

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Budget Estimates May 2017
Communications Portfolio
Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner

Question No: 150

Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner

Hansard Ref: Written, 07/06/2017

Topic: Videos of fights in schools

Senator Kakoschke-Moore, Skye asked:

When the Office is notified of content that has been uploaded onto a social media platform, or image/video sharing site of a schoolyard fight, what is the Office's procedure? Are local police notified?

Answer:

The response of the Office to such a scenario will generally depend on the particular facts and circumstances.

For example, if a complaint was received and we were of the view that the material was intended to have a particular effect on an Australian child and that effect was seriously intimidating, seriously harassing or seriously humiliating we would look to have the video taken down using our cyberbullying scheme.

Our complaints officers would alert school staff to the situation, talk through the specifics of the incident, and offer a range of resources. These would include referral support (for example, to Kids Helpline), educational materials, and outreach support if required. This step would also be followed in instances that fell outside the cyberbullying scheme and we were able to identify the school in which the fight took place.

If the content depicting a fight appeared serious enough to warrant referral to law enforcement we would notify local police. In all cases we would involve youth liaison or school liaison officers at the earliest possible point.

All requests for takedown would be made following consultation with the school and police to ensure the integrity of any investigation was maintained. In certain circumstances, a police investigation may result in restorative justice measures being preferred, which may include youth justice conferencing or conflict resolution between the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, and affected parties.

We always advise complainants to immediately call Triple Zero (000) if they are in fear of their safety, or in danger of harm.