**Microsoft Exchange 2003 – Implementing System Policies**

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**Abstract**

An Exchange System policy provides a new way to apply common settings to servers, public folder stores and mailbox stores for all or selected objects in an Exchange administrative group.

This article explains in details how to implement a mailbox store policy.

This article is based on Windows 2003 Enterprise Edition (Build 3790) and Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 (Build 6944.4).

Reference: Exchange 2003 Product documentation and the Microsoft Exchange 2003 Administration Guide

**Introduction**

A system policy is a collection of configuration settings that you apply to one or more servers, mailbox stores, or public folder stores. For example, to enable storage limits for your mailbox stores, you can define a single policy and apply them to all mailbox stores in your administrative group.

The system policies that you create for an administrative group typically apply to objects within that group. However, you can copy a system policy in one administrative group and insert it's content into an other administrative group. I will show you later in this article how to copy / move Policies.

**Types of Exchange Policies**

There are two types of Exchange policies:

- ? recipient policies.
- ? system policies

System policies are policies that control the configuration settings for Exchange server and information store objects. System policies reside in the System Policies container. You can create and apply three types of system policies:

- ? Mailbox store policies
- ? Public store policies
- ? Server policies

**When to Use Exchange Policies**

Depending on the number of Exchange servers, public folder stores and mailbox stores, you have the possibility to use system policies instead of applying policy settings to individual objects.

Exchange system policies are very useful in medium to large companies that have many servers, public folder stores and mailbox stores.

**Let's begin**

The first Step is to configure the Exchange System Manager to display administrative groups. Start Exchange System Manager (ESM) and select the properties of the Exchange organization object and click "Display administrative Groups".
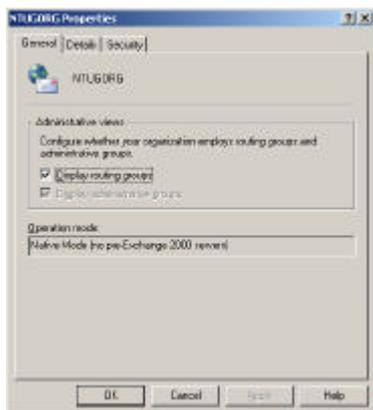


Figure 1: Display administrative groups in ESM

Before you can create a System Policy within an administrative group, you must create a System Policy Container. To create a System Policy Container expand Administrative Groups in ESM, choose the required administrative Group and create a System Policy Container.
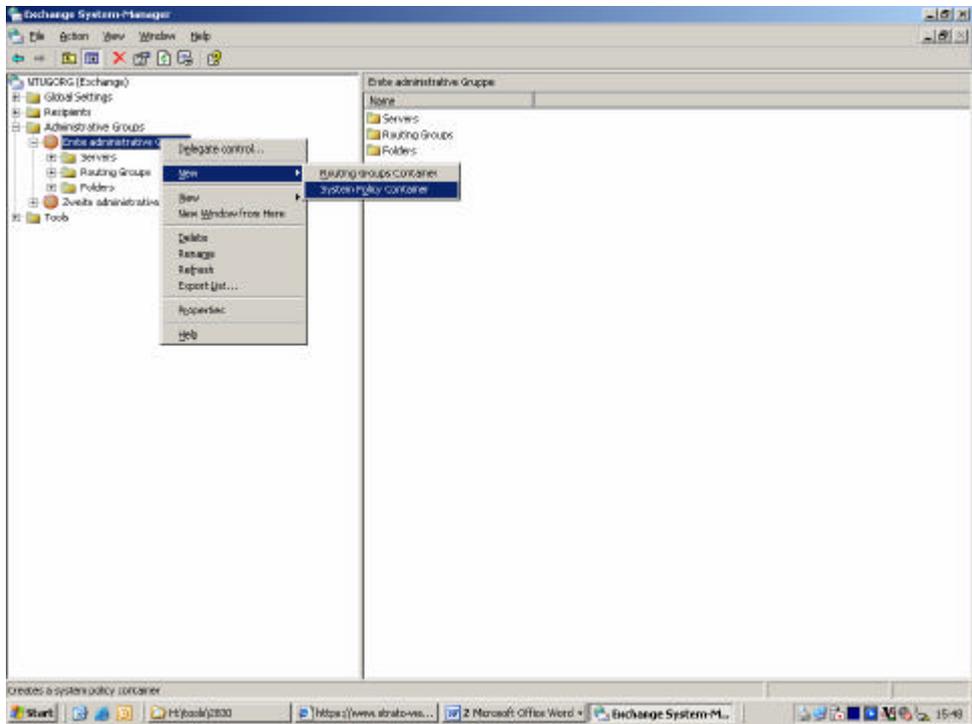


