



Ralph Campbell, Jr.
State Auditor

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
Office of the State Auditor

2 S. Salisbury Street
20601 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0601
Telephone: (919) 807-7500
Fax: (919) 807-7647
Internet <http://www.osa.state.nc.us>

January 29, 2001

Mr. Theodis Beck, Secretary
North Carolina Department of Correction
Shore Building
214 W. Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27603-1337

Dear Secretary Beck:

Our office received an allegation through the State Auditor's Hotline that employees of Albemarle Correctional Institution were using the State computer system to view pornographic material on the Internet.

On Friday, January 5, 2001, we visited the correctional facility to determine the validity of the above allegation. We explained the allegation to the Superintendent of the Albemarle Correctional Institution, the Assistant Superintendent in charge of Custody and Operations, and the Institution's Computer Support Technician.

The Superintendent stated that since opening the facility in the fall of 1999, his management team had also become aware of employees using the Internet while on duty to view pornographic images. In response, the Superintendent ordered the removal of Internet access from the Gatehouse, the Operations Center, the Master Control Center, and the Segregation area. The Superintendent also directed the Institution's Computer Support Technician to conduct random inspections of all computers at the facility.

The Computer Support Technician explained Internet access was removed from the computers in the Gatehouse, Operations, and Master Control through a process in which a "clean" operating system, without Internet access, was reinstalled on the computers in these locations. We confirmed the absence of Internet capability through an examination of one of the computers in Operations. The process of reinstalling a "clean" operating system also removed all history of Internet activity from the computers. The Computer Support Technician stated that he had not yet reinstalled a "clean" operating system on the computer in the Segregation area of the facility. Therefore, we selected this computer as well as the computers in the sergeants' offices within the three dormitory buildings for examination.



In the first two dormitory buildings, Tillery and Falls, we found no evidence that the computers located in the sergeants' offices had been used to access Internet web sites containing sexually explicit photographs. However, the computer located in the sergeant's office in the Badin dormitory had been used to access Internet web sites with sexually explicit photographs. At least four sergeants had access to the computer in addition to several correctional officers. In the absence of security software that associates computer activity, including Internet use, with specific user identifications, specific employees could not be implicated solely on the existence of these images on the computer's hard drive.

Our examination of the computer located in Segregation also contained numerous sexually explicit images that had been downloaded from the Internet. Again, many employees covering multiple shifts have access to this computer. Without specific user identifications, the activity could not be associated with a specific employee.

The State of North Carolina Information Resource Management Commission adopted its "Policy and Guidelines on the Use of the Internet" on August 22, 1994. The following represents the mandated application of certain aspects of that Policy and Guidelines. *While in performance of work-related functions, while on the job, or while using publicly owned or publicly provided information processing resources, public employees and North Carolina Integrated Information Network (NCIIN) users are expected to use the NCIIN and the Internet responsibly and professionally and shall make no intentional use of these services in an illegal, malicious, or obscene manner.*

In addition to the guidance provided in the State policy above, employees of Albemarle Correctional Institution are required to sign a statement acknowledging the fact that they have been informed of and understand the prohibition against personal use of the Department of Correction's computers.

As a result of the discovery of prohibited Internet use, we recommend that the institution obtain and utilize network security software that requires a unique user identification and password for each employee. Network security software generally provides documentation of all computer usage associated with a unique user identification. Thus, the security software can serve as a deterrent to prohibited computer use as well as an investigative tool. In addition, we recommend that management reemphasize to employees the State and institutional policies on the appropriate use of State computers and the Internet.

General Statute § 147-64.6 c (12) requires the State Auditor to provide the Governor, the Attorney General, and other appropriate officials with written notice of apparent instances of violations of penal statutes or apparent instances of malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance by an officer or employee. In accordance with this mandate, and our standard operating practice, we will provide copies of this management letter to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Director of the State Bureau of Investigation, and other appropriate officials.

Mr. Theodis Beck

Page 3

January 29, 2001

We are presenting these findings for your review and written response. The purpose of the response is to allow you the opportunity to outline any corrective actions taken or planned. We request the delivery of your written response by February 13, 2001.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact us. We appreciate the cooperation received from your staff during our review.

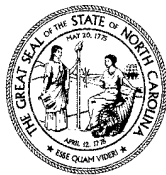
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph Campbell, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ralph Campbell, Jr., CFE
State Auditor

RCjr:dk

Management letters and responses receive the same distribution as audit reports.



North Carolina Department of Correction

214 West Jones Street • 4201 MSC • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4201

Michael F. Easley
Governor

February 13, 2001

Theodis Beck
Secretary

The Honorable Ralph Campbell, Jr.
North Carolina State Auditor
2 South Salisbury Street
20601 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-0601

Dear Mr. Campbell:

Thank you for your letter of January 29, 2001 regarding an allegation through the State Auditor's Hotline that employees of Albemarle Correctional Institution were using the State computer system to view pornographic material on the Internet. Your Office validated the allegation and made specific suggestions as to how we might prevent future abuse of the State Computer system. Management at Albemarle Correctional Institution have taken the following steps to address the violations:

- (1) Ordered the removal of internet access from computers in the Gatehouse, Operations Center, Master Control Center, and the Segregation area;
- (2) Directed the Institution's Computer Support Technician to conduct random inspections of all computers at the facility;
- (3) Reinstalled a clean operating system on computers in the above areas.

We will continue our efforts to prevent future abuse. The Department's Electronic Data Processing Steering Committee (EDP) issued an "Internet Acceptable Use Policy" on May 19, 1998 and reemphasized this policy to all members of the Electronic Data Processing Steering Committee on July 15, 1999. All Divisions and separate offices in the Department of Correction are represented on the EDP Steering Committee.

The Department's Division of Information Resources is currently considering other prevention strategies. They are:

- (1) The use of firewalls and proxy servers to help identify violators and prevent future abuse;
- (2) Purchased and are in the process of distributing Zenworks, a software application that might also be of some help in preventing future abuse.

The Honorable Ralph Campbell

February 13, 2001

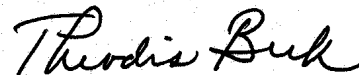
Page 2

- (3) Zenworks also has the capability to access certain files from a remote location which would be beneficial to an agency as large and disperse as the Department of Correction; and
- (4) We are also investigating the purchase of filtering services offered by the State's Information Technology Services (ITS) for use in our Department. However, budgetary constraints may restrict the speed with which some of these technologies can be implemented.

Finally, I have reemphasized the seriousness of this issue to the Department's leadership and encouraged them to continually counsel their employees regarding this issue. Inappropriate use of computers and the internet will become an item of discussion at future management meetings throughout the Department. This morning Deputy Secretary Aikens briefed the Project Team Leaders (PTL), a subordinate group of the EDP Steering Committee, on my behalf regarding this issue. The EDP Steering Committee will be briefed at their monthly meeting on Thursday. Members of these groups are being asked to acknowledge when they have reported back to their supervisors on this issue of concern. We will insure that other groups and organizations within the Department are also briefed. In addition, I am asking the Department's Director of Public Affairs to periodically incorporate similar comments in the Department's newsletter, and I am tasking the Director of Information Resources to refine the Department's policy on Inappropriate Use of Computers and the Internet. We expect this policy to be refined, rewritten, and disseminated to the field within 45 calendar days.

Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. Please rest assured that we will do all we can to correct these violations and prevent future occurrences.

Yours sincerely,



Theodis Beck
Secretary