MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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September 30, 2014

Honorable Stacey E. Pickering, State Auditor
Office of the State Auditor
State of Mississippi
P. O. Box 956
Jackson, MS 39205-0956

INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT REPORT

Dear Mr. Pickering:

We have received your report of your limited assessment of the Information Systems (IS) controls of Madison County. Please find a summary of your findings and the county's responses below.

FINDINGS AND RESPONSE:

1) MADISON COUNTY SHOULD ESTABLISH AND TEST A DISASTER RECOVERY PROCESS

Response:

Madison County agrees with this finding in regard to a catastrophic disaster.

Madison County has procedures in place to backup up its data on all platforms. The media, on which this backup is written to, is stored at an off-site facility. This facility is a sufficient distance from our operations to provide reasonable safety of the backup media. The facility is operated by a reputable third-party provider.

The backup media is picked up daily and delivered to this facility, which is an environmentally controlled and protected environment. The media is stored until the date of its scheduled return to the IT Department to be used in the next backup rotation. The media is rotated on a schedule where there are 8 sets of daily backups (Monday through Thursday), for a two week daily rotation. There are 4 sets of weekly backups (Friday of each week) for a 4 week rotation. There are 6 sets of monthly backups done on the last day of each month for a 6 month rotation. A review is performed each day of the backup jobs and associated logs to verify completeness of the backup.

John Bell Crosby, *District One*
Ronny Lott, *District Two*

Gerald Steen, *District Three*
Karl M. Banks, Sr., *District Four*

Paul Griffin, *District Five*
Cynthia Parker, *Chancery Clerk*

The assurance that the data is complete is confirmed by the fact that this same backup media has been used multiple times to restore all data onto a new system when we have implemented system upgrades. In addition, the IT department periodically receives requests to restore data from the backup media. These restorations are performed with no problems detected.

The above information only addresses the backups and integrity of the data on the backup media. It does not address the fact that there is no equipment to restore the data to in the event of a major disaster (i.e. building fire, tornado, etc.) that would destroy the actual hardware that the data resides on for production access.

Madison County will research the cost associated with securing an off-site facility that would allow the county to quickly resume operation of computer systems to support daily county activities. This task is assigned to the IT Director.

2) MADISON COUNTY SHOULD IMPLEMENT A FORMAL INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

Response:

Madison County agrees with this finding.

Although not formalized into a policy statement, Madison County has security practices in place. All systems and servers are password protected. All outside network access is protected by a security appliance that requires a VPN client with a security profile and network log-on credentials in order to access the network from outside. The internal wireless network is protected by a lengthy encryption key that is required to connect to the internal wireless network.

An IT policy is included in the employee handbook. This IT policy will be reviewed and modified, if needed, to address specific security policies.

The County Administrator and IT Director, in cooperation with the Board Attorney, will review policies to propose any necessary updates to the Board of Supervisors.

3) PASSWORD STRENGTH SHOULD BE IMPROVED

Response:

Madison County will take this finding under advisement.

Sincerely,

Karl M. Banks, Sr.
Board President