



EDBS/KH/C/14/2015
22nd April 2015

Chief Executive Officer
All Bank Licensees
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Dear Sir,

Microsoft 'End of Lifecycle & Support for Windows Server 2003'

Banks which use Microsoft products will be aware that from July 2015 Microsoft will stop issuing updates and patches designed to fix bugs in the Windows Server 2003 operating system. At that time Microsoft will cease to provide technical support for Windows Server 2003, meaning that any critical applications running on that software will no longer receive regular security patches. Consequently the risks arising from the use of the application will increase significantly. In addition, Microsoft Windows Server 2003 will cease to be in compliance with industry standards.

Failure to ensure that your bank's IT operating system and other applications are maintained according to industry best-practice will significantly increase the risks of unauthorised access to the bank network, and it will leave your bank vulnerable to security breaches occurring. This risk is significantly increased where the bank continues to use an operating system that has reached the 'end of life' unless effective alternative risk mitigation has been implemented and is used in a diligent manner.

All banks are required to advise the CBB as to whether they have critical applications running on the Windows Server 2003 operating system, and if so to provide a detailed list of those applications together with the risk mitigation process which the bank proposes to implement. Nil returns are required.

Your bank is required to provide details of the above, together with the relevant risk mitigation strategy, to TechRisk@cbb.gov.bh no later than two weeks from date of this circular.

Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,


Khalid Hamad