

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
—Budget Estimates Hearing—May 2013**

**Answers to Questions on Notice**

**Parliamentary departments, Department of Parliamentary Services**

Topic: **Social Media**

Question: **124**

Written **Senator Ryan**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 12 July 2013**

- a. 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 May 2012 Budget Estimates? If yes, please explain and provide copies of any advice that has been issue.
- b. Does the department/agency monitor usage of social media?
  - If yes, provide details of the useage (for example details could include average hours per employee, hours when useage peaks).
  - Has there been a change to the department/agency protocols due to staff useage?
  - If no, why not? Will the department/agency monitor useage in the future?
- c. 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**

- a) No, DPS policy on the use of social media has not changed. The policy was updated on 2 July 2012 to include a link to the Australian Public Service Commission's principles on participating in online forums.  
  
Parliamentary Computing Network users can access a range of websites—including YouTube, Facebook, MySpace and Twitter—without restrictions. However, there are others which may be blocked by the department's standard filter (adult, weapons, hate, etc).
- b) DPS does not specifically monitor usage of social media, nor has any plans at this stage to do so. DPS's filtering device monitors all website access, recording only website hits, not duration, and filtering content where appropriate.
- c) As DPS does not pro-actively monitor usage, it is not possible to assess impact on employee productivity.