DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY (AFCA)
SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILLINOIS

MEMORANDUM FOR AFCA/EVSN

JUL 03 2008

FROM: AFCA/EV
203 West Losey Street
Scott AFB IL 62225-5222

SUBJECT: Software Certification for Google Earth Enterprise Client Version 4.x
(Certification Termination Date [CTD]: 31 Oct 10)

1. Google Earth Enterprise Client Version 4.x is hereby certified for use "with conditions" on the Air Force Global Information Grid. Google Earth Enterprise Client Version 4.x puts the world's geographic information (satellite imagery, maps, terrain, etc.) at the user's fingertip. The application presents a 3D model of the planet and allows the user to grab, spin, and zoom down to anyplace. This action is based on the due diligence checks validated by AFCA/EVSN as reported in the 07-07 Commercial off the Shelf Risk Assessment dated 7 Jul 07.

2. The constraints are as follows:

   • Only a United States Government (USG) controlled Google Earth Server can be used. The user has to obtain the Google Earth Enterprise Client software from the administrators of the USG controlled Google Earth server. This requires permission from the server administrator for a Google Earth Enterprise Client license and use of their server. Use of a USG server mitigates OPSEC risks.
   • The option to allow Google to collect information on the use of the product must be turned off to mitigate OPSEC risks.

3. Additional issues that should be understood before use of the Google Earth Enterprise Client:

   • Google Earth servers can be set to secure (use port HTTPS 443) or non-secure (use port HTTP 80). When using non-secure servers, data transferred between the client and server is not encrypted. Secure servers encrypt all information between the client and server. The administrator of the server decides if the server should be secure or non-secure.

   • All versions of Google Earth automatically connect to Google in order to check for updates. This feature allows patches to automatically be installed to ensure the user is using the latest secure version. Automatic updates mitigates risks concerning new vulnerabilities being found in the software but can also causes issues with configuration management and determining which versions are installed on the network. Auto updates can be blocked by blocking access to the Google Earth Update site.
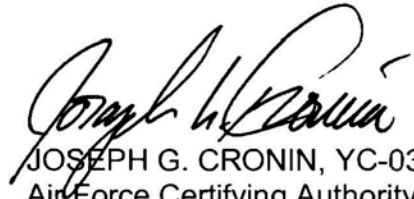
- Google Earth Enterprise Client can be a bandwidth intensive application. This depends on the amount of users and the amount of details in the maps being used. Based on our testing, an average user uses 0.293 Mbps in bandwidth while operating the application. Network administrators should be aware of the amount of users that will be using the application and determine if the network can support them.

The decision to allow users to connect to non-secure servers, and to block or allow automatically updates should be made by Information Assurance Manager for the enclave the product is being used within. Mission requirements, Mission impacts and environment being used within, should determine this decision.

4. Since this certification is for Version 4.x, installation of subsequent major version changes to subject software application, e.g, Version 5.x, would not be grandfathered for certification to assume the original CTD. My Information Assurance validation OPR is HQ AFCA/EVSN, 618-229-6484 (DSN 779-6484) or email:afca.evsn.cots@scott.af.mil.

JOSEPH G. CRONIN, YC-03, DAF
Air Force Certifying Authority