



## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Policy statement

The Department of the Environment's (the Department) approach is to embrace social media as a vehicle for achieving better communication with the staff, stakeholders and the public, with a clear governance and accountability framework, and the application of sound principles, underpinning its use.

For the Department, this means authorising the use of social media tools and not unduly restricting staff access to social media websites.

### Purpose

This document sets out the policy requirements for the use of social media in the Department.

### Scope

This policy applies to:

- all areas of the Department
- all ongoing and non-ongoing employees of the Department. This includes all part-time, casual, irregular and intermittent employees who are employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*, and
- all social media on the Internet and intranet

### Policy context

The Department's Social media policy forms a part of the broader *Conduct, Ethics and Behaviour Framework, Information Technology policies, and Engagement, communication and media policies*.

People Strategies Branch, Information Technology Branch and Policy and Communications Branch will jointly develop and maintain all social media policies, procedures and guidelines.

### Introduction

Social media is commonly associated with the use of the web as a tool for people to interactively share information and collaborate.

The Australian Government is encouraging the official use of social media tools. *Ahead of the Game: Blueprint for Reform of Australian Government Administration* outlines the Government's intention to create a more open government for consultation and collaboration with the public by using social media tools such as online policy forums and blogs.

The *Internal Strategic Review Final Report, April 2014* states

*The Department continues to improve its engagement with the community through social media platforms and other ICT, but there remains scope to make better use of technology.*

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### Policy requirements

1. Departmental staff must use social media tools effectively, ethically and must comply with the:
  - Department's *Guidelines for the use of social media*
  - APS Values and Code of Conduct
  - Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) *Revisions to the Commission's guidance on making public comment* (Circular 2012/1).
2. Social media tools are part of a broader engagement and communication strategy.
3. All online communication on behalf of the Department must be approved by staff who are authorised to represent the Department in the media.
4. Social media accounts may only be established in social media tools and platforms approved for use by the Department.
5. 'Existing departmental social media accounts should be considered prior to establishing separate 'programme' level accounts.
6. Public cloud' social media tools may only be used for external stakeholder engagement.
7. Business objectives should determine which social media tool is used.
8. Proposals to use approved social media must include a detailed communication plan
9. Adequate resourcing must be provided for the life of the social media project.
10. Visual design or 'themeing' of social media tools must use elements from departmental or approved programme branding.
11. Social media messages must be 'user-focussed'.
12. The use of social media tools must comply with the *Archives Act 1983*, *Privacy Act 1988* and other legislative requirements.

Specific guidance on the application of these policy requirements and roles and responsibilities can be found in the *Guidelines for the use of social media*.

### Legislation, policies, standards and guidelines

The Department is committed to developing and maintaining social media channels that comply with legislation, departmental and whole of government policies, strategies, plans, frameworks and guidelines, and international standards:

#### Legislation

- [Archives Act 1983](#)
- [Copyright Act 1968](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988](#)
- [Public Service Act 1999](#)

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### ***Policies and Frameworks***

*Department:*

- [Communication and media policy](#)
- [Conduct, ethics & behaviour framework](#)
- Crisis management – communications policy
- [Enterprise architecture development framework](#)
- [ICT investment process](#)
- [ICT security policy](#)
- [Information licensing policy](#)
- [Information security plan](#)
- [Media policy](#)
- [Records management policy](#)
- Websites Policy

### ***Guidelines and instructions***

*Australian Government:*

- [APSC – APS Values and Code of Conduct in practice](#)
- [APSC - Circular 2012/1: Revisions to the Commission's guidance on making public comment and participating online](#)
- [APSC - Ethics advisory service](#)
- [Multimedia resources](#)
- [Guidelines for ministerial and agency Websites](#)
- [Social media and Commonwealth Records](#)
- [Web Guide – Gov 2.0 Primer](#)

*Department:*

- [A guide to writing for the web](#)
- Crisis management – communication resources
- [Departmental instructions](#) –
  - [Information and Communications Technology](#)
  - [Protective security](#)
  - [Privacy](#)
- [Records management](#)
- [Guidelines for the storage and processing of information using a cloud service](#)
- [Guidelines for the use of IT facilities](#)
- Guidelines for the use of social media
- [Stakeholder engagement handbook](#)

### **References**

1. Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government Administration, *Ahead of the Game: Blueprint for the Reform of Australian Government Administration*, [http://www.dpmc.gov.au/publications/aga\\_reform/aga\\_reform\\_blueprint/index.cfm](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/publications/aga_reform/aga_reform_blueprint/index.cfm) , viewed 5 April 2010.
2. Government 2.0 Taskforce, *Engage: Getting on with Government 2.0, Report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce*, <http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/gov20taskforcereport/index.html> , viewed 5 April 2010.
3. Government response to the report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce, <http://www.finance.gov.au/publications/govresponse20report/index.html> , viewed 3 May 2010.
4. Department of the Environment, *Internal Strategic Review Final Report* <http://intranet.environment.gov.au/About/strategicreview/Documents/Final%20Report%20Strategic%20Review.pdf> , viewed April 2014