

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

Question: BET 746

Topic: Social Media (ACCC)

Hansard Page: Written (Received from Committee 13 June 2012)

Senator Bushby asked:

746. Has there been any changes to department and agency social media or protocols about staff access and useage of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs since publication of the Australian Public Service Commission's Circular 2012/1: Revisions to the Commission's guidance on making public comment and participating online?

If yes, please explain and provide copies of any advice that has been issue. If no, please explain why not.

Answer:

746. The ACCC has changed its policy concerning staff access and usage of social media since publication of the Australian Public Service Commission's Circular 2012/1 in January 2012.

In line with Circular 2012/1, the policy covers appropriate use of social media by staff in both professional and private capacities. The ACCC's policy includes the following:

- all business use of social media must be approved
- Youtube may be accessed for business use
- Facebook and Twitter may be accessed for business use
- Facebook and Twitter may be accessed for personal use, provided this use is 'brief and incidental'
- staff accessing social media must at all times exercise 'caution and good judgement' and uphold APS Values and Code of Conduct.

A copy of the ACCC's social media policy is provided below.

IMTS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

This policy outlines the policy associated with the use of social media for official ACCC business and for private use via ACCC equipment.

Through its acceptance of the recommendations of the Web 2.0 taskforce, the Australian Government has committed to engaging with citizens through social media channels.

This commitment is in accordance with the ACCC's Corporate Plan for 2011-12, where we have agreed to upgrade the ACCC's online communications to meet changing audience preferences and needs.

<p>Related Policies and Guidelines</p>	<p>Related policies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMTS Acceptable Use Policy • IMTS Information Management Policy • IMTS IT Equipment Policy • IMTS Remote Access Policy • IMTS Software Policy • Home-Based Work Policy
<p>Relevant Legislation</p>	<p>Related Australian Government policies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Information Security Manual § Protective Security Manual § Report from the Government 2.0 Taskforce <i>Engage – Getting on with Government 2.0</i> <p>The legislation relevant to this policy includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § <i>Crimes Act 1914</i> § <i>Criminal Code Act 1995</i> § <i>Archives Act 1983</i> § <i>Electronic Transactions Act 1999</i> § <i>Evidence Act 1995</i> § <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> § <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> § <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> § <i>Archives ACT 1983</i> § <i>Copyright ACT 1968</i>
<p>Definitions</p>	<p><i>IMTS Electronic Facility</i></p> <p>Any electronic device or service provided by the IMTS Branch. This includes but is not limited to desktop computers, software, PDAs, mobile phones, laptops, modems.</p>

	<p><i>Inappropriate Content</i> Any material which may be deemed offensive or harassing, or that contravenes the APS Values and Code of Conduct.</p> <p><i>Official use</i> Use which is required in the context of an employee’s role. This could include administering an ACCC social media account (e.g. the @ProductSafetyAU twitter account) or using social media channels as a part of an official investigation.</p> <p><i>Private use</i> Use of personal social media accounts, such as an individual’s own Facebook page, for purposes unrelated to their employment.</p> <p><i>Prohibited Content</i> Any material which is classified as prohibited material by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).</p> <p><i>Senior Executives</i> The CEO, Deputy CEOs, Executive General Managers, General Managers, and Regional Directors.</p> <p><i>Social media</i> Any online platform (websites & mobile applications) that enables people to connect with others and share experiences, content and information. The primary objective of any social media channel is two-way communication. Social media channels can include, but are not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, webinars, blogs, social bookmarking such as Digg or Grapevine, LinkedIn, Google+ and much more.</p>
<p>Policy Statement</p>	<p><i>Official business use – managing/administering an ACCC social media account</i> Social media initiatives need to be strategic and require committed resources to adequately maintain them. If left online but dormant, a social media channel could have a detrimental effect on the ACCC’s reputation. Once you have committed to a social media channel, you must invest time and resources to ensure that you’re continually and effectively engaging with your audience. Social media accounts for professional purposes must be kept separate from any of your personal accounts.</p> <p>Approval to establish an official ACCC social media channel You must discuss your social media proposal with the Strategic Communications Branch and complete the Request Form for New Social Media Initiatives (Attachment A) and have it signed by your General Manager and the General Manager, Strategic Communications, before starting to set up your channel.</p> <p>Day-to-day management One or more people in your team must be assigned the role of social media representatives. They are responsible for regular monitoring of your channels to ensure quick responses to your online audience.</p> <p>Moderation An important element of day-to-day management is moderation: your designated social media representatives must be familiar with and proactively ensure all posts/content is consistent with the moderation</p>