Figure 2: Create a System Policy Container in ESM

After you have created the System Policy Container, you can create a mailbox store policy.
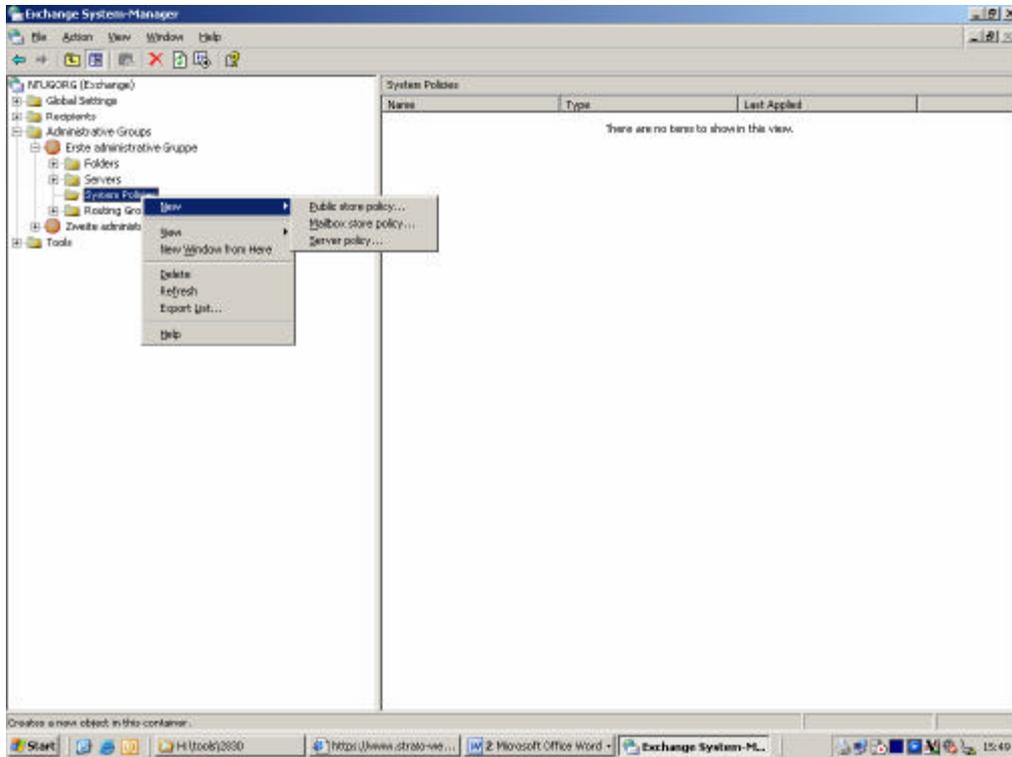


Figure 3: Creation of a Mailbox store policy

In Figure 4 you have to select the properties of the mailbox store policy. In this example we select all possible policy elements. In Figure 5 you must name the policy. In my opinion it is important to choose a name that displays the correct function of the policy. This is important when we have a large set of policies in our system policy container.
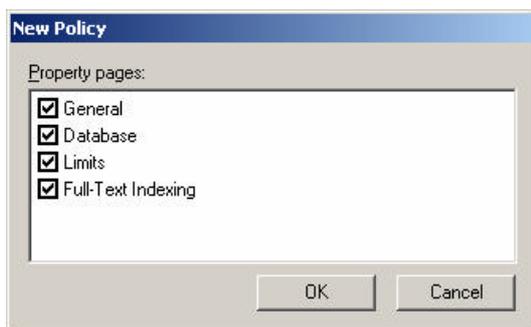


Figure 4: Select Policy properties
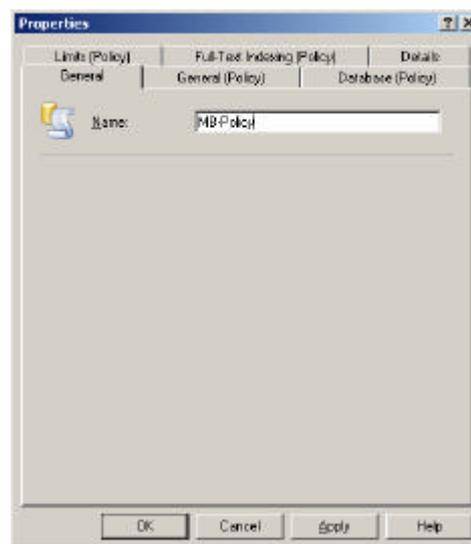


Figure 5: Naming the policy

Next you have to specify the required policy settings. In this example we prohibit the sending and receiving of messages larger 10240 KB and set the "Keep deleted items for (day)" to 30 days and the "Keep deleted mailboxes for (days)" to 30 days also.
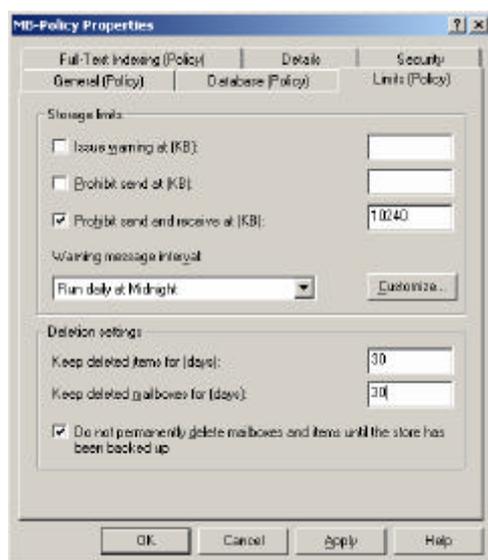


