

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

5 June 2013

Question: BET 1024-1026

Topic: Social Media (ATO)

Written

Senator BUSHBY asked:

1024. Have there been any changes to department/agency social media protocols relating to staff access and usage of YouTube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs since the February 2013 Additional Budget Estimates? If yes, please explain and provide copies of any advice that has been issued.
1025. Does the department/agency monitor usage of social media?
- a. If yes, provide details of the usage (for example details could include average hours per employee hours when usage peaks).
 - b. Has there been a change to the department/agency protocols due to staff usage?
 - c. If no, why not? Will the department/agency monitor usage in the future?
1026. Does social media impact on employee productivity? Provide details (details could include increased internet usage in general or increased internet usage in standard business hours)

Answer:

1024. No. However, we republished our ATO protocols about access and usage of social media on 25 June 2013 to update staff. Where staff have a genuine business need to access social media, they are able to do so after seeking relevant approval. A Digital Media Corporate Management Practice Statement (CMPS) has been issued to provide staff with clear guidelines on the appropriate use of digital media in an official and unofficial capacity. This CMPS aligns with the Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) circular on making public comment.
1025. As per the February 2013 response, the ATO does not currently monitor social media usage. Current policies restrict system access to social media sites for Facebook, YouTube and Myspace. No access is provided unless there is a genuine business need.
- When accessing Twitter, personnel are prompted to confirm their access to the site is appropriate before continuing.
1026. The ATO does not currently monitor social media impact on employee productivity, given access to social media sites is generally restricted. We have an active audit logging of internet access for staff and only a small number of staff have access to social networking sites.