



DHA social media policy

Introduction

This policy contains rules in relation to social media for all DHA employees. It has been developed to inform employees about using social media so they feel empowered to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations under the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct*.

Who is covered by this policy?

This policy applies to all DHA employees.

For the purposes of this policy DHA employees are defined as all officials, employees, service providers and contractors (including those engaged by DHA under the *Public Service Act* or engaged on behalf of DHA by a third party).

What is this policy about?

Social media is online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information. They can include forums, blogs, wikis, social networking websites, and any other websites that allow individual users to easily upload and share content.

We recognise that many of our employees use social media sites – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube etc. – to connect with friends, colleagues and broader networks. However, you should recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to DHA in certain circumstances via your personal use of social media when you can be identified as a DHA employee. Accordingly, you should comply with this policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised.

The policy provides guidance for DHA employees and external contractors on their professional and personal use of social media. It is designed to ensure that across all social media, we act in a professional, coordinated manner and that all statements made are consistent, accurate and appropriate. It is essential that you understand that comments you make via social media platforms are as public as if you were making the same comments to the media or at a public forum.

This policy contains two sections:

1. Guidelines for employees
2. Guidelines for employees who use social media on behalf of DHA

All employees are responsible for knowing and understanding the policy.

Who do I contact at DHA about social media?

DHA's Media Manager manages all official social media and social networking accounts/pages.

In the first instance all social media should be directed to:

s47F

Media Manager

Marketing Communication team

Mobile: s47F

Email: media@dha.gov.au

Guidelines for employees

Bringing issues to DHA's attention

If you find information online that you think DHA should respond to, contact the DHA Media Manager, who will arrange a response from a relevant subject matter expert (as per the DHA social media protocol).

Personal use of social media

DHA supports employees who choose to use social media in their capacity as private citizens, however they should be aware that content published on social media sites is publicly available—even on their personal accounts. As such, you should ensure:

1. you are mindful that your behaviour is still bound by the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct*— even outside work hours
2. you don't make comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to or about your work or about another person or entity
3. your comments are not or could not be perceived to be:
 - a. made on behalf of DHA, rather than an expression of a personal view
 - b. compromising your capacity to fulfil your duties as a DHA employee in an unbiased manner. This applies particularly where comment is made about DHA policies and program
 - c. so strong in your criticism of the DHA's administration that it could seriously disrupt the workplace. (APS employees are encouraged instead to resolve concerns by informal discussion with a manager or by using internal dispute resolution mechanisms, including the APS whistleblowing scheme if appropriate)
 - d. a gratuitous personal attack connected with your employment
 - e. unreasonable criticism of DHA's clients and other stakeholders
 - f. compromising public confidence in DHA or the APS

Where employees participate in a discussion, not directly related to their work but that draws on their expertise in a field, this would be considered personal use. However, employees should not reveal information about DHA that isn't publicly available. If you are unsure, you can also consult with the DHA Media Manager.

Discussing DHA, and its work, in a non-official (personal) capacity

If employees are involved in online discussions that relate to payments, services or initiatives, and general information is not available or will not suffice as a response, it is your responsibility to:

- identify yourself as a DHA employee if you refer to the DHA, its people, products and services
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are authorised to speak on the our behalf
- use a disclaimer to ensure your views and opinions are understood to be your own and not those of the DHA. An example of a disclaimer is: "I am not speaking on behalf of my employer, this is my personal opinion". A disclaimer is required when you:
 - refer to the work done by the DHA and its agencies
 - comment on any DHA-related issue, or
 - provide a link to a DHA website
- not include DHA or agency logos in your postings
- disclose only publicly available information. This includes information available on relevant DHA websites or in annual reports. (note: If you require clarification about what information is in the public domain, you can also consult with the DHA Media Manager.
- provide a direct link to a webpage where the information is available on the internet, so if changes are made to the content/rules people continue to access the most current information

Questions to consider when making personal comments in social media

When considering making personal comments employees should reflect on the following questions:

1. Could the comments reasonably be expected to cause DHA's clients and other stakeholders, to lose confidence in the employee's ability to work in an impartial and professional manner?

2. Would comment of this kind, without proper justification, be likely to lower or undermine DHA's reputation?
3. Are these comments in line with how the community in general expects the public service to operate and behave?
4. Are these comments lawful? For example, do they comply with anti-discrimination legislation and laws relating to defamation?
5. Would you be comfortable if your manager read your comments?

