

Administrative Circular

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

18 July 2014

RETAIN AS POLICY DOCUMENT

Distribution All Staff to see
Cc -
EDRMS s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Reference
Responsible Branch Parliamentary and Media Branch s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Subject: Speeches and Publications by Heads of Mission/Post and Other Departmental Staff in their Official Capacity

This circular replaces A/C s 22(1)(a)(ii) of 19 July 2011. It sets out policy and procedures for HOMs/HOPs and other departmental staff when giving public speeches or publishing material (including online) in their official capacity.

- HOMs/HOPs giving public speeches or publishing material (including online) in their official capacity in their country of accreditation are not required to consult in advance with Canberra. They should use their good judgement to ensure the content and circumstances of their speeches or publications are consistent with the Government's foreign, trade and aid policy objectives.
- HOMs/HOPs may judge that the content or context of a speech or publication is likely to generate media coverage from Australian media organisations or global outlets with likely coverage in Australia. In such cases, the proposed text or an outline should be e-mailed in advance to the FAS of the post's parent division and to the Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary and Media Branch (AS PMB). AS PMB will consult within the Department and with Ministers' offices as appropriate and advise of clearance.
- Where speeches are delivered in Australia or material is published in Australia or on Australian-hosted online platforms, HOMs/HOPs must clear them in advance as per paragraph 3.
- If a speech or publication generates unanticipated interest from Australian media organisations or global outlets with likely coverage in Australia, the HOM/HOP should inform the Media Liaison Section (MLS) (media@dfat.gov.au (<mailto:media@dfat.gov.au>)).
- Particular care and good judgement are required in respect of online publications, given their accessibility in Australia. If HOMs/HOPs choose to maintain an official blog, the content should be unclassified and focused on their official, day-to-day activities as a HOM/HOP. Noting that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Investment are the Government's key spokespersons and advocates of foreign, trade and aid policy, HOM/HOP blogs should not offer general commentary on policy matters, unless it serves a local purpose.
- Other departmental staff may also be authorised to give public speeches or publish material in their official capacity. Those at post should seek clearance in advance from their HOM/HOP. Those in Australia should seek clearance in advance from their divisional FAS or Deputy Secretary and should also inform AS PMB about the speech or publication. The same principles of good judgement and policy consistency apply.

Other relevant guidance

- This circular should be read in conjunction with A/C s 22(1)(a)(ii) on engaging the media and the Department's policies and procedures for departmental social media accounts s 22(1)(a)(ii) s 22(1)(a)(ii)
- This circular should also be read in conjunction with the Department's policies and procedures as they relate to public speech in a private capacity (including online) – A/Cs 22(1)(a)(ii) on publications, speeches or interviews by departmental staff in their private capacity and the Conduct and Ethics Manual at Chapter 8.4 s 22(1)(a)(ii) 8.aspx#section-8-4 (Making Public Comment) and Chapter 8.5 s 22(1)(a)(ii) s 22(1)(a)(ii) (Using Internet Social Networking Tools, Blogs and Internet Chat Rooms).

Peter Varghese
Secretary

Administrative Circular

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

18 August 2014

RETAIN AS POLICY DOCUMENT

Distribution All Staff
Cc -
EDRMS s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Reference
Responsible Parliamentary and Media Branch s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Branch

Subject: Speeches, Publications, Online Comment and Media Engagement by Departmental Staff in their Private Capacity

This circular replaces ALC s 22(1)(a)(ii) of 25 June 2007. It sets out policy and procedures for departmental staff when intending to give public speeches, publish material (including online) or engage with the media in their private capacity. This circular is not intended to cover academic work (essays, theses or seminar papers) not intended for publication.

2. The Department recognises the right of staff to participate as private citizens in public discourse and to make public comments in a private capacity. Publications (including broader social commentaries or scholarly works) by departmental staff can be advantageous to departmental and Government objectives.

3. At the same time, departmental staff have responsibilities to the Department when they make public comment in their private capacity, as well as general principles to follow on what constitutes inappropriate public comment (see Chapter 8.4.5 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) of the Conduct and Ethics Manual). The term "public comment" here is used broadly. It includes comment made on political or social issues at public speaking engagements, during radio or television interviews, on the internet (including blogs and social networking sites), in letters to the press, books, or in academic forums where the comment is intended for, or may be accessed by, the community at large.

4. Departmental staff should also be mindful that there are occasions – particularly for Heads of Mission/Post (HOM/HOPs) – when it is difficult to draw a distinction in the public mind between a departmental staff member's private views on broader social, economic or political issues and those of the Government.

5. There are procedures departmental staff should follow when intending to give public speeches, publish material (including online) or engage with the media in their private capacity. Departmental staff in Australia and HOMs/HOPs should consult with the Assistant Secretary Parliamentary and Media Branch (AS PMB), where such public comment addresses subjects of political, economic or social interest or where an activity might reasonably become public in circumstances capable of being interpreted as reflecting a departmental view. Those at post should consult with their HOM/HOP, who will determine whether, in the context of the anticipated audience, referral to AS PMB is necessary. If comment is to be made in Australia, it should be referred to AS PMB.

6. Departmental staff should be mindful that specialised commentary, for example on historical or legal themes, could be seen in some contexts to have contemporary policy significance for the Department. If in doubt, consult AS PMB or HOM/HOP.

7. AS PMB will consult with the employee and relevant areas of the Department and co-ordinate a decision on whether or not it would be appropriate for the proposed publication, speech or media engagement to proceed and on what conditions, e.g. acknowledgement of source material the copyright of which is owned by the Commonwealth; or the terms of a disclaimer noting that the views represent an employee's personal perspective (some examples of disclaimers are contained in the annex of this circular).

8. In determining a course of action, AS PMB will be guided by the Australian Public Service Commission's publication APS Values and Code of Conduct in Practice (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/aps-values-and-code-of-conduct-in-practice>). Permission will not be given to publish work that draws on documents carrying a current national security classification or contravening the Privacy Act. An employee may request to have a negative decision reviewed by the Secretary. The goal in all cases is for agreement to be reached quickly and amicably.

9. The Conduct and Ethics Manual at Chapter 8.5 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) (Using Internet Social Networking Tools, Blogs and Internet Chat Rooms) provides guidance and case studies for departmental staff on making public comment in their private capacity online. Because of their nature, it is not practical to apply a clearance procedure for public comment in a private capacity on social media platforms, such as Twitter or Facebook. Accordingly, staff should exercise particular care and show particular good judgement in respect of comments on social media.

10. If a speech, publication or comment in a private capacity draws unanticipated media coverage after the fact, inform AS PMB or HOM/HOP. It is also recommended that AS PMB or HOM/HOP be made aware of any private dealings staff have with the media which may reasonably become public in circumstances capable of being interpreted as reflecting a departmental or post view.

Other relevant guidance

11. The Conduct and Ethics Manual at Chapter 8.4 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

8.aspx#section-8-4 (Making Public Comment) and Chapter 8.5 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) provides further guidance and case studies for departmental staff on making public comment in their private capacity and in a range of contexts (including online). The Conduct and Ethics Manual at Chapter 7.1 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) provides further guidance and case studies for departmental staff on appropriate use of and access to official and

personal information.