Figure 6: Specify the properties of the policy

The final step is to add a Mailbox Store to the Mailbox store policy. Figure 7 shows the required steps.
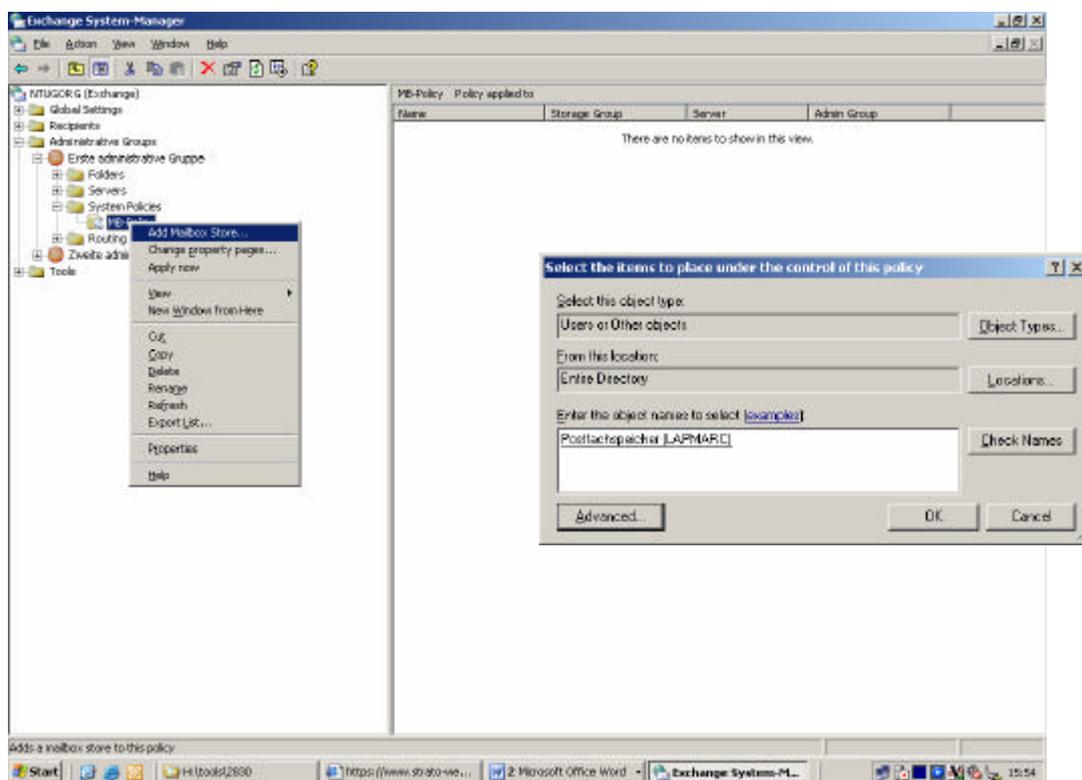


Figure 7: Add the mailbox stores to the policy

**Policy Conflict handling**

If you create a policy that conflicts with an existing policy, Exchange displays a dialog box with a warning. The newer policy replaces the older policy.

If the mailbox store is under control of another policy, exchange displays a dialog box and you have the possibility to remove the mailbox store from the control of the other policy or to apply the new policy.

**Copying System Policies between Administrative Groups**

Policies can be copied or moved between policy containers that are in different administrative groups. For example, you could create the mailbox store policy once, and then copy the policy to the system policy container in the other administrative group.

**Removing or Overriding System Policies**

After the mailbox store policy is applied to the mailbox stores, you can no longer use the property pages of the object to modify the settings controlled by the policy. To change the settings on the object, you must either modify the policy or remove the policy.

To remove the mailbox store policy from an mailbox store:

1. Use Exchange System Manager and navigate to the system policy object in the system policy container
2. In the properties of the system policy object, right-click the object that you want to remove from the system policy.
3. Select "Remove from policy"

Removing a system policy from an object doesn't remove the applied settings to the object. To override a mailbox store policy, you can override policy settings manually on each mailbox or move the users to a different mailbox store that has the other settings applied to it.

**Conclusion**

Exchange System Policies provides a new way to implement common policies for your servers, mailbox stores und public folder stores in your Exchange organization. Exchange System Policies works best in medium and large Exchange Server implementations.

**Related Links**

Exchange 2003 Online help
www.microsoft.com/exchange