Personal privacy and security online

If you identify yourself as a DHA employee on a social media site, you should be aware that this information may be searchable, even by people who are not your 'friends' or 'followers' online.

Employees should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions and privacy notices of the social media sites they use, and adjust their privacy settings according to their own needs. However, employees should not rely on a site's security settings for a guarantee of privacy, as material posted in a relatively secure setting can still be copied and reproduced elsewhere. Further, comments posted on one site can also be used on others under the terms and conditions of many social media sites. Likewise, DHA employees must still uphold the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct* even when material is posted anonymously, or using an 'alias' or pseudonym. They should bear in mind that even if they do not identify themselves online as a DHA employee, they could nonetheless be recognised as such.

As a rule of thumb, irrespective of the forum, anyone who posts material online should make an assumption that at some point their identity and the nature of their employment will be revealed. Social media websites are public forums. Inappropriate public comment on such sites could put employees at risk of breaching the *Code of Conduct*. If employees have concerns relating to DHA, they can seek advice within DHA.

Breaches of the policy

As a DHA employee your behaviour, both in and out of the workplace, must be in line with the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct*.

It is important to understand that failure to adhere to the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct* can result in a range of sanctions including reprimands, reduction in classification and termination of employment.

Examples of failure to adhere to the *Code of Conduct* in a social media setting include:

- A DHA employee makes derogatory and obscene posts about their manager on Facebook. They are not Facebook 'friends' with their manager, but they happen to have mutual friends.
- A DHA employee tweets derogatory comments about Defence members from their personal Twitter account.
- A DHA employee discloses non-publicly available information.

The role of the DHA Media Manager is to monitor social media. Where necessary, employees will be contacted to discuss their behaviour online. Where appropriate, a person's manager may also be contacted.

In situations where an employee's online behaviour potentially breaches the *APS Values* or *Code of Conduct*, the issue will be referred Corporate Affairs for investigation and action.

For those employees not contracted by DHA under the *Public Service Act* (e.g. contractors employed on behalf of DHA by a third party or contracted service providers). Breaches of the policy will be addressed as per your agreement with DHA and/or your third party agency.

Guidelines for employees who use social media on behalf of DHA

These guidelines provide support for the application of the Social Media Policy, and more specifically for employees who use social media on behalf of the DHA.

Representing DHA on social media

When representing DHA online you should:

1. get approval from the DHA Media Manager
2. disclose that you are a DHA employee and be clear about what area you are representing and what your role and accountabilities are
3. ensure you adhere to the apolitical character of DHA.
4. undertake training when requested to do so
5. be aware of the terms and conditions of use governing the website upon which you upload or contribute material. These terms and conditions may determine the intellectual property rights and access to content that is uploaded to that particular website

Providing information in social media

The DHA social media protocol details how DHA will respond to social media.

When providing information on behalf of DHA you should:

- disclose only publicly available information, or other information that you are authorised to release
- only offer information, support or comment on topics that fall within your area of responsibility
- provide a direct link to information where it is available on the internet, so if changes are made to the content/rules, people continue to access the most current information
- ensure any content you publish is factually accurate and complies with privacy guidelines

Respecting online etiquette

In order to respect online etiquette you should:

- adhere to the terms of use, and seek to conform to the cultural and behavioural norms of the social media platform being used
- be respectful of all individuals and communities you interact with
- be polite and respectful of others' opinions, even in times of heated discussion and debate
- ensure you do not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity

APS Code of Conduct obligations

As with all work for DHA, employees need to adhere to the *APS Values* and *Code of Conduct*, and should:

- keep in mind the requirement for all DHA employees to act honestly, professionally, and with respect and courtesy
- Other considerations (including privacy, legal and records management)

When engaging online on behalf of DHA you should:

- ensure you advise the DHA Media Manager of any comment you post online so they know to monitor that space for any further activity
- ensure you do not disclose your or other people's personal information on social media sites.
- respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms



DHA social media protocol

Introduction

Monitoring social media on behalf of DHA is key to online reputation management. This protocol outlines how members of the DHA social media team monitor, respond and post to DHA social media platforms. These platforms include (but is not limited to):

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- Instagram

It is designed to ensure we act in a professional, coordinated manner and that all statements made are consistent, accurate and appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

- *Members of the social media team*
Members of the social media team monitor, post and respond to, each of the DHA social media platforms as per the DHA social media roster. If you are rostered on you are required to respond to post within two hours.
- *DHA Media Manager – s47F*
The DHA Media Manager, or other responsible person, will be the first point of contact for members of the social media team should they require clarification on responding to or posting to social media. The Media Manager will provide advice on the most appropriate action to follow.
- *Marketing Communications National Managers – s47F and s47F*
Marketing Communication National Manager (or her delegate) is the second point of contact for members of the social media team should they require clarification responding to or posting to social media.
- *Business Unit SME*
A business unit SME is the person that provides expert advice on responding to particular issues within their divisional responsibility.

