

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2010-2011
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Output Group: 1.1

Topic: Social Media

Senator: Abetz

Question reference number: PM 96

- a) Has the department instituted any policies or protocols that restrict or deny staff the use of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs? If yes, please explain what restrictions have been put in place. Why were these restrictions put in place?
- b) If no: Why not? (for example there may be legitimate reasons for some staff to access these sites for legitimate purposes).
- c) Are staff utilising these sites during work hours? If yes, how many hours are spent on these sites? What time are these sites most accessed (i.e. lunch time?).
- d) Will measures be introduced to restrict access to these sites?

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 3 December 2010

Number of pages: One

Answer:

- a) The Commission's current IT Facilities Users' policy provides that access to social networking sites such as Facebook, Bebo and MySpace, or maintaining or contributing to a Blog or a Bulletin Board, is subject to the same requirements as all other personal use i.e. it must be limited, reasonable and not improper. The Commission has developed new guidance (Circular 2009/6 – Protocols for online media participation) for APS employees participating in professional conversations online. This guidance assists APS employees to understand the practical application of the APS Values and Code of Conduct in both common and unusual circumstances.
- b) Not applicable
- c) The Commission's internet gateway is managed by DEEWR. The Commission does not specifically monitor usage of these sites.
- d) No restrictions are planned.