

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARINGS

PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET PORTFOLIO

Department/Agency: Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government

Outcome: 1

Topic: Social Media

Senator: ABETZ

Question reference number: 46

Type of question: Written, Tuesday 19 October 2010

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

- 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 has 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?

Number of pages: 2

Answer:

- a) The department allows its users open access to some social media sites, including Facebook, MySpace, Blogger and YouTube. Most online forums and blogs are also accessible, depending on content. A user's access to any social media site is limited to 60 minutes in a 24 hour period. Access is also denied to websites that are considered inappropriate. These restrictions on content are in place to protect the network from potentially malicious code, protect users from illegal activity, and to prevent misuse of the system.
- b) Not applicable.
- c) Monitoring indicates sites are most accessed early morning and lunchtime.
- d) The Department monitors all Internet use and modifies its access policies to meet emerging issues or resource constraints.