12. This circular should also be read in conjunction with A/C S 22(1)(a)(ii)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

on engaging the media and A/C
on speeches and publications by Heads of Mission/Post and other departmental staff in their official capacity

Peter Varghese
Secretary

Annex

The following are examples of possible disclaimers for publications by departmental staff in their private capacity:

Case	Example
Publication of academic thesis where no reference to employment by department is relevant or necessary	"[name] is a graduate student of the s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Publication in circumstances where author's DFAT employment is well known (e.g. a HOM) but where publication does not reflect departmental / government views	"[name] is an employee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views represented here are his/her own."
Publication arising from indirect professional activity (e.g. a multilateral context)	"[name] is an employee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views represented here are in his/her capacity as s 22(1)(a)(ii) and are not necessarily those of the Australian Government."

Administrative Circular

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

10 September 2014

RETAIN AS POLICY DOCUMENT

Distribution All Staff to see
Cc -
EDRMS s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Reference
Responsible Parliamentary and Media Branch s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Branch

Subject: Media Engagement and Online Comment by Individuals and Entities Funded or Sponsored by Departmental Programs

This circular sets out principles for departmental staff for managing media engagement and online comment by individuals and entities funded or sponsored by departmental programs. These individuals and entities include: volunteers; employees and representatives of funded NGOs; cultural grant recipients; Australia Award and New Colombo Plan award recipients and alumni; associated universities; alumni networks; and contractors funded by programs.

2. While the Department has policies and procedures on media engagement and online comment by departmental staff (see Administrative Circulars s 22(1)(a)(ii) and s 22(1)(a)(ii)) these do not apply to individuals and entities funded or sponsored by departmental programs. Nevertheless, the Department has important reputational and promotional interests in media engagement and online comment by such individuals and entities.

Program guidelines on media engagement and online comment

3. The Department's reputational and promotional interests are advanced by the practice of including guidelines on media engagement and online comment in program procedures and agreements with relevant individuals and entities. For example, existing aid grant and contract templates already contain clear provisions on media engagement and branding. Templates are available on the procurement templates s 22(1)(a)(ii) intranet page.

4. When preparing program procedures and agreements, departmental staff should rely on existing departmental arrangements where relevant, or otherwise include guidelines that set minimum standards which encourage individuals and entities funded or sponsored by the program:

- to inform program managers on proposed media engagements regarding that program;
- to acknowledge the Department's funding or sponsorship in such engagements; and
- to show good judgment in use of social media on issues or in circumstances capable of being interpreted as reflecting on the program.

The Department's Media Liaison Section (MLS) (media@dfat.gov.au (<mailto:media@dfat.gov.au>)) can provide advice on appropriate program guidelines on media engagement and online comment.

Managing reputational risk

5. Program managers may become aware that an individual or entity funded or sponsored by a departmental program is seeking to pursue a media engagement, has undertaken a media engagement or has made online comment relevant to that program. If so, they should apply their judgment and assess whether the media engagement or online comment presents any reputational risk to the Department or the relevant program. A key consideration is whether the media engagement, online comment or their context reflects well on Australia, the Department or the program in question.

6. It is important to emphasise that in most cases, there is no reputational risk. However, if there is, program managers should consult MLS, who will provide advice on mitigating that risk (e.g. by speaking with the individual engaging with the media or making public comment in order to seek a clarification, or by preparing a set of talking points for Portfolio Ministers and the Department). They should also inform the relevant HOM/HOP.

Ensuring recognition of departmental funding

7. Program managers should also assess whether proposed media engagement sufficiently and appropriately recognises the Department's funding or sponsorship. If not, they should speak with the individual or entity in order to seek a clarification. For media products such as media releases and other publications, program managers should further assess whether departmental brandings s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) is applied appropriately. If not, they should speak with the individual or entity in order to seek a modification.

Promoting departmentally funded activities

8. Program managers should also think creatively about actively promoting funded/sponsored activities through appropriate media opportunities (e.g. media interviews, media releases, use of social media). To ensure effective coordination of proactive media engagement by the Department and our Portfolio Ministers, program managers should contact the Department's Communications Sections **22(1)(a)(ii)** with such proposals. At post, they should also ensure that HOM/HOP is consulted about such proposals.

Role of Ministers and HOMs/HOPs

9. While it may be appropriate to focus such proactive media engagement exclusively on funded/sponsored individuals or entities, program managers should always first consider whether our Portfolio Ministers, HOMs/HOPs or other senior departmental officials would be better placed to engage with media about the relevant program or funded/sponsored activity. Often a collaborative approach with an Australian Government representative and a funded/sponsored individual or entity is appropriate and most effective.

10. Whether the media engagement is proactive or reactive, in accordance with A/C s **22(1)(a)(ii)** HOM/HOP as the senior government representative in country should always be considered first for engaging local media at post on departmental programs or funded/sponsored activities.

Other relevant guidance

11. This circular should also be read in conjunction with A/C s **22(1)(a)(ii)** on engaging the media; A/C s **22(1)(a)(ii)** s **22(1)(a)(ii)** on speeches and publications by Heads of Mission/Post and other departmental staff in their official capacity and; A/C s **22(1)(a)(ii)** on speeches, publications, online comment and media engagement by departmental staff in their private capacity.

Peter Varghese
Secretary

Guide to Official Use of Social Media

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Why social media matters for DFAT

DFAT's official social media presence provides opportunities to build and enhance Australia's international profile in pursuit of our national interests consistent with the [2017 Foreign Policy White Paper s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [DFAT Corporate Plan \(http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/Pages/dfat-corporate-plan.aspx\)](#), [Digital Media Strategy 2016-18 s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) and the [DFAT Communication Strategy 2018-2019 s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

It allows us to speak authoritatively as an Australian Government agency, and through that voice, deliver messages and information directly to our target audiences, reach influential contacts, engage and be open to challenge, and increase access to our officials and Ministers.

We use social media because it:

- Enables us to LISTEN and stay professionally informed by monitoring events, harvesting information, gauging public sentiment and identifying key influencers.
- Provides real time channels to deliver our messages directly and INFLUENCE beyond traditional audiences.
- Improves the delivery of our services through closer ENGAGEMENT with our customers, citizens, partner organisations and communities of interest globally and allows us to respond rapidly to humanitarian and consular crises or political or economic developments.
- Helps us EXPLAIN government policies and programs to domestic and foreign audiences and makes us more accountable and transparent through open dialogue.
- Can assist public CONSULTATION processes and the formulation of policy.

The use of social media should augment not replace the department's traditional forms of communication with a view to reaching a wider audience. Our corporate websites remain the publicly accessible authoritative source and repository of information, with social media messages generally linking the public to relevant webpages. Print and broadcast media engagement will also continue to be central to official communications.

Guidance

Options: Social Media Opportunities in DFAT

There are three main ways you can use social media for official purposes.

