

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Program SPCG**

**Question No. 72**

**Senator Barnett asked the following question at the hearing on 18 October 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 discussion forums and blogs?

If yes, please explain what restrictions have been put in place. Why were these restrictions put in place?

If no, why not (for example, there may be legitimate reasons for some staff to access these sites for legitimate purposes)?

- b. Are staff utilising these sites during work hours?  
c. If yes, how many hours are spent on these sites?  
d. What time are these sites most accessed (e.g., lunch time)?  
e. Will measures be introduced to restrict access to these sites?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

- a. Yes.

The following sites are allowed for all staff:

Linkedin  
Orkut  
Facebook

Youtube is accessible to all staff, but restrictions are in place to allow only authorised staff to access the Youtube page that allows for the uploading of videos.

The following sites are blocked to all staff:

Myspace  
Flickr  
Bebo

Twitter is blocked to all staff except the Web 2.0 access group.

Access to these sites is governed by the standards and protocols as described in the latest versions of the:

- *AGD Information and Communications Technology Security Policy (ICTSP),*
- *Australian Government Information and Communications Technology Security Manual (ISM),*
- *Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF),*
- *AGIMO Better Practice Guidelines, Record Keeping Guidelines, Archives Act and Freedom of Information requirements.*
- *The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) Circular 2009/6: Protocols for online media participation, the advice incorporated in the APS Values and Code of Conduct in practice,*

The Web 2.0 access group is an internal control mechanism. Staff with legitimate business needs to access these sites are added to this group, there are currently 18 staff members in this group.

b. Yes.

c. The Departmental system is not able to track the length of time spent on these sites.

d. The sites are most accessed from 12 noon to 1:00pm.

e. Yes, some measures are already in place, see answer to *a*. The Department has an internal Online Collaboration and Social Networking Policy which provides governance around the use of these sites. The Department is also looking at implementing new technologies to better cope with the risk of malware and data leakages.