policy, and take immediate action to remove any content inconsistent with this policy. See the 'how to' guide for the social media channel you are using for more information about this.

Approval process for day-to-day content

The General Manager of your branch must sign off on a process to manage day-to-day approvals for social media content for your work area (e.g. approval of each tweet). Approval processes will vary between branches as it depends on the sensitivity of the content and how much past experience the branch has in implementing social media strategies.

Record keeping

Your branch is responsible for keeping accurate and compliant records in accordance with the 'how to' guide for the particular social media channel you are using.

Progress reporting

Once you have set-up your social media channel, you will be required to report on your progress to the Social Media Steering Committee every three months, or as often as deemed necessary.

Official business use – as a part of an investigation

Material from social media channels can sometimes be used as evidence in investigations undertaken by the ACCC. There are specific procedures governing access to and recording of social media channels for this purpose. Refer to the relevant Enforcement Guidelines for more information.

Private/ personal use

In accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy, the ACCC allows staff to use its electronic facilities for personal use responsibly and appropriately. This applies to private use of any social media platform authorised for use by all ACCC staff. At present, Skype is not permitted for use via ACCC equipment or networks. Personal social media accounts must be kept separate from any of your professional accounts.

Be careful about linking your social media presence to your workplace

You are advised to think very carefully about private use of social media and not mistake permission to access social media at work as permission to speak or act publicly on behalf of the ACCC.

You will need to exercise caution and good judgement in relation to any use of social media, both business and personal, where your relationship with the ACCC – or with the Australian Public Service more generally – could be attributed to or linked back to your social media presence. Personal social media accounts must be kept separate from any of your professional accounts.

Which email address should I use?

You must not use a work email address for private social media use. This applies even if you are accessing the social media channel from your home computer. Likewise, you must not use personal email addresses for official ACCC business.

All staff engaged as Australian Public Servants are covered by the [APS](#)

[Code of Conduct](#). The Code of Conduct has broad application. If your behaviour inside or outside of the workplace is found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct, you could face sanctions including dismissal. This can apply even if you are using your own computer outside of work hours. For this reason, please familiarise yourself with the Code of Conduct.

Security

You must take special care not to post any sensitive or classified information on a social media channel, including webmail.

All users should be aware that files and attachments accessed via the internet may contain malicious content, and the protections, such as scanning for viruses, provided for official ACCC email are not applied. Staff should take extra care when handling links or files provided via social media channels, including webmail.

Monitoring

IMTS conducts monitoring and recording of private social media use in accordance with the Electronic Facilities Conduct Policy.

You must not post inappropriate content to any social media site. ACCC may monitor posts to social media sites and if necessary, will remove any inappropriate information

A breach of this policy can result in termination of employment.

Attachment A: Request Form for New Social Media Initiatives

Read the information under the heading "Decision-making process" at the end of the form before completing it.