1. **Contribute to official DFAT social media accounts** (<http://dfat.gov.au/news/Pages/social-media.aspx>) to reinforce foreign policy, public diplomacy, trade advocacy and aid program messages, or to convey information in the public interest. Contributions to these accounts must be cleared at a minimum of E12 level, or approval escalated to the responsible SES officer if there are any sensitive or controversial issues.
2. **Represent the department on third-party sites** such as an external blog or online forum. Staff should seek prior approval by Assistant Secretary, Communications and Parliamentary Branch (AS CMB) when making public comment in an official capacity as set out in Administrative Circular **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** *Speeches, Publications, Online Comment and Media Engagement by Departmental Staff in their Official Capacity*.
3. **Seek approval to create and manage an official social media account** where there is a defined and sustainable business need. Follow the steps in section 2 below in consultation with Communications and Parliamentary Branch (CMB).

Account Requirements for DFAT Official Social Media

1. Social Media Business Plan anchored to a communications strategy

2. Approved and supported by Communications and Parliamentary Branch (CMB)
3. Recorded on list of official social media accounts on DFAT website
4. Connected to the corporate social media management dashboard

2. Social Media Business Plans

Posts and work units must prepare a business plan for each separate social media account for approval by AS CMB. Business plans provide assurance to management that appropriate governance and risk mitigation arrangements are in place, and that accounts are being managed efficiently and effectively. It should be drafted as a practical, working document for teams managing the account. Each plan should set out the purpose, the type and frequency of content, target audiences, level of engagement, languages, publishing protocols, internal controls and measures of success. Work units should discuss their plans with CMB in advance to confirm the suitability of the proposed channel and for advice on customising the plan, if necessary.

Business plans must be reviewed when there is a change of HOM/HOP or A-based account managers or as conditions of use and/or licensing arrangements change. Updates should be sent to CMB. A [business plan template](#) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) is available on the intranet.

HOM/HOPs should exercise judgment about which social media channel will be the most effective tool in their countries of accreditation and assess digital content in the same way they would for other media or publications. An inactive or poorly maintained site could be counter-productive in pursuing post or departmental advocacy objectives.

Staff in Australia and overseas, including LES, must seek permission to create any social media accounts which are associated with the department and used for work purposes. This includes closed/private or member-only social media accounts such as Facebook Groups or LinkedIn Groups. Only approved and officially branded accounts will be listed on the DFAT website. For guidance on personal use of social media, refer to [Chapter 8.5 of the Conduct and Ethics Manual](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5>).

3. Conduct, Ethics and Risk Management

Conduct and Ethics

It's important to remember that when you use social media in an official capacity you are bound by the Australian Public Service (APS) [Code of Conduct](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee>), [Values](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee/aps-values>) and [Employment Principles](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee/employment-principles>), and the [DFAT Security Manual](#) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) which require you to uphold the integrity, good reputation and security of DFAT and the APS. DFAT [Codes of Conduct](#) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) also apply to locally engaged staff, employees on secondment

to DFAT, employees on leave, non-ongoing employees and contractors. Chapter 7 of the [DFAT Conduct and Ethics Manual](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-7-appropriate-use-of-official-information-and-resources.aspx>) provides guidance on appropriate use and collection of official and personal information and resources. Chapter 8 of the manual covers upholding the reputation of the Department and Australia. The Australian Public Service Commission publications, [APS Values and Code of Conduct in practice](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/aps-values-and-code-of-conduct-in-practice>) and [Making public comment on social media: A guide for employees](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/making-public-comment>), also provide further practical information on the standards of behaviour expected of staff.

Risk Management

You should undertake a brief risk assessment to identify and document any potential problems which might arise when using social media and ensure appropriate risk mitigation strategies are in place. Some potential risks include failure to meet the intended public diplomacy objectives, breaches of information security, inadequate resources to sustain the service, legal liability arising from inaccurate or misleading information or harm to the reputation of the department and the Australian Government. The [DFAT Guide to Better Risk Management](#) s 22(1)(a)(ii) explains the principles that govern risk in the department and provides instructions on how to assess and manage particular risks.

You should not use social media to advertise or endorse individual businesses or commercial entities. As part of a sound, risk-managed approach, care should be taken to ensure that content does not convey the impression that DFAT supports one company or brand over another. Commercial content or business engagement online should not conflict with, or compromise, Australian foreign, trade or development policy interests, nor should it adversely affect the image of the Australian Government or the department. Account managers must apply the same criteria and guiding principles as outlined in [Administrative Circular](#) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) *Advancing the Interests of Australian Business Overseas*.

Dealing with mistakes

Mistakes will occasionally happen. Depending on the nature of the error, you should consider taking the following steps:

- Explain in a subsequent message that the material was posted by mistake and, if necessary, confirm that it is not an official view.
- Post the correct information if the mistake was factual, making clear what you've corrected.
- Inform your supervisor immediately for advice on further handling, which may include contacting s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

4. Branding and Visual Identity

Official social media accounts must be consistently named and branded with a recognisable, authoritative design using the Australian Government branding elements in compliance with the [Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet](#) (<http://www.dpmpc.gov.au/pmcp/publication/australian-government-branding-guidelines-use-australian-government-logo-australian-government-departments-and-agencies>) guidelines. The [DFAT Social Media Branding Guidelines](#)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) provide the preferred naming conventions and profile settings for each social media platform. Contact s 22(1)(a)(ii) for further advice on common branding and design.

5. Creating Social Media Content: Publishing Framework

Account managers and Heads of Mission/Post, STO Directors and SES officers with responsibility for official accounts must exercise judgment at all times when drafting or approving content for official social media. An official social media presence should be managed and maintained with care as it is a highly visible, direct and personal way of communicating with the public. Staff should be meticulous in checking facts, attributing sources and respecting copyright. Our social media engagement should be sensitive to cultural diversity and delivered with respect and courtesy. Social media content which is part of a broader communication campaign should be developed in consultation with the Strategic and Digital Communications Section (SDC).

You should never communicate unauthorised official information, unclassified or classified, including personal information of individuals held by DFAT, or privileged information on official social media. This includes staff details, job details, travel movements, travel of Ministers or officials, or photographs/video that might inadvertently capture security features of overseas as post premises such as secure doors, location of alarms or security cameras. Contact **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** for further advice.

Official Social Media Publishing Framework

Content	Clearance process
Established policy and media lines within your area of expertise and direct responsibility.	Submit with minimum EL2 clearance, or escalate clearance to the responsible SES officer where there are any sensitive or controversial issues.
Where Ministers are key spokespersons and will take the lead eg. policy announcements. Breaking news or crisis communications where media talking points are being developed. Promoting specific elements of Minister's visit program while it's underway. Subjects not in your area of expertise or direct responsibility.	Seek guidance and approval from the responsible SES even at the cost of some delay. If you intend to respond to a journalist on social media (eg. rebutting a claim or correcting a fact) consult MLS before doing so.
Any classified or privileged information not cleared for public release. Content that has the potential to compromise the security of the department and its staff or to disrupt its operations. Partisan comment and information which may diminish public confidence in DFAT's capacity to be impartial. Information which discloses personal information about staff, clients and stakeholders for a purpose other than for which it was collected, unless an exception applies or consent is obtained. Promoting personal social media accounts of DFAT staff. Multimedia (photographs, video and audio) if DFAT does not have the necessary intellectual property rights or consent to use the material.	Don't do it

Workflow and Clearance Processes

Staff should treat social media in exactly the same way they would in relation to any public comment in an official capacity. The minimal clearance level is EL2 or, on sensitive or controversial issues, clearance is escalated to the responsible SES officer. Social media account managers, including LES, may be granted authority to reply to users on an agreed range of non-sensitive public diplomacy or administrative topics. These should be defined within the context of the business plan and account managers should have completed departmental training or be able to demonstrate competencies in social media before taking on editorial or page administrator roles. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly understood and included in performance agreements.

