Question No: BET 167

Topic: Social Media

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Bushby asked:

Has the department instituted any changes to policies or protocols since last estimates that restrict or deny staff the use of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs? If yes, please explain what changes have been put in place. Why were these changes put in place?

Are staff utilising these sites during work hours? If yes, how many hours are spent on these sites? What time these sites are most accessed

Will measures be introduced to restrict access to these sites?

Answer:

The department has not instituted any changes to policies or protocols regarding the use of social media since last estimates.

All Treasury employees agree to abide by the official guidelines for the use of the Treasury network. A social media policy has been drafted to assist Treasury employees who use social media as part of their work to have a thorough understanding of the department's expectations with regard to the use of such media. Treasury employees working with online media are subject also to departmental guidelines on personal responsibilities, how the use of these media is related to other Treasury policies as well as the standards of behaviour set out in the APS Values and APS Code of Conduct and specifically addressed in *Circular 2009/6: Protocols for online media participation* released by the Australian Public Service Commission.

The department uses a third party software application to block websites according to how they are categorised by the third party provider. These include:

•   Chatrooms

•   Dating Sites

•   Internet Email Sites

- Music Downloads

Websites blocked include YouTube, Facebook and MySpace. Access to these sites is available in the department through two PCs set up in the Library for staff to use. Staff are free to use these PCs on their own time.

Some online sites, for example Twitter, have been approved for use to allow Treasury employees to access for official purposes.