



North Carolina  
Department of Environment  
and Natural Resources

## P O L I C Y

**Section: Information Technology Services**

**Number:**

**Subject: Departmental Desktop Workstation**

**Approved By: DENR Secretary and IRMB**

**Eff. Date: Aug 1, 1997**

**Revised:**

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### DEFINITIONS:

**Guidelines:** recommended procedure or technology, intended to assist management in the selection of technologies and more generally, to foster a coherent IT strategic direction.

**Standards:** required procedure or technology, intended to establish a departmental computing environment that is coherent, supportable, and enables easy access and sharing of information. In some cases the standards may apply only to the department. In others, these standards apply to all departments in state government and have been promulgated by the state IRM.

**Workstation or Desktop Computer:** A networked or stand alone computer that is relatively small physically and is relatively inexpensive (vis a vis mini or mainframe computers) though they may have powerful processors and considerable storage capacity. Typically, these computers are resident in the workspace of individual end users and IT professionals.

### POLICY STATEMENT:

#### 100. Background

The Information Resources Management Board (IRMB) recognizes that technology trends and general practice are leading to the widespread adoption of a client/server application environment. Client/Server

(C/S) is a computing model where application processing is split, typically sharing the load between networked computers. One computer runs client software and another runs server software.

This model has a number of benefits. Distributing processing among computers promotes a better utilization of hardware investments. C/S relies on development tools that foster more rapid development, and training requirements and accessibility issues are reduced with the C/S application that typically includes a graphical user interface like that of most Windows software. At the same time, the challenge associated with this computing model is the potential for excessive complexity and related problems of support. Across divisions and across the department, the greater the number and kinds of computers, operating systems, and applications, the greater will be the complexity of the department's portfolio of applications, the more difficult will be most development projects.

In addition, the department seeks a workstation standard that maximizes the flexibility of its staff in the selection of productivity applications, provides a common, easy-to-use user interface, and minimizes the resources required to install and maintain these workstations.

To address the C/S issues and meet these related computing objectives, the IRMB has developed a set of departmental standards and guidelines relating to desktop computing.

## **200. Workstation Standard**

All workstations in EHNR will be IBM PC compatible. This standard is compatible with by far the largest segment of workstations in the department. It is compatible with the largest number of software vendor products, and it is capable of considerable customization.

## **300. Workstation Guideline**

Where possible, new computers should be positioned to support the newer thirty-two bit operating systems and applications. See Attachment for minimum specifications.

## **400. Adoption of the Standard**

Workstation standards are not retroactive. They should be adopted with any new purchase and installation. Existing computers should be recycled where appropriate.

## **500. Exceptions**

In general, it is expected that all divisions and offices within DENR will adhere to these standards; however, exceptions may be granted for special situations. Written requests for exceptions should be directed to the Technology Planning Officer (TPO). Where appropriate the TPO may forward the proposal to technical experts in ITS to comment on the request. The request plus comments will then be placed on the IRMB agenda for review and a decision by the IRMB. The requester will attend the IRMB review session to make his or her case. The requests should include: 1) the name and title of the requester, 2) the requesting organization, 2) the exception that is being requested, and 3) a statement of the special circumstances that are intended to justify the request.

If the division requesting an exception has submitted a Technology Plan which includes provision for the purchase of desktop computers, links these purchases to their business objectives in the plan, provides for

necessary support requirements, and is approved by the IRMB, then the request will be approved by the Technology Planning Officer without further review.