

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission

Outcome/Program: Cross Portfolio

Topic: Social Media

Senator: Ryan

Question reference number: 86

Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: 1

Question:

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.

Does the department/agency monitor usage of social media?

- If yes, provide details of the usage (for example details could include average hours per employee, hours when usage peaks).
- Has there been a change to the department/agency protocols due to staff usage?
- If no, why not? Will the department/agency monitor usage in the future?

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:

Access to social media sites using Commission ICT resources is covered in the ICT Users' Policy. This policy has not been amended since May 2012 Budget Estimates. Advice to staff on making public comment and participating online is covered in a specific Human Resources policy available on the Commission Intranet. This was updated in 2012 to reflect APSC Circular 2012/1.

ICT services are provided to the Commission by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). This includes the Internet gateway and the associated monitoring services. DEEWR have advised that it does not monitor use of social media and does not intend to monitor use in the future.

The Commission does not believe that social media has a negative impact on productivity. All employees are aware of their obligations in relation to the APS Values and the Code of Conduct. No manager or supervisor has expressed a concern about inappropriate use of social media in the workplace. The Commission is aware that there is widespread use of the Internet, however, this can be directly related to proper and efficient use of internet for work related purpose. It can only be assumed that this increasing trend will continue as organisations, including the Commission, place more reliance on the internet for information sharing and other business.