

TITLE

C169 COMPUTER USE, INTERNET & EMAIL POLICY

DEPARTMENT

Corporate Services

POLICY DIRECTIVE

HISTORY

Council Resolution No 313/03 adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 August 2003.

POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to reflect the ideals and values by which the Council manages:

- access and use of computer equipment and software;
- access to and distribution of information; and,
- the use of e-mail and internet technology in the workplace.

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that employees of Council use information technology resources in an appropriate manner. Information technology resources such as equipment, software, e-mail and internet access are provided to improve productivity in the employee's conduct of Council operations. This policy provides direction and guidelines to ensure appropriate use of the resources provided.

SCOPE

It is intended that this policy will encompass the whole of Council's activities including the operations at the works depot and King Island Airport and other Business Unit that is/may become operational.

POLICY

1. **Computer Equipment:**

Computer equipment is provided by Council to assist employees in the performance of their duties. Each employee is responsible for using this equipment in an appropriate manner. Incidental use of computer equipment for personal purposes is understandable, and all such use should be undertaken in a manner that does not negatively affect the equipment's use for their operational purposes.

2. SOFTWARE

Unauthorised installation of software is strictly prohibited. Only the Director Corporate Services or the Computer Officer are permitted to install software or authorise the installation of software by non-IT personnel. Software includes application programs, screensavers, desktop backgrounds, utilities, shareware, games and all other executable files.

3. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The computer systems developed or used by Council have been designed and developed at a cost to the Council. Such systems, and all ancillary documentation and information in relation to them, constitute intellectual property owned by King Island Council or the person who has authorised Council to use them. Employees and contractors are required to protect the intellectual property of Council and where an employee is using a system under license from another person, the employee must observe the requirements of the licensor.

4. SYSTEMS' SECURITY

Employees must not delete, rearrange, access or otherwise use stored information in the Council's computer systems other than within the scope and course of the proper and diligent performance of the employee's duties. Where an employee has been provided with a password to facilitate access to the Council's computer systems or computer stored data, the employee shall not disclose the password or allow it to become known to any person, including Council's employees and agents.

5. E-MAIL TECHNOLOGY

Today, e-mail is an important productivity tool for business, as well as a personal communication medium. Care should be taken to avoid e-mail overload and time wastage by the recipient, and placing a burden on the technical network resources used to deliver e-mail. Each employee is accountable for using e-mail in a responsible manner. Respective Managers are also accountable for ensuring that employees are aware of their accountabilities and that these guidelines are adhered to as far as practicable.

The Council is committed to effective and efficient e-mail use, encompassing creation, retention and deletion of all relevant e-mails. E-mail is not to be used for inappropriate purposes. All e-mail received and sent on the Council computer networks is owned by the Council and not individual users.

Non-adherence to this policy or abuse of the e-mail system and/or the Internet is not acceptable behaviour and will be dealt with under the Council's Performance Appraisal process. This may involve disciplinary action and in some cases, may lead to termination of employment.

This policy identifies rules and guidelines relating to the use of the Council's e-mail system and general good e-mail practice.

6. RULES FOR USE OF E-MAIL

- 6.1 All e-mail stored on the Council computer networks is owned by the Council and is not considered private. As such, the Council may access and monitor employee's e-mail to evaluate content or for other purposes.
- 6.2 E-mail messages must not contain defamatory, disparaging or disrespectful comments about people or organisations.
- 6.3 E-mail must not be used for any form of harassment. Employees must not transmit any data that is or could be conceived as threatening, obscene, pornographic, racially offensive, defamatory or sexually explicit. Whilst employees cannot be held accountable for receiving such e-mail, they will be held accountable for forwarding or storing such messages.
- 6.4 The e-mail system is provided for work use to advance the business interests of the Council. It is recognised that personal e-mail will be received and sent but this should be kept to a minimum.
- 6.5 E-mail, such as chain letters or similar "junk" e-mail must not be originated by, or forwarded to anyone internal or external to the Council.
- 6.6 Any warnings about viruses received from any source should be referred to the Director Corporate Services or Computer Officer as soon as possible.
- 6.7 All e-mail sent to recipients outside the Council will contain the following disclaimer at the end of the message:

