppy Disc Drive Size is a standard 1. 44mb or 3.5 " disc.
- Monitor type is VGA or Super VGA colour monitor with the average size being 14 " or 15 " screens.

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Currently, Council purchases Osborne PCs to help keep the configuration of the PC environment standard. Also, this will help to eliminate any foreign components into Council's Computer environment.

All of the above factors have a financial impact and costing for the items described above, need to be included in the Budget item when approval is being considered.

SOFTWARE CONSIDERATIONS

The preferred standard software packages currently used by Council are as follows:

- Word Processing - Word Perfect 5.1 & 5.2 for Windows
- Data Base - Microsoft Access
- Graphics - Harvard Graphics
- Spreadsheet - Microsoft Excel
- Communication - Reflection
- Network - Lan Manager

The use of standard packages throughout Council, ensures data can be easily transferred across the "platforms" to the various Departments and their users. With this standardisation, there will be a multitude of users who will gain experience in more than one software package accessible easily through Council's Computer System.

By keeping to these specifications, it enables the Information technology department to provide better support throughout Council.

Purchasing of other software outside the above packages will only be considered after a proper evaluation and justification process has taken place.

LICENSING OF SOFTWARE

As users are aware, the transfer of software between PCs is quite easily achieved. The user should also be aware that it is an infringement of copyright laws which exist with all computer related items. "Piracy" of software is an illegal offence and shall **NOT** be permitted under any circumstances. Any software which is not Council owned and licensed, shall be deleted on the spot by the Computer Services Co-Ordinator or staff.

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INSTALLATIONS

All new software and hardware is to be installed by the Information Technology Department. This is to ensure no "piracy" of software occurs and that one licensed copy per user is administered on any computer related hardware.

This will also eliminate any duplication or "extra" varieties of software or hardware which a user might prefer other than Council's preferred standards. A Software and Hardware register is also kept on all computer related items showing all licensed copies of software, models and serial numbers of all hardware. This will be continually maintained to reflect Council's software and hardware assets.

As a result of the above, **all original** (or master) software installation discs will be retained by the Information Technology Department, after installation, for security reasons.

COMPUTER VIRUSES

What is a Computer Virus?

All computers operate by processing data according the "coded instructions" found in a PC's configuration. However, some time ago, a program was created which would commit various acts of "vandalism". Some of the problems caused was making a computer screen go blank in the middle of an application, or make all of the letters appear to fall to the bottom of the screen, or just inserting a "witty" one-liner in the middle of your screen. This was the first computer "virus". It got its name from its ability to copy itself and attach itself onto any other program with which it comes into contact. Therefore, it was and still is to this current date highly contagious! As time has gone past, more harmful viruses have been found which can cause even greater panic and confusion to a PC and its user by destroying data.

As a result of the number of users who take work to and from work or who are completing tertiary education, Council has been opened up to the threat of viruses. As a user, you can be unaware you may be carrying a software virus on your PC or diskettes.

In order to help overcome this problem, **ALL** Council PC's will be installed with virus detection software, so every time you power up a PC, it will automatically check your system for any viruses and continue to do so throughout the duration of use of the PC.

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Also, if "foreign" diskettes are to be used, they are to be scanned for viruses before they can be used on any Council PC. This scanning process should also be carried out to all current and older diskettes to ensure they are free from viruses. Once this is completed, a sticker is to be placed on the diskette, marking it as being virus scanned and what date the scanning was performed.

The Information Technology Department will provide all the necessary software programs to scan diskettes and remove any viruses that may be found on diskettes and the stickers for marking purposes.

Attached is a summary of what penalties are involved if the laws are broken under the heading "Did you know it is illegal..."

SUPPORT

The aims and objectives are to establish correct procedures to be used by all computer users when they have a question or problem with either software or hardware.

- 1 . Identify the problem to determine if it is software or hardware.
 - a. If it is a software problem note the program you were using and the program name and contact the Information Technology Department immediately. Do not press any keys if you are not sure what the problem is, because quite often this could cause further problems.

Someone from the Information Technology Department will respond to your problem by getting all the appropriate details required. If it cannot be solved inhouse, a call will be logged with Genasys by the Information Technology Manger or other authorised staff. A reference numbers will be given which is kept and filed with the Information technology department. An ongoing record or history of all the calls are kept for reference.

Note: Calls that are logged with Genasys covers all HP3000, HP9000 applications, Networking and Genamap.

- b. If it is a hardware problem, staff from the Information Technology Department will again respond to your problem. If it cannot be solved inhouse, a service call will be logged with the hardware company by the Information Technology Manger or other authorised staff. An ongoing record or history of all hardware calls are also kept for reference.

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DID YOU KNOW IT IS ILLEGAL...

To copy or distribute software or its accompanying documentation including programs, applications, data codes and manuals, without permission or licence from the copyright owner (ie generally the software developer).

To run purchased software covered by copyright on two or more computers simultaneously unless the licence agreement specifically allows it.

For organisations to consciously or unconsciously encourage, allow, compel or pressure employees to make or distribute illegal software copies sourced from within the organisation or within employee's homes or at any other location of the organisations behalf.

To infringe the laws against unauthorised software copying because a superior, colleague or friend compels it.

To fail to disclose knowledge to law enforcement agencies that the criminal law against unauthorised software copying has been breached, is being breached or will be broken.

To loan software in order that a copy be made of it, or it to copy software while it is on loan including loan to a friend or colleague.

PENALTIES

Criminal Charges

In some cases software theft and piracy may constitute a criminal offence and expose a company or employee to criminal charges with the following penalties:

Individual Liability

For a first offence, an individual can be fined up to \$500 for each illegal copy made or distribution of an article of software covered by copyright.

If it is not a first offence, an individual can be sentenced for a maximum of six (6) months imprisonment and/or fined up to \$500 for each unauthorised copy made or, distribution of an article covered by copyright.

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If more than one article of software is copied, an individual can be fined for each unauthorised copy made or distribution of an article of software covered by copyright up to a maximum of \$50 000.

Company Liability

For a first offence, a copy is liable for a fine of up to \$2 500 for each unauthorised copy made or distribution of an article of software covered by copyright.

If it is not a first offence, a company can be fined up to \$5 000 for each unauthorised copy made or distribution of an article of software covered by copyright. If more than one article of software is copied, a company can be fined up to \$250 000.

Civil Damages Claims

As well as the penalties outlined previously, the owner of an infringed copyright may sue an offender for damages for illegal copying. Under Australian law there is no upper limit to the amount for which the claimant can sue for damage in relation to intellectual property.

The Australian watchdog authority on these matters is the Business Software Association of Australia (BSAA), being an organisation comprised of major computer software manufacturers.

Foundation members include Autodesk Australia, Ashton-Tate, Lotus Development, Microsoft and WordPerfect Pacific. They can be contacted on 00802 1143.