

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 15 October 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE12/0123) PROGRAM – Internal Product

Senator Humphries (written) asked:

Portfolio wide - Social Media: Have 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 issued.

Answer:

There has been no change to departmental social media policy regarding staff access to Youtube and other online social media, such as Facebook and Twitter since May 2012.



Social media

As a department we strive to listen to our clients and stakeholders and are committed to being responsive, accessible and approachable. Social media is becoming more accepted and used, to the extent that members of the public increasingly expect information to be made available through social media channels.

In response to this demand, the department has begun using social media as a tool to communicate with stakeholders. It is expected that social media will continue to become a valuable component of stakeholder and client engagement for the department now and in the future.

Social media are a range of web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing and collaboration on the world wide web using Web 2.0 technology. Social media tools for online communication include blogs, Wikis, podcasting, RSS feeds, social bookmarking, tagging, social networking sites, mash-ups and virtual worlds.

As a general proposition, working with online media in an official capacity is subject to the same standards of conduct required by the *Public Service Act 1999* that otherwise apply in a physical work environment. All online work and communication on behalf of the department must be authorised and adhere to the department's strict guidelines, which are provided in a number of policy documents, including the *DIAC Code of Conduct Guidelines*, and the *Email and Internet Use Instruction*. Guidance material is also available: *Email and Internet Better Practice Guide* and *Social Media* fact sheet. Please note that the record keeping requirements in relation to social media use are outlined in *Social media—Recordkeeping requirements*.

The process for using social media will depend on the nature and purpose of the communication. Examples of where the department currently uses social media in communication activities include: ImmiTV and No to people Smuggling channels on YouTube, messages on immigration related blogs, and a departmental RSS feed available through www.australia.gov.au

Staff who propose to use social media applications for official purposes must prepare a business case for approval outlining the purpose of the communication. The business case should include, the resources required for the activity, including content moderation, the risks of the project, including if it is possible to opt-out of the application and how privacy issues and legal concerns will be mitigated.

Accessing social media

The department's IT Security settings currently prevent most staff from accessing social media platforms from their computers. However, it is possible to have these settings amended. Where there is an identified business need for a social media platform or site, for instance through a communication strategy, it will be possible to gain access to social media websites for staff who have a business need.

Procedures to gain access to social media

- Step 1: Those staff members who have identified a genuine business need to access social media must gain approval from their director.
- A request for updating access, including approval from director or above, should be sent through to IT Support.
- Step 2: IT Support will process the request, and if approved the staff member's access will be upgraded and they will be notified by IT Support.
- Please note: Staff members who require any level of internet access to perform their duties must abide by the applicable departmental standards and policies
- Staff can access the most up-to-date Email and Internet Use Instructions and Guidelines through the intranet: http://dimanet.immi.gov.au/computers_systems/email_internet_intranet/internet_email_instruction

Types of social media

Facebook [www.facebook.com/DepartmentofImmigrationandCitizenship]

The social networking service Facebook was launched in February 2004. As of July 2010 Facebook has more than 500 million active users worldwide including more than nine million users in Australia.

The department's Facebook page provides an avenue for anyone with an interest in the department's work to access recent news stories, videos and photos. The department's Facebook page provides program areas with an additional communication channel to reach their external audiences. If you would like to use Facebook as a departmental communication tool you should contact the Internal and Strategic Communications (ISC) team in NatComms by sending an email to comms@immi.gov.au.

Content for daily uploads

All posts to the department's Facebook page are managed by the ISC team in NatComms. Updates are limited to two per day. For consistency, the first post for the day will be added each morning, with a possible second post made in the afternoon, covering a media release that features content on current departmental issues that may be publicly debated. If there is no media release available that day then another general link may be added.

NatComms is responsible for responding to all questions and comments that are posted on the department's Facebook profile. To ensure consistency, all responses are taken from pre-written standard responses in the department's Facebook copy and paste guide. Program areas providing information to post on the department's Facebook page should consider likely stakeholders questions or comments in response to their posts and provide response for inclusion into the copy and paste guide.

Procedures for daily uploads

Step 1: You are required to draft the Facebook posting, which should include a link to further information on the department's website, ImmiTV or other relevant online site for further information. The post should include (where applicable):

- title
- short summary sentence
- web link*
- photo or graphic if available

You should also provide responses for likely comments on their post for inclusion in the copy and paste guide including:

- title
- words for each response, including links to the department's website or where the stakeholder can seek further information on the topic.

Step 2: The draft posting and supporting details, including when it should go live on the department's Facebook page should be submitted to the NatComms mailbox (comms@immi.gov.au) at least two working days before posting date. NatComms will edit the text and send back to the line area for final approval before posting.

*Please note: The department's website will be the primary source of information for the Facebook page. Links included in posts will be to the department's website, with exceptions for ImmiTV and other government department's or agencies websites, which may also be worth considering linking to when there is relevant or newsworthy information provided.

Information that is not publicly available will not be published.

Twitter [www.twitter.com/sandiHlogan]

Twitter offers a social networking and microblogging service. Twitter has gained popularity worldwide and currently has more than 175 million users, generating 65 million tweets a day and handling more than 800 000 search queries per day. It is sometimes described as the SMS of the Internet. At the heart of Twitter are tweets, which are short messages made up of no more than 140 characters. All users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, compatible external applications (such as for smartphones), or by Short Message Service (SMS). While the service is free, accessing it through SMS may incur phone service provider fees.

You can benefit from the department's proactive use of Twitter. It offers program areas the ability to quickly and concisely communicate with external stakeholders.

Procedures for tweeting

- Step 1: Line area to include need for Twitter content in related communication strategy.
- ISC will check if the line area has a communication strategy in place. If there is no strategy in place, the ISC team will work with the line area to see if a communications strategy needs to be developed and implemented.
- Step 2: The line area is required to prepare a draft tweet. The tweet should include (where applicable):
- The requested tweet content, exactly as it should be typed in Twitter. That is, including any relevant hashtags, @Mentions, @Replies and shortened URLs. For more information on these please refer to the definitions provided below.
- The tweet must be less than 140 characters
 - If the tweet is in response to another tweet or news article, a copy of the original information should be included.
- Step 3: The draft tweet should be submitted to the Internal and Strategic Communications mailbox (comms@immi.gov.au). ISC will edit the text and send back to the line area for final approval before tweeting.

Flickr [<http://www.flickr.com/photos/diacimages>]

Flickr is an image and video hosting website, widely used by organisations and individuals to share photos. It is a useful tool for program areas to distribute high resolution photographs to professional publications and their external stakeholders.

If you wish to add images to the department's Flickr site you should send a request to the Internal and Strategic Communications mailbox (comms@immi.gov.au) outlining the subject of the photos and purpose for their inclusion on the site.

Photos should be supplied in the highest possible resolution and must be provided to NatComms on a disc or secure flash drive (due to file size they must not be emailed).

All photos published on the department's Flickr site must be owned by the department and have photographic consent for individuals. Photos are loaded to the site for free distribution and use, with no licensing restrictions on who or how the images can be used. Departmental corporate images (i.e departmental staff at work) are not published to the site.

Contact us

More information is available on the National Communication Branch page, or by emailing comms@immi.gov.au, phoning 02 6264 2233 or contacting your state-based public affairs officer.

Revised January 2012