

Audit: IRS loses 490 computers

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A government audit in Washington found that the personal information of more than 2,000 taxpayers has been compromised by lost or stolen computers since 2003.

The audit, conducted by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, found that 490 Internal Revenue Service computers were lost or stolen in 387 incidents and the majority of the incidents were not reported to the IRS computer security office as regulations require, USA Today reported Thursday.

The report said IRS laptops are not equipped with sufficient password controls and encryption software to protect taxpayer information and other data from unauthorized access.

"This is a serious concern," said Inspector General Russell George. "The American public relies on the IRS to protect the personal information they provide."

IRS Commissioner Mark Everson said the agency has "moved aggressively" to increase protections on taxpayer data since summer 2006 and the organization is unaware of any identity thefts resulting from the missing computers.

"Protection of taxpayer data is a top priority," Everson said.

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