Title and intended purpose (Explain the specific use for this social media initiative, eg, to support the XYZ campaign; to reach XYZ audiences regarding ABC)			
Date Submitted			
Requestor/Business Owner	Name, Title:	Branch:	Contact No:
Business Sponsor (Business approver for this request)	Name, Title:	Branch:	Contact No:
Proposed social media channel			
Objectives and business benefits			
Target audience	Who is the audience? Are they key users of social media?		
Key message(s)	What is your key message? Is it suitable for dissemination via social media? Is social media the best way to reach your audience with this message?		
Options analysis	Have you considered alternative channels? Would they be more effective?		
Research	Have you spoken to other parts of the ACCC on how they have managed social media initiatives and what they have learnt? Have you spoken to Legal Group or the Corporate law group about any legal obligations associated with this social media initiative? Have you read and understood the <i>ACCC Social Media Policy for Official Use, Electronic Facilities Conduct Policy and Guidelines</i> ? Will you use supporting applications to assist you to manage the channel such as HootSuite? Are you aware of the ongoing costs?		

Implementation	<p>What are the risks of using this social media channel and what are the mitigations?</p> <p>Do you have appropriate levels of resourcing? Will this need extra budget?</p> <p>What is the appropriate style and tone to use in this social media channel? Are you prepared to develop content to suit this style?</p>
Day-to-day management	<p>Name the people who will be responsible for day-to-day monitoring, writing of responses and organising approvals for responses</p> <p>How will you monitor your social media initiative including the outputs and the responses you receive from your audience?</p> <p>Do you have processes and resources identified to manage the recordkeeping for this channel?</p> <p>You need to ensure that responses to questions posted to your social media are replied to within 24hrs (except weekends) the reply should be as close to the posting time as possible even if the reply is just that we are looking into the question.</p>
Content approvals	<p>Outline your approvals process for this social media channel and name the person responsible for authorising responses and posts</p>
Timescales	<p>Are there any business imperatives and associated deadlines that should be considered during prioritisation of this request?</p> <p>Life expectancy of capability: how long will this social media initiative be required?</p>

Next steps:

Business Sponsor (SES level) to email this form to GM, Strategic Communications

Decision-making process (using the three Cs)

Social media initiatives need to be strategic and require committed resources to adequately maintain them. In some cases, it is a long-term investment and unlike a quick campaign, it cannot be set aside for a while due to lack of resources or current issues. If left online but dormant, a social media channel could have a detrimental effect on the ACCC's reputation. Once you have committed to a social media channel, you must invest time and resources to ensure that you're continually and effectively engaging with your audience.

The decision to implement a social media initiative should stem from a real need to reach the right people, at the right time with the right message, and a genuine desire to hear from them. Social media is not right for every Branch or project. To determine the best channel to meet the needs of your target audience, use the three Cs – Consider, Communicate and Capture.

<p style="text-align: center;">Consider</p>	<p>Who is the audience? Are they key users of social media?</p> <p>Which social media channels are best for your audience? Why?</p> <p>Is social media the best way to reach your audience with this message? Have you considered alternative channels? Would they be more effective?</p> <p>Do you have the capacity to regularly engage with your online audience?</p> <p>What are the risks of using the social media channel you wish to use and what are the mitigations (i.e. do you require more resources or a monitoring process etc)? It is recommended that you speak to the Corporate Law Unit before commencing.</p> <p>How will you resource the monitoring and support within your team? Have you discussed with your team members the impact on their workload in managing social media? Will this need budget for additional resources?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Communicate</p>	<p>What is your key message? What is the appropriate way to disseminate this via social media?</p> <p>Have you spoken to other parts of the ACCC on how they have managed social media initiatives and what they have learnt?</p> <p>What is the appropriate style and tone to use in this social media channel? Are you prepared to develop content to suit this style?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Capture</p>	<p>How will you monitor your social media initiatives, including your output and the responses you receive from your audience?</p>

Process

Here is an overview of the process to set-up your social media

Identify a real need for social media in your work area



Read this policy and answer the questions within the CCC principles above



Discuss your ideas & initiatives with other branches who have already implemented social media strategies



Complete the request form and have your GM submit it to the GM, Strategic Communications for final sign-off

Key contacts

Corporate Communications & sign-off:	Lynne Haultain General Manager Strategic Communications
IMTS:	Kathy Ho Project Manager
Social media advice & guidance:	Leonora Nicol Director Strategic Communications Branch
Legal issues:	Corporate Law Unit, ACCC