Teams should establish agreed protocols to ensure a consistent style, branding, tempo and voice for each platform, and develop rosters to provide cover during business hours, while staff are on leave and after-hours by arrangement.

Workflow for DFAT corporate CMB-managed accounts

CMB has editorial control over DFAT's main social media accounts. CMB welcomes submissions of proposed content that meet the requirements in the [Guide to Publishing on DFAT Corporate Social Media s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

Accepted content may be adjusted for style, tone and length. Final authority for approving content and replies from central corporate accounts rests with AS CMB.

CMB does not guarantee publication. If a submission is judged not appropriate for the central DFAT accounts, CMB may suggest other potential channels.

Workflow for all other accounts in Australia and overseas

Account managers are responsible for developing content plans to meet specific communications objectives and reach target audiences.

Teams should not seek to represent or speak on behalf of another DFAT program area or post without the prior consent of the relevant division. They must confirm that DFAT owns or has permission to use photographs, video and audio on social media and ensure that all content complies with the standards

Content must be cleared at minimum EL2 level, or higher depending on whether there are sensitive or controversial issues. Final authority for approving original and shared content and replies from these accounts rests with HOMs/HOPs, Divisions Heads or STO Directors.

CMB reviews the department's global social media presence for quality assurance purposes and may contact individual account managers with feedback. The branch can provide advice on content planning and strategic communications.

Consular and Passport Information

Posts may convey general consular or passport information for Australian expatriates or travellers via an approved, official social media account. This includes information on recent travel advice updates and broader messaging such as the importance of buying travel insurance. Posts can share Smartraveller content or create their own.

If creating their own content, posts should ensure the information or advice is consistent with content on the Smartraveller or Australian Passport Office websites and provide a link to the relevant page of the website. For example, posts cannot advise by social media for Australians to avoid part of a city unless this is already stated in the travel advice. However, posts can advise by social media of a recent outbreak of dengue fever if there is reference in the travel advice to the broader risk of dengue fever. In line with Administrative Circular s 22(1)(a)(ii) *Travel Advice: Role of Posts and Divisions*, this is to ensure consistency of messaging to all Australians.

We encourage posts to use their social media accounts to provide timely information and advice to Australians in the event of an emergency overseas. Posts should consider retweeting and sharing posts from local authoritative sources in English (such as local police, emergency management authorities, consular partners) in addition to, or where required in advance of, retweeting and sharing posts from Smartraveller.

If posts wish to create consular content other than that available on the Smartraveller website, they should contact Director, Consular Information Section s 22(1)(a)(ii) or after-hours s 22(1)(a)(ii)

If posts wish to create content about passports other than that available on the Australian Passport Office website, they should consult with the Passports Communications Units s 22(1)(a)(ii) This applies regardless of the medium, including mass mail outs to registered Australians through the Consular Information System, post websites or official social media accounts.

Crisis support through social media

Staff must not respond to individual requests for consular or humanitarian crisis support or pursue consular or passport casework through official social media channels, other than to direct the enquiry to an appropriate resource or contact. The department's inability to monitor social media platforms 24 hours-a-day means that we are not able to provide consular or crisis support within a guaranteed time frame. There are also important privacy considerations. For these reasons, official accounts should where possible include after-hours consular contact information in the Bio or About section, or carry an auto-reply message to Direct Messages where this function is enabled.

Suggested lines for a Facebook About section (or 'Our Story', no character count):

For the latest travel advice visit Smartraveller smartraveller.gov.au/help (<http://smartraveller.gov.au/help>). In a consular emergency, contact the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas or 1300 555 135 from within Australia.

Suggested lines for a Twitter or Instagram biography (160 characters):

See [@smartraveller](https://twitter.com/smartraveller) (<https://twitter.com/smartraveller>) for travel updates. For emergency consular assistance call +61 2 6261 3305

Suggested auto response to Facebook Direct Messages if enabled (250 characters):

Thanks. We'll get back to you in business hours. See Smartraveller for latest travel advice <http://smartraveller.gov.au/help>. In an emergency contact the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas or 1300 555 135 in Australia

If a member of the public makes contact on a social media service during office hours, where appropriate and as resources allow, staff may provide information or advice drawn directly from the Smartraveller or DFAT websites (with a link to the relevant page), and/or provide the user with relevant contact information. In all other circumstances, the following message, or something similar tailored to the situation, should be posted as soon as possible.

This account cannot provide you with the consular assistance you need. We encourage you to use our 24-hour Consular Emergency Helpline: within Australia 1300 555 135, outside Australia +61 2 6261 3305 or SMS +61 421 269 080. Visit <http://smartraveller.gov.au/services/help.html> (<http://smartraveller.gov.au/services/help.html>)

6. Comment Moderation and Responses

In general, we encourage open, transparent and unfiltered conversations and comments on our social media channels. Depending on the options available in the particular social media account settings, user comments can either appear online automatically or be held for moderation. It's not possible to hide or delete user comments on some platforms, such as Twitter.

Creating standard responses to frequently asked questions enables staff to respond quickly and confidently to non-contentious queries, including Direct Messages where this function is enabled. In many instances, it's more efficient to disable the Direct Messaging option and refer the public to approved contact points.

Teams should discuss potential areas of uncertainty around monitoring and responding to comments, and reach agreement on the approach best suited to their

operating environment. For further guidance, refer to the [digital lesson on moderating comments](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)**
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Complaints through social media

Complaints or negative comments will inevitably be received through our social media channels. You should refrain from arguing or refuting complaints or negative feedback through social media channels as this behaviour can antagonise or fuel further attacks on DFAT's services, brand and/or reputation.

Reasonable complaints or feedback about DFAT services should be acknowledged as soon as possible with a response which may be a tailored version of the following.

"Sounds like you have not had the experience you expected. Your feedback is important to help us improve the way we deliver our services. You can contact us here: <http://dfat.gov.au/Pages/contact-us.aspx> (<http://dfat.gov.au/Pages/contact-us.aspx>)"

Deleting comments or replies

Social media is fluid, interactive and often self-regulating. Its advantage is that it allows two-way communication and an expression of wider community views. Organisations that heavily filter comments significantly reduce the impact and usefulness of their channels. It's not necessary to hide or delete comments that express opposing views or register complaints except when they breach our [social media terms of use](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/about-this-website/Pages/disclaimer.aspx#social-media>).

