

INVEST NI INTERNET & E-MAIL ACCEPTABLE USAGE POLICY

Author: Neil McGarry
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Version	Current Author	Review Date	Reviewer
1.0	Martin Graham	June 2002	NIPSA, Liam Hagan, Colum Boyle
1.1	S McArdle	April 2003	M Graham
1.2	C. Greenwood	14 August 2003	Ian Boylan
1.3	Neil McGarry	10 th March 2005	Ian Boylan
1.4	Neil McGarry	8 th June 2006	Ian Boylan
1.5	Neil McGarry	19 th January 2009	Liam Hagan

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that electronic mail (email) and the Internet are used efficiently for their intended purpose without infringing legal requirements or creating unnecessary business risk.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 All employees of Invest NI as well as contractors, secondees and temporary staff are subject to this policy.
- 2.2 This policy relates to all Invest NI ICT systems that use or operate the internet and email, including those supplied or operated on its behalf by external contractors. The policy applies further to joint working arrangements with other agencies and applies to any user accessing information using Invest NI ICT equipment.
- 2.3 Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action, which in certain circumstances may lead to dismissal. In addition, your conduct and/or action(s) may be unlawful or illegal and you may be held personally liable.

3 GENERAL

- 3.1 Invest NI owns the corporate email system which can be defined as messages (regardless of format), attachments and supporting infrastructure (the servers that transmit and store email). **All Invest NI resources, including email and internet access are provided solely for business purposes and for carrying out activities consistent with your responsibilities.**
- 3.2 Incidental and occasional personal use of these systems is permitted, subject to the restrictions contained in this policy. It is Best Practice that all non-business related sites and emails are accessed during your 'own time'. An employee's own time would be defined as time when they are not on duty (i.e. not signed in for work or on a lunch or sanctioned break).

Expires 30th June 2012

- 3.3 Network users should not engage in any activity which is illegal, offensive or likely to have negative repercussions for Invest NI.
- 3.4 **Except to the extent required for the proper performance of your duties,** you may not upload, download, use, retain, distribute or disseminate any images, text, materials or software which:
- Are or might be considered to be indecent, obscene or contain profanity;
 - Are or might be offensive or abusive in that its context is or can be considered to be a personal attack, rude or personally critical, sexist, racist, or generally distasteful;
 - Encourage or promote activities which make unproductive use of your time;
 - Encourage or promote activities which would, if conducted, be illegal;
 - Involve activities outside the scope of your responsibilities – for example, unauthorised selling/advertising of goods and services;
 - Might affect or have the potential to affect the performance of, damage or overload Invest NI's system, network and/or external communications in any way;
 - Might be defamatory or incur liability on the part of Invest NI or otherwise adversely impact on the image of Invest NI.

4 USE OF EMAIL

- 4.1 Care should be taken when using email as it is perceived to be less formal than paper-based communication. All expressions of fact, intention and opinion via email can be held against you and/or Invest NI, in the same way as verbal and written expressions or statements.
- 4.2 You must not include anything in an email which you cannot or are not prepared to account for. You must not make any statements on your own behalf or on behalf of Invest NI, which do or may defame or damage the reputation of any person or organisation. All users must create their own designed [email signature](#) which contains an Invest NI disclaimer underneath it.
- 4.3 Do not forward non-work related emails containing jokes, lurid imagery or executable attachments to colleagues. Email messages, which have been deleted from your system, can be traced and retrieved. Email, both in hard copy and electronic form, is admissible as evidence in a court of law.
- 4.4 Care should be taken when adding attachments to your corporate email. It is Invest NI policy that no sent or received attachments should exceed 25Mb in size. Attachments over 25Mb should be broken down into smaller attachments, shrunk via a data compression utility or sent via a secure mode of transport such as an Ironkey or SendThisFile.
- 4.5 There should be no improper use of email distribution i.e. an 'all staff' address must not be used for sending emails that are not relevant to the business. Emails should not be sent to the Invest NI All Staff group unless the user is either a member of Senior Management, HR or the ICT Infrastructure Duty Manager; staff should instead contact the Communications Unit.

Expires 30th June 2012

- 4.6 Invest NI users must ensure that protectively marked information (i.e. Restricted) should not be sent over public networks such as the internet.
- 4.7 The corporate email system must not be configured to auto-forward email to any private email accounts such as Hotmail, GoogleMail or Yahoo.
- 4.8 *INTERNET EMAIL*
Web-based email should not be used by Invest NI staff for business purpose. However it is also preferable to use these sites to forward emails of a personal nature during your 'own time' rather than use the corporate email system.

5 USE OF THE INTERNET

- 5.1 When visiting an Internet site you should be aware that your identity (which is linked to Invest NI's) may be logged. Therefore, any activity engaged in, undertaking given or transaction made may impact on Invest NI.
- 5.2 Please be aware of the following conventions:
- Always ensure that Invest NI is neither embarrassed nor liable in any way by your use of the Internet.
 - You must not download any software or executable files on to an Invest NI workstation unless you have obtained prior permission from the ICT Team.
 - You must not use Invest NI equipment to access the Internet from outside the Invest NI network.
 - It is Best Practice that all non-business related sites (i.e. sports, news etc) are accessed during your 'own time'. Users are **personally responsible** for what they view. This information is logged and reported on across the organisation.
 - It is prohibited to use the internet or Invest NI email to carry out activities for personal gain (e.g. gambling, share dealing, selling on eBay etc).
 - You must not make any statements on your own behalf or on behalf of Invest NI which do or may defame or damage the reputation of any person.
- 5.3 Except to the extent required for the proper performance of your duties:
- You must not access or download any material which is pornographic, offensive or illegal.
- 5.4 For further information please refer to the [Invest NI ICT Systems Acceptable Usage Policy](#).

