

U. S. Department of Labor

Commissioner for
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Washington, D.C. 20212

SEP 18 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: JOHN J. GETEK
Assistant Inspector General
for Audit

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FROM : KATHARINE G. ABRAHAM
Commissioner

SUBJECT : Data Security Follow-up Audit
Draft Letter Report No. 03-00-012-11-001

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) draft letter report regarding Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data security.

Overall the BLS is in agreement with the audit results. With the findings provided by your staff, we have made further progress in implementing the remaining open recommendations. The following information is provided for your consideration in determining whether to close additional recommendations at this time:

Recommendation No. 1.2.1.

The BLS has finalized its agreement with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to exchange SunGard user IDs for security testing purposes. The IDs have been exchanged and tests will be performed twice each year according to the test procedures we shared with your staff.

Recommendation No. 1.4.4.

There is no change in status since we last discussed this recommendation with your staff. We will inform the OIG when we have determined our course of action regarding server location and administration.

Recommendation No. 1.4.7.

The modem line used to connect to SunGard is being changed to permit dial-out calls only. The other modem, requiring dial-in access, now prompts for an appropriate user name and password. In addition, we will conduct phone sweeps to detect any unapproved modems on a quarterly basis. Every BLS computer identified as providing dial-in access will be protected by username and password and, where possible, the BLS security warning banner will be displayed during the dial-in logon process.

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Recommendation No. 1.4.8.

There is no change in status since we last discussed this recommendation with your staff. We will inform the OIG when the meta-directory is completed and central monitoring of UNIX accounts is underway.

UNIX Password Strength.

We will begin testing user password strength on all UNIX accounts in near future, and will inform the OIG when testing is underway.

I appreciate your continued assistance and that of your staff in improving the security of BLS data. As in the initial audit, the work conducted by your audit team was quite helpful to us in identifying areas where additional security controls were needed. If you have any question, please contact Jesus Salinas in the Division of Management Systems on Area Code 202-691-7628.