7. Multimedia (Photographs, Video and Audio)

Before you post multimedia (photographs, video and audio) material on social media, you must ensure that DFAT either owns the intellectual property rights (usually copyright) in the material or that DFAT has permission from the owner (also referred to as a 'licence') to post the material. This includes images used to brand accounts such as the profile and cover images.

If the multimedia has been produced by a contractor on behalf of DFAT or by a grant recipient, DFAT will usually either be the owner of the intellectual property rights in the material or have a licence to use the material for a broad range of purposes. Multimedia sourced from the internet may be made available under a [Creative Commons](#) (<https://creativecommons.org.au/>), licence that permits DFAT to post the material. You may need to attribute the source. For multimedia submitted as part of a social media competition, the template competition terms and conditions grant DFAT the intellectual property rights to post the material.

In some cases, social media platforms state in their terms and conditions that they reserve limited rights of use over the content in their application, preserving their right to use this content for the purpose of operating and advertising their service.

Consent **must be obtained** from individuals appearing in any photograph not taken in a public place and in situations where the individuals would have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Work units should also consider the privacy and security implications of including staff names, location or contact details in photo captions.

Official social media content must comply with the [DFAT Child Protection Policy for Australia's Overseas Aid Program](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)**
s 22(1)(a)(ii) Informed consent **must be obtained from the parent or guardian in all situations** when photographing or filming a child or using children's images in official publications and online. Images must show children in a dignified and respectful manner and they should be adequately clothed.

Refer to the [Communications and Media intranet site](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)**

for further information on handling multimedia content.

8. Recordkeeping

Like any other record, social media records of value must be captured and maintained in a useable and accessible form in compliance with the Archives Act 1983, related legislation and regulations, and whole-of-government policy and standards issued or endorsed by the National Archives of Australia.

Staff should refer to [Administrative Circular](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** *Records Management Policy 2018* and the [Records Management Policy](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** for more detail regarding the principles and obligations around capture and management of social media as records.

For more detail regarding the practical steps to capture social media material as records – the what to capture, why, and how – refer to the [Advice – Social Media as Records](#) **s 22(1)(a)(ii)** and any subsequent guidance issued by Corporate Records Section.

9. Settings: Terms of Use, Privacy and Account Security

Terms of Use

The department's [social media terms of use](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/about-this-website/Pages/disclaimer.aspx#social-media>) sets out our approach to comment moderation and replies, privacy and other legal considerations. It is a mandatory requirement for official social media accounts to link to this disclaimer and/or a translated version which may need to include requirements unique to a particular country.

Privacy

The department's collection, use, disclosure and storage of personal information is governed by the Australian Privacy Principles in the *Privacy Act 1988*. Good privacy practices should be part of normal work habits. Personal information, including email addresses of individuals, should not be provided to third-parties without the explicit consent of the owner. This applies to personal information acquired through competitions and direct messaging on social media. Refer to DFAT's [privacy policy](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/about-this-website/pages/privacy.aspx>) for more information.

Account Security

You should not create shared user logons to manage official accounts, where it is a breach of the platform's terms of use to do so, as the accounts may be deactivated if detected. Under the terms of use for [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/business/help/113163272211510) (<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/113163272211510>) and [LinkedIn](https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/company-pages/get-started#C_create) (https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/company-pages/get-started#C_create), administrators are required to use their real personal Profiles to manage official Pages. LinkedIn settings and Facebook Business Manager ensure there is a clear and separate interface between the personal and official,

Passwords to official accounts should be changed regularly and specifically when there are staff changes to minimise the risk of deliberate or unintentional misuse. Other simple procedures to preserve the integrity of accounts include:

- Passwords must comply with DFAT's [Acceptable Use Policy: Password Management s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)
s 22(1)(a)(ii) Choose a complex password, no shorter than nine characters, which contains digits, punctuation and special characters as well as letters.
- Only log on to the password-protected accounts when you need to post an official message and log off immediately afterwards.
- Avoid using personal mobile devices to connect to official accounts for publishing. Account managers should use DFAT desktop or officially issued devices.
- If an erroneous message is published accidentally, staff should discuss immediately with their supervisor and not attempt to correct or retract the message without seeking advice.
- The [CyberSense](http://www.asd.gov.au/videos/cybersense.htm) (<http://www.asd.gov.au/videos/cybersense.htm>)ense video series is an educational tool for Australian Government agencies which also informs staff about information security threats. For more information or to report possible malicious activity, refer to [ICT Security s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) or contacts **s 22(1)(a)(ii)**

10. Anti-bullying and harassment

DFAT is committed to achieving a workplace free from bullying and harassment. The Australian Public Service Commission has prepared [guidance on cyber bullying and online harassment](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/home/latest-news/cyber-bullying>), of APS employees by clients or members of the public. The guidance ensures a consistent approach across all APS agencies to managing instances of cyber bullying and to supporting employees who may become targets of online abuse in the course of their work. Staff should also refer to the [DFAT Anti-bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

11. Accessibility and Inclusivity

The [Digital Service Standard](#) (<https://www.dta.gov.au/standard/>), applies only to Australian Government digital information services and therefore some social media platforms operated by third-party service providers may not meet these standards. However, DFAT is committed to social inclusion and support for people with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds. Where possible, social media content should be made available in a format that all users can read and understand and if necessary provide alternative accessible formats, which may include full text on DFAT websites, or referral to usual phone, email or counter services.

The Media Access Australia report, [Sociability: social media for people with a disability](#) (<https://mediaaccess.org.au/web/social-media-for-people-with-a-disability>), provides practical guidance on overcoming accessibility constraints on social media. Refer to the [website and intranet publishing](#),

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

to whole-of-government accessibility and inclusivity requirements.

policies for further advice and contact points in relation

12. Promotion, Advertising and Competitions

Paid Promotion

Most social media platforms offer the option of pushing specific messages to target audiences through paid promotion – also referred to as 'boosted' or 'sponsored' posts or 'native ads' – which appear in a user's newsfeed. This can be an efficient and cost-effective means of promoting corporate messages including funding opportunities, scholarships, job vacancies and public diplomacy events to highly targeted audiences by age, gender, qualification, occupation and location. Social media teams are encouraged to consider building a paid media strategy into their social media plans. Social media managers can access this facility through their administrator log-on. Each platform will have detailed information and set-up instructions and staff should familiarise themselves with the arrangements. Any spend should comply with the department's finance and procurement policies.

The government Master Media Agency may be in a position to offer advice, or to design and manage social media targeting on behalf of work units in Australia only. Staff should refer to [Administrative Circulars 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) Guidelines for Government Advertising and contact Director, Corporate Planning Section, if they have any queries.

Paid Social Media Influencer Campaigns

The Department of Finance has directed government agencies not to use paid social media influencer strategies in campaign advertising or related public relations activities. It reflects the Government's view that paid social media influencer strategies do not provide value for money, and may reduce the effectiveness of campaigns in achieving their objectives.