6 USE OF WEB 2.0 & COLLABORATION TECHNOLOGIES

- 6.1 Web 2.0 sites allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as consumers of user-generated content in a virtual community.
- Examples of such sites include social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc.), blogs, wikis, video sharing sites (e.g. YouTube), hosted services and web applications.

Expires 30th June 2012

- On-line Internet conferencing facilities such as WebEx, Instant Messenger, Net Meeting etc. are services that enable the easy sharing of information on the Web.
- 6.2 Social networking scams are commonplace on the Internet and many PC users are tricked into giving criminals access to their machines.
- Scams can include, for example, pretending to offer software that can reveal who's checking out users' profiles but that actually turns out to be malware (phishing) or alleged anti-virus software prompting a download by claiming that PCs are infected (scareware).
 - Users who believe they have compromised their workstation via a scam must immediately contact the ICT Team.
- 6.3 The sensitivity of any information discussed and files shared via Web 2.0 or collaboration media must be considered. In particular users may not post, blog or upload information outside of the company that:
- Is commercially sensitive or that may have contractual or other legal implications to Invest NI, unless it is sent for a specific, authorised business purpose and is encrypted.
 - May damage or embarrass Invest NI's reputation or its relationship with its business partners.
 - That contradicts any aspect of Invest NI's Data Disclosure Policy
- 6.4 Some collaboration technologies allow a user to give permission for someone else to take control of a workstation. **This facility should never be used without the express permission of the ICT Team.** An individual given control of a PC could potentially access network resources.

7 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 All information relating to our customers and the business operation of Invest NI is considered confidential. Users are expected to treat electronic information with the same care as you would confidential paper-based information.
- 7.1.1 As a rule users must keep all such information secure, use it only for the purpose(s) intended and not disclose the same to any unauthorised third party (which may also include other employees of Invest NI and Internet users).

8 MONITORING

- 8.1 All Invest NI resources, including internet browsing and corporate email are provided solely for business purposes. Any information stored on a PC (including information stored on a hard drive, CD, USB device etc.) may be subject to scrutiny by Invest NI.
- 8.2 Invest NI has the right, but not the duty, to monitor and record any aspect of its ICT and electrical systems including, but not limited to, monitoring and recording web sites visited and email sent by users.

Expires 30th June 2012

- 8.3 It may be necessary as part of technical/legal proceedings in respect of harassment, defamation or breach of contract etc. to review a system. Users must be aware that material on a PC cannot be regarded as private or confidential to the specific user.
- 8.4 Internet sites classed as containing inappropriate content will be barred from all access. Attempts to access such sites may lead to appropriate action being taken by Human Resources as defined in Section 9.

9 PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY

- 9.1 If this policy abused or not upheld Invest NI reserves the right to:
- Take further action in line with Invest NI's disciplinary procedures, as necessary against the Staff Member and to charge and recover any costs that arise
 - Withdraw computing, communications or other services
 - In the case of any dispute, the relevant authority, as designated by the Invest Northern Ireland Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, will deal with the dispute. See the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures in the Staff Handbook for further information.

Expires 30th June 2012

Appendix A – Summary of Internet & Email Acceptable Usage Policy

The Internet and Email Acceptable Usage Policy can be summarised as follows:

- This policy applies to all Invest NI staff including contractors, secondees and temporary staff.
- Limited personal use of the Internet is acceptable provided it does not interfere with or impede Invest NI working.
- Internet and email usage is monitored and reported on.
- Invest NI employs software to block some non-business related and offensive websites.
- You should not engage in any activity which is illegal, offensive or likely to have negative repercussions for Invest NI.
- You may not upload, download, use, retain, distribute or disseminate any images, text, materials or software which:
 - Are or might be considered to be indecent, obscene or contain profanity;
 - Are or might be offensive or abusive in that its context is or can be considered to be a personal attack, rude or personally critical, sexist, racist, or generally distasteful;
 - Encourage or promote activities which make unproductive use of your time;
 - Encourage or promote activities which would, if conducted, be illegal or unlawful;
 - Involve activities outside the scope of your responsibilities – for example, unauthorised selling/advertising of goods and services;
 - Might affect or have the potential to affect the performance of, damage or overload Invest NI's system, network and/or external communications in any way;
 - Might be defamatory or incur liability on the part of Invest NI or adversely impact on the image of Invest NI.
- You must not include anything in an e-mail which you cannot or are not prepared to account for.
- E-mail messages, which have been deleted from your system, can be traced and retrieved.
- Care should be taken when adding attachments to your Outlook email. It is Invest NI policy that no attachment should exceed 25Mb in size.
- The auto-forwarding facility within the corporate email system should not be used to forward work emails to private accounts (e.g. Hotmail or Yahoo).
- Access to all email Internet sites (e.g. Hotmail, Yahoo mail etc.) is restricted to your 'own time' as defined by Human Resources.
- Always ensure that Invest NI is neither embarrassed nor liable in any way by your use of the Internet.

Expires 30th June 2012

- You must not download any software, executable files or potentially offensive graphic image files (GIFs and JPGs) unless you have obtained prior permission from the IT Security Officer. This also includes laptops.
- It is Best Practice that all non-business related sites (i.e. sports, games etc.) are accessed during non-core working hours. Users may access these non-business related sites, but are personally responsible for what they view. This information is also logged and reported on across the organisation.
- You must not make any statements on your own behalf or on behalf of Invest NI which do or may defame or damage the reputation of any person.
- You must not let a third party take remote control of your machine **without the express permission of the ICT Team**.

Expires 30th June 2012