



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

CODE-OF-CONDUCT FOR THE USE OF EMAIL & INTERNET SERVICES

The Department makes email and internet access available to staff, in order to:

- conduct the business of the Department;
- make, develop and maintain professional contacts;
- research and improve professional, research and business practices; and
- Provide an effective high-quality service to the Department's clients.

Internet and email access is not a right, but is granted at the discretion of the Secretary and must be used in accordance with the law, this Code of Conduct, the APS Code of Conduct and be consistent with the Department's values.

Staff responsibility

Staff should be aware that they are legally and personally responsible and accountable when using departmental internet and email facilities and may be charged the full cost of any usage that is considered to be excessive or inappropriate. They may also be held accountable for any business disruption (e.g. caused by a virus) resulting from non-departmental activity.

Conditions of use

The use of email or internet facilities for illegal, inappropriate, unethical or unacceptable purposes is prohibited and may be cause for disciplinary action, including removal of access, dismissal or prosecution.

Illegal activity

The Department characterises as illegal any activity that is in violation of State, Territory or Commonwealth laws.

Inappropriate, unethical or unacceptable activity

The Department characterises inappropriate, unethical or unacceptable, any activity where the officer knowingly:

- infringes upon copyright, licence agreements or other contracts;
- interferes with or impedes the intended use of Departmental information resources;
- attempts to gain unauthorised access;
- devise or execute any scheme to defraud or obtain money, or other things of value by false pretences or misrepresentation;
- promotes or conducts a private business;
- transmits communications which may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others;

- accesses, stores, disseminates or publishes any material which contravenes the law or which may be offensive, obscene or in violation of workplace standards;
- makes public comment on political or social issues (including Government policy);
- transmits any communication, which is insulting, abusive or uses words or images which could reflect adversely on the Department; or
- invades the privacy of another individual.

Supervisor responsibility

Supervisors are responsible for the conduct of their staff when staff use email or the internet and, if they become aware of any violation of this code of conduct, must deal with the issue as a supervisory problem at the local level.

Restricted access

Staff should be aware that automated systems will restrict access to internet sites and block the delivery/receipt of emails that are considered incompatible with this code-of-conduct or impact on the activities of the Department.

Coverage of service and systems

This code-of-conduct applies equally to staff accessing the internet through services or equipment provided by the Department that may not be covered by the Department's access management, virus protection and security systems – such as internet access through mobile phones, wireless networking and home-based equipment. Under these circumstances, staff are required to be extra diligent in ensuring that their activities are in accordance with this code-of-conduct.

Email disclaimer

The Department will append a standard electronic footer to all outgoing emails containing a disclaimer regarding the views expressed, advising of the communications confidentiality and detailing the recipients' obligations. Non-standard footers will be automatically removed by the email system.

Personal use

Email and internet access is provided to staff for the conduct of Departmental business, however, the Department allows reasonable personal use of email and the internet subject to it being:

- consistent with this code-of-conduct;
- in your own time;
- not for the conduct of private business;
- within reasonable usage levels; and
- at your supervisor's discretion.

Monitoring and records

The Department monitors and records all activities occurring on its IT systems including email and the use of the internet. Users should note that system archives may also contain copies of emails that have been deleted by the user.

Further Guidance

In addition to the above general code of conduct staff are required to observe the Department's [guidelines for the appropriate use of email](#).

Also:

- Australian Public Service Commission "[Circular 2009/6: Protocols for online media participation](#)"
- Australian Government Information Security Manual: "[Personnel security for Information Systems – Using the Internet](#)"