Paid social media influencer arrangements cover any circumstance where a person is paid or otherwise remunerated (either directly, through a media agency, or through another supplier, such as a public relations agency), to promote a Government policy, measure, program or initiative through their personal social media account. It does not include arrangements made with organisations. It also does not affect recipients of grants and scholarships or participants in programs that may be required to acknowledge the department on social media.

The department has a long-standing practice of leveraging prominent individuals or other third-party advocates (such as in business, civil society and academia) to advance Australia's aid, trade and foreign policy interests overseas. This practice remains effective tradeecraft, provided it do not involve paid social media influencer arrangements as outlined above.

Campaign and Non-Campaign Advertising

For campaign and non-campaign advertising, the Department of Finance administers the [Commonwealth Government's Central Advertising System \(CAS\)](#) (<http://www.finance.gov.au/advertising/>), which is the coordinated procurement arrangement that consolidates government advertising expenditure and buying power to secure optimal media discounts on Commonwealth-wide media rates. Non-Corporate Commonwealth entities, such as DFAT, subject to the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act) are required to contact the government's Master Media Agency to place their advertising through the CAS.

Competitions, Promotions and Giveaways

Competitions involving games of skill or chance and other promotions with prizes or giveaways can be useful ways to attract and engage followers. You must comply with local applicable law on gaming for each state/region/country where the competition is open (from where people are eligible to enter), the department's finance policies and the requirements of the individual social media service. You may also need to consider copyright and privacy issues. Most of the intellectual property obligations and requirements under the Privacy Act will be satisfied via the inclusion of specific clauses in the standardised terms and conditions for competitions and giveaways which must be prepared using the standard terms and conditions for competitions and giveaways template. For the template and more information, refer to the [sponsorship guidance and policy s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) on the intranet, the [digital lesson on social media competitions and giveaways s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) and the Help Menu of the social media platform you plan to use. For legal advice regarding competitions and giveaways or the standard terms and conditions, contact the Commercial Law Section s 22(1)(a)(ii)

13. Performance Reporting

To ensure social media remains an effective corporate communication tool, managers should track and measure the performance of official accounts. You should review the popularity of your content, trends in follower growth and demographics, statistics on clicks, reach and engagement at least monthly, as well as the efficiency of internal planning, governance and management protocols. Social media platforms typically have inbuilt analytic functions which retrieve comprehensive and accurate information about users' interactivity and the popularity of individual posts. Staff managing social media accounts should familiarise themselves with these facilities through each channel's Help Menu.

CMB has purchased social media management software which enables it to monitor all official accounts and prepare aggregate reports to management, Ministers and Parliament. CMB staff must have access to all official accounts to maintain the connection to the corporate dashboard.

14. Closing Accounts

Where there is a sound business reason to close an official account, it may be merged, suspended or deleted. You should contact s 22(1)(a)(ii) to discuss the most appropriate action.

Deleting an account is irreversible and means the username or handle is then publicly available for anyone to use. Reasons not to delete an account may include:

- enduring public interest in the content
- possibility that it may be reactivated in future
- risk of trademark infringement through unauthorised use of the username or handle.

Some platforms offer the option of merging accounts if they meet certain criteria. Alternatively, you can suspend an account by adjusting the settings to private and publishing a series of messages to advise followers and refer them to other accounts.

Before deactivating an account, you should download a copy by following the instructions in the platform's Help Menu and retain the copy on file. Photographs should be captioned and include copyright information. You should also ensure you have separately captured and filed any Direct Messages and Replies to Comments deemed a corporate record.

Before deactivating an account, remove staff access and ensure SDC has the password or Page Admin access to Facebook or LinkedIn. You should retain a record of the decision to merge and update the business plans for any remaining accounts to reflect new arrangements. You should deactivate accounts by following the instructions in the platform's Help Menu. Once complete, remove links or references from post website or any other pages on DFAT website, if applicable.

15. Social Media Accounts for Programs funded by DFAT

If DFAT does not own an account and consequently unable to enforce the department's social media policies, there is no requirement for posts or divisions to create or manage accounts initiated by funding partners. However, it's important that line areas managing funding partners and programs exercise their responsibility as part of their contract management to ensure funding partners promote Australian interests and do nothing on their Australian-funded program related social media accounts to bring any harm to Australia's reputation.

16. Training and Development

Social media account managers must demonstrate a level of competency with social media platforms or complete social media training delivered by the Diplomatic Academy under the [Digital Literacy Program s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#). The program is also relevant to all staff who contribute to official social media or wish to increase their familiarity with strategic communication generally.

The use of social media is also covered in pre-posting public diplomacy training for A-based staff managing, supervising or contributing to official accounts. Posts, STOs and divisions may wish to consider engaging local service providers to deliver customised in-house training sessions. Account managers should stay up-to-date with the features of each social media platform and refer to the Help Menu before contacting CMB for advice on customising the settings or seeking technical support.

Social media management roles should be included in job descriptions and performance agreements. Appropriate handover arrangements should be in place for new staff assuming these roles.

17. Misconduct

Potential employee misconduct, such as inappropriately disclosing unauthorised or privileged information, misrepresenting an agency, misusing agency resources or otherwise bringing an agency or the Government into disrepute, are not exclusive to social media, and are covered by existing APS guidelines, [Handling misconduct: a human resource manager's guide](#) (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/handling-misconduct-a-human-resource-managers-guide-2015>), and the [DFAT Conduct and Ethics Manual](#) (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-11-reporting-alleged-misconduct-and-criminal-offences.aspx>).

Communications and Parliamentary Branch contacts

DFAT Corporate Social Media Publishing
Business hours (Canberra time)
Email s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Please put "Publishing" in the subject line

[@dfat.gov.au](mailto:csmp@dfat.gov.au)

Requests for New Social Media Accounts and Support for Existing Accounts

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

Please put "Support" in the subject line

Social Media Account Manager Training

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

Multimedia Content, Publishing, Training

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

Branding and graphic design

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

Strategic Communications Campaigns

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

DFAT website publishing

Emails **22(1)(a)(ii)** [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

Media and Parliamentary Section (24/7)

Phone +61 2 6261 1555

Email media@dfat.gov.au (<mailto:media@dfat.gov.au>)

References

DFAT Policies and Guides

- Administrative Circulars 22(1)(a)(ii) Departmental Staff in their Official Capacity. Speeches, Publications, Online Comment and Media Engagement by
- Administrative Circulars 22(1)(a)(ii) Message from the Secretary on the Importance of Security Awareness in DFAT.
- Conduct and Ethics Manual (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/conduct-and-ethics-manual.aspx>)
- Code of Conduct for Overseas Service **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- LES Code of Conduct **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- DFAT Security Manual **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- Protective Security portals **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- ICT Acceptable Use Policies **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- ICT Security Policies **22(1)(a)(ii)**
- Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy **22(1)(a)(ii)**

Australian Government Policies and Guides

- Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee>)
- Australian Public Service Values (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee/aps-values>), and Employment Principles (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/working-in-the-aps/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-an-aps-employee/employment-principles>)
- Australian Public Service Commission Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct in Practice (<http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications-and-media/current-publications/aps-values-and-code-of-conduct-in-practice/employees-as-citizens>)
- Australian Government Information Security Manual (<http://www.asd.gov.au/infosec/ism/index.htm>)
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner Privacy topics: Internet communications and other technologies (<http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-topics/internet-communications-and-other-technologies/>).