*****Internet E-Mail Confidentiality Footer*****

Privileged/Confidential Information may be contained in this message. If you are not the addressee indicated in this message (or responsible for delivery of the message to such a person), you may not copy or deliver this message to anyone. In such case, you should destroy this message and kindly notify the sender by reply e-mail. Please advise immediately if you or your employer does not consent to Internet e-mail for messages of this kind. Opinions, conclusions and other information in this message that do not relate to the official business of the King Island Council shall be understood as neither given nor endorsed by it.

7. E-MAIL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The following provide guidelines for good practice when using e-mail:

- 7.1 Sending e-mail messages:
 - Only send e-mail messages to those who need them
 - Keep e-mails short and to the point
 - Do not rely on message formatting, such as alignments, fonts or colours as there is no guarantee it will be displayed as intended by the recipient's e-mail system (this particularly applies to sending e-mail externally)
 - Using e-mail to deliver external documents is not secure and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, discretion must be exercised when sending e-mails externally.

Where feasible, confidential information should not be sent via e-mail to external organisations – alternative arrangements, such as the courier of hard copy should be utilised.

Attachments over 1 Megabyte are considered large attachments. Avoid attachments larger than this size. When sending e-mail with attachments, adopt the following guidelines;

Avoid sending large attachments to a large distribution list, as it multiplies the system resources required to deliver the mail.

Be aware that large attachments may take a large amount of time to deliver, and may not be accepted by the recipients system.

Do not “reply with history” to e-mails that had attachments in the original e-mail.

Please note, the procedure for official communications by e-mail and how it must be recorded in the Central Filing System.

7.2 Receiving e-mail messages:

DO NOT forward inappropriate e-mails you have received to others, delete immediately.

Unsolicited e-mail from unsolicited sources should be treated as hostile, and should be deleted without opening.

Be wary of attachments from untrusted sources. Detach all attachments and run a virus check manually before opening.

Do not “reply to all” unless everyone has to see the reply.

If the incoming e-mail is a formal communication from an external source please ensure the e-mail is forwarded to the Council’s records management area.

Regularly delete messages that are no longer required.

8. INTERNET TECHNOLOGY

This policy provides rules and guidelines on using the King Island Council gateway to the Internet within the Council Facility.

The Internet is a tool that can be used for information gathering and research. It can also be a time waster, impacting on personal productivity, and overuse may hinder normal business activities which rely on the Internet gateway. As such, each employee is individually accountable for using the Internet in a responsible manner. Respective managers are also accountable for ensuring that employees are aware of their accountability's and that these guidelines are adhered to as far as practicable.

Non-adherence to this policy or abuse the Internet is not acceptable behaviour and will be dealt with under the Council’s Performance Appraisal process. This may involve disciplinary action and in some cases, may lead to termination of employment.

9. RULES FOR THE USE OF THE INTERNET

- 9.1 Employees can use the Internet for gathering information or research related to Council business activities.
- 9.2 The Council may monitor use of the Internet by its employees.
- 9.3 Under no circumstances are web-sites known to contain offensive or potentially offensive material to be visited.
- 9.4 Under no circumstances is threatening, obscene, pornographic, racially offensive or sexually abusive material to be viewed or down loaded from the Internet.
- 9.5 Employees are prohibited from downloading any type of software from the Internet.
- 9.6 Any files downloaded from the Internet should be checked automatically by the system for viruses. Software and other executables (including screen savers) must not be downloaded.
- 9.7 The internet is not to be used for “chat” lines for personal purposes.

RELATED LEGISLATION

The preparation of dissemination of this policy has been completed to ensure that Council’s risk management requirements in the area of information technology are satisfactorily addressed.

RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for ensuring that this policy is adhered to rests with the Management Executive Team. On a day to day basis the Director Corporate Services is to ensure that the policy guidelines and rules are adhered to.

REVIEW

The content of this policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary, from time to time, to ensure that the policy remains current and effective.