

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio  
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13  
17 October 2012

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

**TOPIC:** Social Media

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Bushby

**QUESTION No.:** SI-153

1. Has there been any changes to department and agency social media or protocols about staff access and usage of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs since May 2012 Budget Estimates? If yes, please explain and provide copies of any advice that has been issued.
2. Does the department/agency monitor usage of social media?
  - If yes, provide details of the usage (for example details could include average hours per employee, hours when usage peaks)
  - If no, will the department/agency monitor usage in the future?
3. Does social media impact on employee productivity? Provide details (details could include increased internet usage in general or increased internet usage in standard business hours).

**ANSWER**

**DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION**

1. Yes. The department implemented a Social Media Policy in August 2012 as part of a broader Social Media Framework to enable the use of social media sites for communications, stakeholder engagement and the promulgation departmental business activities. The department employs a suite of social media sites to achieve departmental strategic aims, conduct public engagement and perform collaborative activities in alignment with the *Declaration of Open Government*. Business areas wishing to use social media for official purposes must submit a comprehensive business case and record their presence on a departmental social media register.

The DIISRTE Social Media Governance Framework and the DIISRTE Social Media Policy documentation has been issued to all staff regarding the use of social media and is available on the department's intranet.

2. Staff use of social media sites is included in the logs of internet usage. Should a need arise to examine usage of internet access, the department has the capability to investigate individual usage with respect to the department's ICT Terms of Use Policy and the APSC Code of Conduct.

As a provision of the departmental Social Media Policy, all business areas using an official social media presence must monitor and evaluate their presences to determine that the expected business

benefits detailed at the outset of the activity are being achieved. To date, all business areas operating official social media presences have absorbed social media activities into their business as usual work loadings and have found no negative productivity impacts.

3. The department has not been required to undertake a formal investigation regarding any adverse impact on productivity since open access to social media sites was provided to staff.

The department has a social media community of practice at which representatives from business areas have discussed that using social media for communication, business processes and stakeholder engagement provides very good outcomes.

### **AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES (AIATSIS)**

1. Yes, the Institute is in the proceeds of establishing a social media policy.
2. This will be addressed by the policy referred to in 1. above.
3. The use of social media is integral to our research staff work and productivity. It is a means of communicating with, establishing and maintaining Indigenous and like-minded networks.

### **AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (AIMS)**

1. No.
2. No.
3. Social media has a positive impact on productivity at AIMS. It is increasingly used by our stakeholder to communicate activities and interests and is considered a valuable tool for research communications and collaborations.

### **AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)**

1. No.
2. Yes. ANSTO will carry out investigation at the request of managers where there is concern about inordinate use of particular websites. Given these investigations are undertaken on a case-by-case basis, details of usage are not available.
3. No. For scientific researchers, social media is a tool to connect and innovate and researchers are encouraged to use social media as a collaboration tool.

### **AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC)**

1. No.
2. No.
3. No.

### **AUSTRALIAN SKILLS QUALITY AUTHORITY (ASQA)**

1. No.
2. No. ASQA has no plans to monitor social media usage in the immediate future.
3. ASQA does not specifically monitor and report on social media usage by its employees, and ASQA's Information Technology Security and Acceptable Usage Policy permits employees to undertake a limited amount of social network browsing provided it does not interfere with their duties.

### **COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)**

1. No.
2. No.
3. CSIRO has not undertaken specific research in this matter.

### **IP AUSTRALIA**

1. Yes, IP Australia has updated its Electronic Media Use Policy (now called the Use of Technology and Online Conduct Policy) to align it with the Australian Public Service Commission's Circular 2012/1: Revisions to the Commission's guidance on making public comment and participating online.
2. Yes. Access to social media websites using IP Australia's IT systems is restricted to personnel with a business requirement to use these websites, but even this limited use is monitored to ensure it is work-related. The total use of social media recorded for the month of October by IP Australia's Internet use monitoring tool was 6,540 MBs. This represents approximately 1.5% of total Internet use by agency personnel for the month of October.
3. No. Access to social media websites is limited to a small number of employees with a business requirement to use these websites, and even this use is monitored. Sanctions apply for excessive personal use of these websites.

## TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALITY AND STANDARDS AGENCY (TEQSA)

1. Yes, the TEQSA ICT Security User Policy has been implemented, and includes a specific section on social media (extract below):

### **Social Networking**

Social networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are popular. As with all internet use, a limited amount of social network browsing is permitted so long as it does not interfere with the completion of your duties. The Australian Public Service Commission Values and Code of Conduct should be considered when posting material.

Many social networking sites give the option for a user to identify his or her current place of employment. It is recommended that should you wish to document your employment status or employer, that 'Public Service' or 'Government' is recommended rather than identifying TEQSA. This will assist in the mitigation of comments that may be made in this public forum and their link to TEQSA.

Employees should be conscious of their role as a regulator and the potential impact of comments made in the public domain. All employees are reminded that public comments from TEQSA are to be made and/or cleared from the TEQSA Communications team. Posting of information that is obtained through your employment is a breach of the ICT Security Policy and may be a breach of section 188 of the *TEQSA Act*, the APS Code of Conduct and/or the *Crimes Act 1914* which may result in criminal or civil penalties. Please refer to the Australian Public Service Commission Circular 2012/1 and the *TEQSA Public Comment Policy* available on the Intranet.

2. Monitoring will be implemented in 2013.
3. There is no evidence that use of social media impacts on productivity at TEQSA. Reasonable use of social media is explained in the induction process, which includes familiarisation with the TEQSA ICT Security User Policy. Employees are required to sign a declaration stating that they understand and will abide by the policy.