

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA # *B-3

Urgent

Routine

AGENDA DATE May 6, 2008

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES NO
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES NO

SUBJECT:

Approval To Destroy Backup Tapes Greater than 24 Months Old in Accordance with Records Retention Requirements

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Direct County Departments to Destroy Backup Tapes Greater than 24 Months Old in Accordance with Records Retention Requirements Unless Otherwise Authorized in Writing by the County Chief Information Officer (CIO).

FISCAL IMPACT:

Any staff time associated with destroying the tapes to meet this recommendation is expected to be managed within the budgets of the affected departments.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2008-317

On motion of Supervisor Monteith, Seconded by Supervisor Grover
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Grover, Monteith, DeMartini and Chairman Mayfield

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) _____ Denied

3) _____ Approved as amended

4) _____ Other:

MOTION:



ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

Approval To Destroy Backup Tapes Greater than 24 Months Old in Accordance with Records Retention Requirements

DISCUSSION:

County departments routinely make backups of their data stored on computer systems to allow for a recovery should the primary system fail. Typically these backups occur nightly or weekly and involve writing to some form of high-capacity tape cartridge. Because no formal guidance has been established in the county, many departments have retained these tapes for years, although in many cases the ability to read those tapes, due to changes in technology, no longer exists in the county.

There are requirements on some departments imposed by State and Federal mandates to retain data for a certain period of time. Financial information, grant information, time studies, activity logs, etc., can have associated retention requirements. Whatever retention requirements those departments face remain in effect and are not modified by this policy. Those requirements dictate what must happen with the data, which will continue to remain intact. It is only the old backup copies of the data that would be affected by this policy. Any data with a specific retention period would remain on the computer system and recent backup copies of that data would be retained. Backup tapes that are several years old, however, where a more current backup is on hand, are simply copies of copies. If the primary data is still on the computer system and there is a recent backup of that data, then having a copy 24 months old provides no value, but creates a storage and management liability. Should a business need be identified that would require a longer retention period than the 24 months proposed, departments could seek written authorization from the Chief Information Officer for an exception.

Backup tapes are expensive and can be difficult and costly to store effectively and track appropriately. This effort will streamline efforts to manage backups and give a clear direction to county Information Technology staff, allowing them to make better use of their time and of limited storage space.

This issue was discussed with the county Information Technology Steering Committee at their March, 2008 meeting with a recommendation that this action be proposed to the Board of Supervisors. The issue was also discussed with the county IT Managers Working Group who were asked to identify any issues associated with the proposed 24-month retention period for backup tapes and no issues were identified.

POLICY ISSUES:

California Government Code Section 26202 allows the Board of Supervisors to "...authorize the destruction or disposition of any record which is more than 2 years old ... which is not expressly required by law to be filed and preserved if the board determines by four-fifths vote that the retention... is no longer necessary or required for county purposes."

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California Government Code Section 26201 allows the board of Supervisors to “authorize at any time the destruction or disposition of any duplicate record, paper, or document, the original or a permanent photographic reproduction of which is in the files of any officer or department of the county.”

This proposal would improve internal efficiencies and is consistent with the Board's priority of efficient delivery of public services.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact associated with this item. Existing SBT and Departmental IT staff will be responsible for destroying data backup tapes consistent with the proposed policy.