Timing of responses

- DHA's social media platforms are monitored during business hours (9am – 5pm), Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. During these times responses must be made within two hours.
- Comments made outside business hours must be responded to as soon as practicable during business hours.

Posting to social media

It is the responsibility of individual project managers to identify opportunities to use social media to promote DHA's brand and achievements, as well as inform its stakeholders of information that is essential to their customer experience.

When posting to social media the following should be taken into consideration

1. *Voice* – Use we and/or our wherever possible.
2. *Tone* – the tone should reflect DHA's values. It should be friendly, professional and approachable at all times.
3. *Language* – avoid jargon, acronyms and overly-formal language wherever possible.
4. *Sourcing* – Cite sources for remarks where possible include hyperlinks, video, images or other references.
5. *Images* – Images should be news quality and provide a complementary visual element that will enhance the post. Out-of-focus or skewed images are not acceptable.
6. *Timing* – Posts in relation to events must be made during or directly after the event. Other posts should be made at a time deemed appropriate to the project.
7. *Newsworthiness* – the post should be newsworthy and add-value.
8. *Hashtags* – use appropriate hashtags that will increase the spread of the message.
9. *Call outs* – call outs should be relevant to the story and add value. Call outs to individuals should be avoided.

Members of the DHA social media team should work with the project manager to formulate a post that is informative and appropriate for the occasion. It is the responsibility of the DHA social media team to post to DHA's social media platforms.

Responding to social media

It is the responsibility of DHA's social media team to respond to posts on DHA's social media platforms. If you discover a post on one of DHA's social media channels it is your duty, as a member of the social media team, to address the post in the appropriate method. The first step in responding to a post is to evaluate what kinds of post it is. At DHA we have established three main types of posts that you may need to address: positive comments, negative comments and questions. The protocol for addressing each of these is set out below.

Positive comments are those comments that are either helpful or complimentary to DHA.

In responding to positive comment you have two choices:

1. Do not respond
2. Respond

The decision on which of the above options you choose should be based on the following:

- If the comment is NOT factual you must respond by correcting the inaccuracy.
- If the comment IS factual you may let the comment stand.
- If the comment IS factual and you can ADD VALUE* then you may either respond, like or share the comment.

Negative comments are comments that may be offensive or inappropriate, a customer service complaint, inaccurate or a rant or rage. Negative comments can usually be attributed to one of three individuals:

1. Trolls (have no valid reason for being angry)
 - a. If the comment is offensive or inappropriate, and violates the DHA social media policy, it must be deleted immediately.
 - b. If the comment is offensive, but does not violate the DHA social media policy, then let it stand and continue to monitor the comment. Log the comment in the DHA social media register.
2. Misguided (the comment contains incorrect information about DHA.)
 - a. You must respond in order to correct the facts.
 - b. Responses should be sought and approved by the relevant business area.
 - c. Where possible a link to the accurate information on the DHA website should be provided.

3. Unhappy customer – the comment is a result of a negative experience with DHA.
 - a. Offer an apology for the negative experience.
 - b. Provide the customer with a link to the customer service page on the DHA website.
 - c. Contact the relevant business area and inform them of the post.

Policy violation

The following types of comments should be recorded in the social media policy violation spreadsheet and deleted immediately:

- Vulgar or abusive language.
- Personal or obscene attacks
- Threats of defamatory statements
- Suggestions or encouragement of illegal activity
- Copyright or trademark infringements
- Spam
- Offensive terms targeting individuals or groups

If you are unsure if a comment violates the social media protocol please seek advice from the DHA Media Manager in the first instance.

