



DPC/P11.1

ACROSS GOVERNMENT POLICY

Social media policy

Purpose

The intent and purpose of this policy is to require Public Sector Agencies to consider using social media in their service delivery and as part of their communications and engagement activities.

Increasing the use of social media as a normal, modern communication channel is expected to enhance agencies' engagement with citizens and provide greater choice for citizens on how they connect with their government.

Background

The South Australian Government recognises the need for agencies to collaborate with the community to better understand their perspectives and create public value. Social media as an essential tool for agencies to embed community participation and engagement into their business.

While agencies determine how best to deliver services and interact with their customers, including the [level of participation](#) they expect from the public, it is clear that social media has an increasing reach throughout society, with the [ABS reporting its use increasing](#) – making it the most popular use of the Internet at home (equal with banking). As such, social media should no longer be considered as separate to regular communication activities and should be integrated as part of an agency's 'business as usual', subject to due diligence.

Policy statements

All Public Sector Agencies must consider using social media as part of:

- any public community engagement activity
- their service delivery for any new or reformed government service

unless doing so would create unmanageable risks to privacy or security.

Where the decision is made not to use social media, agencies should be able to provide sufficient reason – indicating why it was proactively discounted.

All Public Sector Agencies must:

- incorporate social media into their regular communication strategies
- have social media guidance in place for staff, including processes for authorised use, and clear, predetermined delegations to enable appropriately-trained staff to speak on behalf of the agency with minimal delay.

Guidance may form part of an agency's Internet and email usage guidelines, and where possible should refer to the [Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector](#) and [Social Media Guidance for Agencies and Staff](#).

Scope

This policy applies to all South Australian Government Public Sector Agencies (as defined in [ICT Policy Statement 1 – Compliant Authorities](#)).

Roles and Responsibilities

As with the use of any communication channel, agencies are responsible for ensuring they have adequately planned their use of social media, including appropriate consideration of resources, internal processes, response times, recordkeeping, and risk management requirements. Consideration should be given as to whether a consolidated social media channel is appropriate for use by all areas of your department.

Individuals using social media in an official capacity should ensure they have express approval to speak on behalf of their agency. Public Sector employees should consider the [Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector](#) prior to using social media, even for personal use. Further guidance is available in [Social Media Guidance for Agencies and Staff](#).

Related Documents

There is a range of existing requirements and guidance available for agencies, including:

- Digital Communications Guidelines
- Social Media Strategy Template
- Marketing Communications Guidelines
- Social Media: Guidance for Agencies and Staff
- Better Together Principles of Engagement
- Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector
- Plain English Good Practice Guide
- State Records Act 1997
- IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum.

Exemptions

Advice regarding exemptions from this policy is provided in the Government Ruling on Information and Communication Technology titled [ICT Ruling 1 Exemptions](#).

Definitions

Social media: Social media (sometimes referred to as social networking or Web 2.0 technologies) are 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 upload and share content.

Public Sector Agency: An internal to government entity, including administrative units, bodies corporate, statutory authorities, and instrumentalities of the Crown, as defined in the [Public Sector Act 2009 \(SA\)](#).

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