Date modified: 7 November 2018

Responsible line area: Soft Power, Communications and Scholarships Division **22(1)(a)(ii)**
22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Intranet

Head of Mission and SES: Personal Use of Social Media

Section 8.5 of the [Conduct and Ethics Manual \(https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5\)](https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5) covers acceptable personal use of social media.

It requires staff to maintain a sharp distinction between personal and official social media. This separation can become blurred when HOMs or SES use personal accounts in an official capacity.

The following guidance explains why DFAT has adopted this approach and provides options for HOMs or SES who wish to use social media actively for the duration of their term in a position overseas or in Australia.

Facebook

A personal Facebook Profile belongs exclusively to an individual as it's tied to personal details such as date of birth, relationship status, education and employment history. In line with [Facebook's Community Standards \(https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/integrity_authenticity/misrepresentation/\)](https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/integrity_authenticity/misrepresentation/), staff must not share password access. Profiles do not yield any performance measures nor can they be connected to s 22(1)(a)(ii) or other corporate social media management applications.

By contrast, official Facebook Pages are owned by, and have enduring value to, the department. The historical content, the follower base and the intellectual property invested in multimedia and branding assets are retained by DFAT. Unlike Profiles, a Page's performance can be tracked and measured and multiple staff can access the account in a variety of administrator roles.

Depending on the social media landscape in a particular country, including local audience preferences for engaging directly with an individual more than an organisation, it may be appropriate to establish an official Facebook Page for the position of Ambassador or High Commissioner. These are transferable accounts that belong to the position and not the individual.

The following options comply with Facebook's policies and satisfy internal requirements. Posts and divisions should consider the resource implications and other risks and benefits carefully as it's not good practice to create temporary accounts for the duration of an individual HOM or SES term only.

All new social media accounts require a separate business plan for approval by AS CMB.

Facebook Options:

- **Convert the existing post Facebook Page to a HOM Facebook Page**
 - Change the name of the Page to "Australian Ambassador/High Commissioner to Country X"
 - Retain existing custom username (handle/URL) or change to be consistent across platform in line with [social media branding guidance](#), s 22(1)(a)(ii)
 - changing usernames breaks embedded links and may not be permitted more than once without the permission of Facebook. Discuss naming options with SDC
 - Change the profile image from the standard DFAT logo to HOM portrait
 - Change the category to 'Government Official'
 - Change the style and tone of content to speak in informal first person but still represent whole of government interests
 - Give Page Admin access to HOM so they can post text and photos using the Business Manager app and desktop.
- **Alternatively, retain the existing post Facebook Page and create a new, additional official HOM Facebook Page**
 - Create custom username (@handle/URL) in line with social media branding guide – be consistent across platforms
 - Select Category 'Government Official'
 - Connect both Pages to post's Facebook Business Manager account and ensure multiple staff at post and in SDC have access in appropriate roles
 - Allow SDC to connect the new Page to the DFAT Sprout Social dashboard
 - Add the new Page to the list of official accounts on the DFAT and post websites
 - Ensure the new Page satisfies best practice on branding, content and governance.
- **SES in Australia may submit content for the DFAT corporate Facebook Page**
- **HOMs and SES may use their personal Facebook Profile to listen, engage and stay professionally informed**
 - Change Bio to state that 'Views are my own' and link to the official Facebook Page/s
 - Take personal responsibility for both public and private updates on his personal timeline and managing friends and followers
 - Not use post resources to manage the account in any capacity
 - Ensure the official post Facebook Page take the authoritative lead. HOM can tag and share content from official Facebook Page but not the other way around
 - As a personal account, content should comply with [8.5 of the Conduct and Ethics Manual \(http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5\)](https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5) – impartial, apolitical and not create the impression it represents DFAT.

Twitter

Personal Twitter accounts should not be used as official communication channels representing DFAT or the Australian Government. A Twitter account with a unique handle in the name of an individual staff member should be connected to their private email, phone number and logon verification settings. As the account owner, staff will take personal accounts with them to different roles and locations in DFAT and any career beyond.

By contrast, verified official Twitter accounts with generic transferable handles are owned by, and have enduring value to, the department. The historical content,

the follower base and the intellectual property invested in the multimedia and branding assets are retained by DFAT. Unlike personal accounts, an official account¹⁵ must be connected to the corporate social media management software as a risk mitigation measure and for business continuity. Its performance will be tracked and measured and multiple staff granted access the account.

Depending on the social media landscape in a particular country, including local audience preferences for engaging directly with an individual more than an organisation, it may be appropriate to convert an existing post Twitter account to a HOM account or establishing an additional official Twitter account for the position of Ambassador or High Commissioner. The following options comply with Twitter rules and policies (<https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/twitter-rules>), on verifying accounts and managing multiple accounts and team logons, including through Tweet Deck, and satisfy our internal requirements.

Should a post decide to pursue any of them, SDC requires a separate business plan to confirm that the arrangement can be sustained. Post should consider public perceptions, the resource implications and other risks and benefits carefully as it's not ideal to create temporary accounts for the duration of a HOM term only.

Twitter Options

- Consider converting existing post Twitter account to a HOM account (or create a new HOM account so post has two official accounts)
 - If converting existing account:
 - change the username (@handle/URL) if necessary to one which is consistent across platforms
 - use HOM name and official Bio (identify as official, link to post website, include consular contact details or tag @Smartraveller
 - connect to an @dfat.gov.au email and DFAT mobile number
 - change the style and tone of content to speak in informal first person but still represent whole of government interests
 - update link on post website if necessary
 - advise followers of the change
 - SDC to request restoration of the verification tick from Twitter if necessary
 - SDC to update links on DFAT website
 - If creating a new, additional account:
 - create a new custom username (@handle/URL) which can be used consistently across platforms on any future official HOM accounts
 - use HOM name and official Bio (identify as official, link to post website, include consular contact details or tag @Smartraveller
 - connect to an @dfat.gov.au email and DFAT mobile number
 - add link to post website
 - SDC to seek verification from Twitter and add to official lists
 - Give HOM password access through Twitter desktop or mobile app or the Tweet Deck team feature (<https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/tweetdeck-teams>), so he can toggle between personal and official to publish content
 - Ensure the official Twitter account/s retains the content history, comment threads, image assets and followers, and transfers to successors
 - Provide password to SDC so account can be connected to the DFAT s 22(1)(a)(ii) dashboard.
- SES in Australia may submit content for the DFAT corporate Twitter account.
- HOMs and SES may use their personal Twitter account to listen, engage and stay professionally informed.
 - Bio to state that 'Views are my own' and link to official Twitter account but not use any official branding or imply that it is an official account
 - HOM to take personal responsibility for creating and publishing content and managing the account without drawing on staff resources
 - Post account should lead. HOM can share content from official post Twitter account and tag its handle but not the other way around
 - Post can repeat appropriate images and text submitted by HOM but not tag (use personal @handles) or retweet messages on personal accounts
 - As a personal account, the content should comply with 8.5 of the Conduct and Ethics Manual (<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/conduct-ethics-manual/Pages/chapter-8-upholding-the-reputation-of-the-department-and-australia.aspx#section-8-5>), - impartial, apolitical and not create the impression it represents DFAT
 - DFAT will not monitor, reply or measure performance.