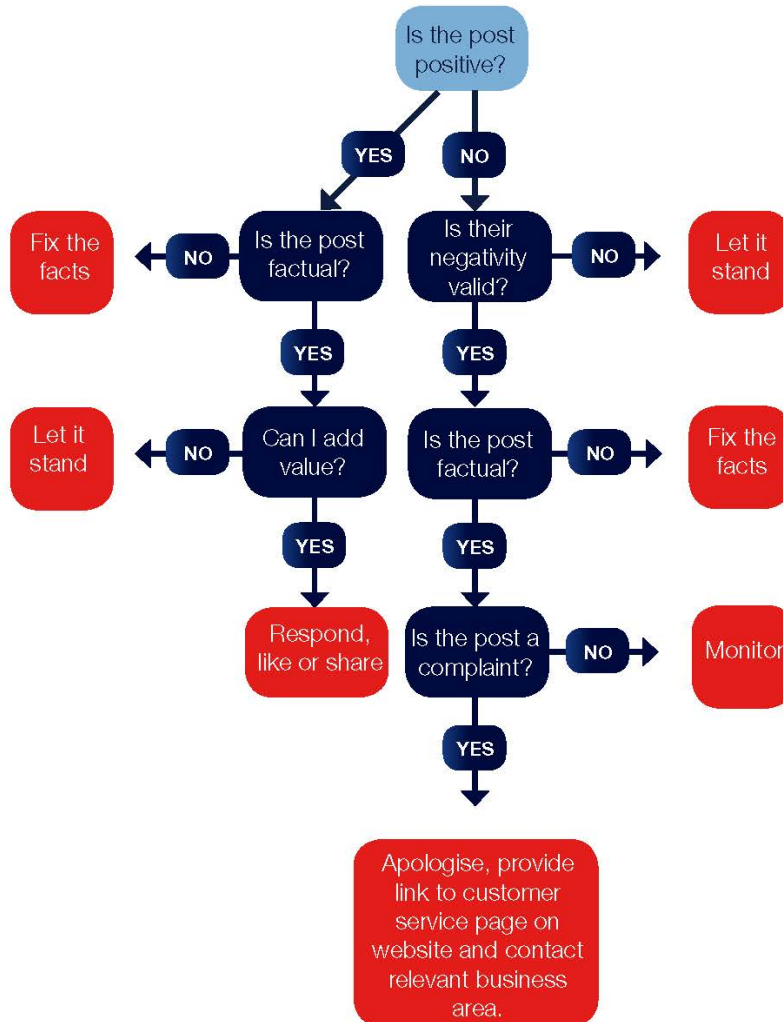
Confidentiality

Personal or contact details of staff, Defence members, clients, spokespeople or board members will not be provided on social media without prior consent.

The release of any information will remain consistent with the organisation's [privacy policy](#).

Social Media Protocol

DISCOVER EVALUATE RESPOND



CAN I DELETE A COMMENT?

The following types of comments should be recorded in the social media policy violation spreadsheet and can be deleted immediately:

- Vulgar or abusive language.
- Personal or obscene attacks
- Threats of defamatory statements
- Suggestions or encouragement of illegal activity
- Copyright or trademark infringements
- Spam
- Offensive terms targeting individuals or groups

If you are unsure if a comment violates the social media policy please seek advice from the DHA Media Manager in the first instance.



A message from the Managing Director



Dear colleagues

Following on from my brief video announcement last week, today we expand our social media presence to include Facebook.

Facebook gives people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. For DHA this will allow us to increase our exposure and reach to our target audience, Defence members and their families. In addition to this it will allow us to communicate positive stories and updates on news, become the 'source of truth', lower our marketing expenses by using 'free media', and ensure that we are transparent which will, in turn, help build our reputation across our key stakeholder base.

I recognise that many of our employees use social media sites – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube etc. – to connect with friends, colleagues and broader networks. However, you should recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to DHA in certain circumstances via your personal use of social media when you can be identified as a DHA employee. Accordingly, you should ensure your online profiles are set to private in order to make sure any risk of such damage is minimised.

Please make yourself familiar with our updated [Social media policy](#). The policy contains rules in relation to social media for all DHA employees and contractors. It has been developed to inform you about using social media so you feel empowered to participate, while being mindful of your responsibilities and obligations under the [APS Values](#) and [Code of Conduct](#).

The page will be monitored Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 5pm AESDT, posts made outside these hours will be responded to as soon as practicable during business hours. Our Media Manager, S47F, is the first point of contact for all social media enquiries. You can contact her on S47F.

I encourage you all to have a look at, and like, the [DHA Facebook](#) page.

Regards

Peter Howman
Managing Director