

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012

18 October 2012

Question: SBT 782-784

Topic: Social Media (ATO)

Written: Received from Committee – 26 October 2012

Senator BUSHBY asked:

782. Has there been any changes to department and agency social media or protocols about staff access and usage 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 issue.

783. 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. If no, will the department/agency monitor usage in the future?

784. 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:

782. No. There have been no changes to ATO protocols about staff access to and usage of social media since the May 2012 Budget Estimates.

In September 2012, the ATO issued internal guidance on the *Appropriate use of digital media* to assist staff with understanding their obligations as APS employees in relation to digital media and in particular social media.

In addition, an article was published in the internal staff newsletter, along with a log-on message on staff computers and in July 2012, a headline banner was also published on the intranet.

783. The ATO does not monitor usage of social media and there is no intention to monitor usage in the future. Current ATO 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, staff are prompted to confirm whether their access to a site is appropriate before continuing.

784. The ATO does not monitor social media impact on employee productivity, given access to social media sites is generally restricted.