Instagram

The same principles for personal use of Twitter apply to Instagram.

Date modified: 5 November 2018

Responsible line area: Soft Power, Communications and Scholarships Division s 22(1)(a)(ii)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT Intranet

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Title: Consular: Travel Advice: Social media in a crisis
MRN: s 22(1)(a)(ii) 11/09/2018 09:53:12 AM ZE10
To: Austrade Posts; FAF Posts
Cc:
From: Canberra s 22(1)(a)(ii)
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: The cable has the following attachment/s -
 Social media examples.docx
Response: Routine, Requires Action

UNCLASSIFIED

Summary

We ask posts to make greater use of social media in the event of an incident or event that might impact Australians overseas. Cable provides examples of possible text and attaches previous messages that have worked well.

Posts are asked to make greater use of **social media** in the event of a crisis overseas that might impact Australians. Sometimes this can be done instead of, or at least ahead of, a travel advice update, provided the risk is identified in general terms in the travel advice. Recent examples include localised demonstrations that have a potential to turn violent, where the travel advice already covers a general reference to political violence or demonstrations. Or the potential impact of typhoons/cyclones in areas that attract high numbers of foreign tourists, where the travel advice already references seasonal storms.

2. Sharing/re-tweeting posts from **English-language local authoritative sources** (such as local police, emergency services, emergency management authorities, consular partners) is a good option where possible. If not, Posts should send their own Facebook post or tweet drawing on, and pointing to, the travel advice. For example: "Local media reports indicate demonstrations are occurring in XX. See our travel advice for general information on security awareness". Or: "local authorities are warning citizens in XX to evacuate ahead of Typhoon YY. See our travel advice for general information on natural disasters".

3. Sometimes it will be appropriate to send a holding line and then follow up with more detailed information and advice. s 22(1)(a)(ii) can re-post/re-tweet anything you do on the Smartraveller social media accounts. A few recent examples are attached.

4. We also encourage consular teams to work with **public diplomacy teams** to build posts' social media following among expatriate Australians. This will complement Smartraveller's own social media audiences and better reach both travelling and resident Australians.

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5. s 22(1)(a)(ii) are available at all times to assist posts in their communications for incidents overseas and can be contacted at:

- s 22(1)(a)(ii) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)
- s 22(1)(a)(ii) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

text ends

Sent by: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Prepared
by:
Approved
by:
Topics:

Example 1

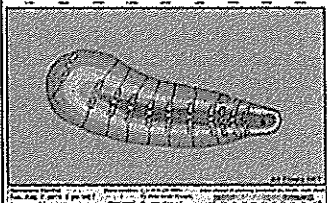
smartraveller.gov.au
Published by Consular Information Section (P) August 8

If you are in Hawaii, monitor Hurricane Hector updates from Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency and US National Weather Service Honolulu & Central Pacific Hurricane Center. Be prepared, and always follow the advice and recommendations of local authorities.
Australian Consulate-General Honolulu

Hurricane Hector

Tropical Storm Warning for Hawaii County
Update Time: Aug 07 2018 5:00pm HST

Lat: 16.6N | Lon: 150.7W
Moving W at 16 kph
Most likely arrival time of tropical storm force winds



73,670 People Reached 709 Engagements 3,242 Clicks

View Insights [Boost Post](#)

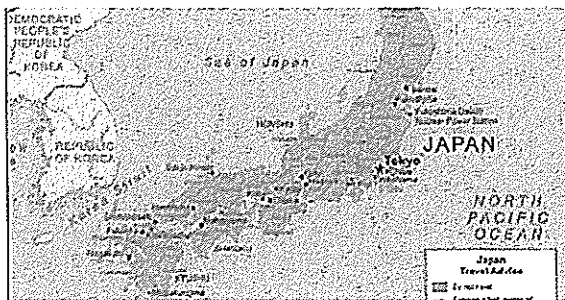
s 22(1)(a)(ii) 191 Comments 56 Shares

Example 2

オーストラリア大使館 Australian Embassy Japan shared a post
September 3 at 5:25 PM

Typhoon Jebi is expected to make landfall on the southern island of Shikoku in Japan on 4 September 2018. Expect very strong winds, torrential rains, local flooding and storm surges in coastal areas. Transportation and communication services may be affected. Monitor local media sources and the Japan Meteorological Agency for the progress of approaching storms, and follow the advice of local authorities.

smartraveller.gov.au shared a link
Published by Consular Information Section (P) September 3 at 1:59 PM



SMARTRAVELLER GOV AU
Japan

Be informed. Be prepared. Our latest travel advice includes: useful ...

93

5 Comments 3 Shares

Like Comment Share

Example 3



Smartraveller
@Smartraveller

#Jacksonville, Florida - reports of a mass shooting at the Jacksonville Landing. Local police advise people to stay away from the area. The area is not safe.

Jax Sheriff's Office @JSOPIO

We can't stress enough to stay away. Many blocks away. twitter.com/JSOPIO/status/...

4:47 AM - 27 Aug 2018

3 Retweets 2 Likes

3 2



Add another Tweet

Title: Consular: Travel Advice: Social Media in a Crisis
MRN: s 22(1)(a)(ii) 15/11/2018 10:24:43 AM ZE10
To: Austrade Posts; FAF Posts
Cc:
From: Canberra s 22(1)(a)(ii)
From File: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
EDRMS
Files:
References:
Response: Routine, Requires Action

UNCLASSIFIED

Summary

Additional guidance to posts around the use of social media in a consular crisis or emergency.

Further to ref t/s 22(1)(a)(ii) we provide additional guidance to posts around the use of social media in a consular crisis or emergency.

2. While the primary objective of posts' social media accounts is to increase Australia's influence and engagement with audiences in countries of accreditation, including in the local language, Australian travellers and expatriates will also follow post accounts, particularly during a consular crisis or emergency. Posts' social media accounts can be used to augment messages posted on Smartraveller to provide an additional channel for communicating to our citizens in the event of a crisis or potential crisis (this might include information on an approaching cyclone or the potential for civil unrest during an election campaign).
3. During a crisis, posts should consider retweeting or sharing content from local authoritative sources in English (such as local police, emergency management authorities, and consular partners) in addition to contributing to, and sharing posts from, the Smartraveller accounts. Posts should not retweet journalists or unverified users publishing updates from the location as this information may be incorrect.
4. Posts should exercise their judgment about how best to balance the needs of different audiences, including considering how consular messages will be received and understood by the citizens in their countries of accreditation.
5. The Guide to Official Use of Social Media provides further advice on communicating consular and passport information, including, for instance, recent travel advice updates.
6. CPB has been consulted in drafting this cable.