

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY – PROFESSIONAL USE

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET – DECEMBER 2017

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Policy Statement

1. Intent

This policy, and the associated [social media strategy template](#), governs the professional use of social media for the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC).

2. Alignment to DPAC Values

This policy is aligned with the following Departmental values:

- **Excellence** – we strive for excellence at all times. This means:
 - We value knowledge, wisdom, experience and diverse points of view.
 - We prepare advice and deliver services that are fit for purpose.
 - We show leadership and encourage and develop others.
 - We foster a work environment that promotes learning and innovation
- **Customer focus** – customers are at the centre of what we do and how we do it. This means:
 - The views of our customers, clients, stakeholders and communities inform our work.
 - We respond to the needs of our customers and they value our services.
 - We measure satisfaction with our services.
- **Working together** – we support and respect one another and work with others to achieve results. This means:
 - We reach out to others and build respectful and trusting relationships.
 - We commit to a safe, supportive, flexible and inclusive working environment.
 - We celebrate success and recognize the contribution of our staff.
- **Professional** – we act with integrity and are accountable and transparent. This means:
 - We are responsible for our decisions and actions.
 - We are clear and concise and use plain English.
 - We are honest and open and lead by example.
 - We are flexible and respond to changing priorities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff of DPAC who engage in social media for professional use. It does not apply to Ministerial and Parliamentary staff.

Personal use of social media is covered by the Department's [Social Media Policy – Personal Use](#).

Professional use of social media platforms is subject to the conditions outlined by the [Tasmanian Government Communications Policy](#).

4. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- expectations of working with DPAC's social media accounts/pages are clearly set out for staff so they understand their responsibilities;
- suitable planning is undertaken, and resourcing and approval processes are established, prior to developing a social media presence on behalf of DPAC/the Tasmanian Government; and
- potential risks of using social media for work purposes are mitigated to ensure a positive outcome is achieved for DPAC and the Tasmanian Government.

5. Definitions

5.1 Social media

Social media refers to various online tools that enable users to contribute content and share information and resources. It includes online forums and blogs; collaborative sites such as Wikipedia; social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter; and media-sharing websites such as YouTube, Instagram or Flickr.

Social media messages often make use of multimedia such as text, audio, video and images.

Along with other communication channels such as newspapers, radio, television and websites, social media is an important source of information on government policies, programs and services.

5.2 Websites and webpages

A website refers to the collection of pages that make up an entire site. A webpage refers to an individual page.

5.3 Hosting

Hosting is a service that allows individuals and organisations to make their own websites and webpages available on the web. In the context of this policy, hosting refers to the service provided by the organisation running a website on which Tasmanian Government information is published.

5.4 Moderation

Moderation refers to the process of actively managing comments and interaction on a website which allows for user-contributed content.

5.5 Moderator

A moderator has the responsibility of monitoring and managing comments on a website which allows for user-contributed content.

5.6 Administrators

An administrator is an individual who has administration and/or editing rights to a social media site or account.

5.7 Professional use

Professional use is use of social media as part of a staff member's employment duties on behalf of the Department.

5.8 Personal use

Personal use is use of social media in any context which is outside a staff member's professional duties. This includes personal use of social media in the workplace.

5.9 Must

In the context of this policy, "must" indicates that the action is mandatory because it relates to another policy or legislation, or minimises risks.

5.10 Should

In the context of this policy, "should" indicates a recommended course of action because it is best practice.

5.11 Caretaker

Caretaker refers to the time leading up to a State election when the Tasmanian Government is operating in "caretaker mode" and must ensure its activity remains apolitical. The caretaker period starts with the dissolution or expiration of the House of Assembly and ends when a new Government is appointed.

6. Policy Context

There are two key differences between a standard website and a social media site:

1. On social media sites, Tasmanian Government information is hosted on an external site.
2. Social media sites allow for two-way conversation between the content owners and their audiences.

These two differences present some unique challenges and potential risks that need to be managed, as addressed below.

7. Policy

7.1 Gaining approval to create a page/presence on a social media site

The decision to use social media for a Business Unit or project will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the relevant Business Unit Manager and the Communications and Protocol Unit (CPU). This decision should be supported by a social media strategy. This strategy is a key planning document that will:

- articulate the purpose of the page, including whether it is for a defined period or ongoing basis;
- identify target audiences;
- choose the most appropriate social media channel/s;
- document who the administrators will be;
- document possible content and frequency of posting;
- document how comments and questions will be responded to;
- document how frequently the page is to be monitored; and
- identify risks and mitigation strategies.

A [social media strategy template](http://www.communications.tas.gov.au) is available from www.communications.tas.gov.au.

7.2 Protecting personal privacy

Administrators and moderators who create or manage a DPAC social media account should avoid using their personal accounts, where possible.

For example, comments and posts should be only made through the DPAC social media account, not a personal social media account.

If an administrator must comment or post content using their personal account, they must clearly identify themselves as being professionally associated with the page or site in each post.

However, it's important to note that if a personal account is used to post content to a site, staff should be aware that both their personal and work activities on the site might be viewed by members of the public, and staff may wish to consider appropriate privacy controls (if available) to try and separate those activities. See also the Department's Electronic Communication and Internet Usage Policy, 6.6.2 Internet Use.

Contact CPU at commsrequests@dpac.tas.gov.au if you need advice/assistance.

7.3 Account support

CPU maintains a register of DPAC's social media accounts in order to:

- provide technical or strategic support when needed; and
- gain access to the account in an emergency.

A member of CPU must be given full administration rights, along with details such as name of site administrator and moderators, login details (where applicable), associated email accounts, passwords and procedural information.

7.4 Record keeping

Activity on the page/site must be regularly captured in DPAC's records management system, in accordance with the [Archives Act 1983](#) and the [Libraries Act 1984](#).

For information and assistance, contact ITS.

7.5 Management of the site

The Business Unit is responsible for ongoing management of the social media pages/accounts, including updating content, record keeping, and monitoring and moderating activity. The details of who is responsible for this and how regularly it is monitored should be documented in a social media strategy, which must be approved by the Business Unit Manager and CPU.

All pages should be kept up-to-date and content posted regularly – how regularly should be decided on a case-by-case basis and documented in your social media strategy. If there is no activity on a page for an extended period, the purpose of the page/presence on a social media site should be reconsidered, including whether the page should be taken down.

Any content posted on a social media site must be of an equivalent standard to information provided on Tasmanian Government websites, and comply with the *Tasmanian Government Communications Policy*.

This means:

- Clearly identifying the page/account as being owned by the Tasmanian Government. This may be done through the presence of a Tasmanian Government logo or a statement of ownership. There must also be a link back to the agency's website, as well as a way to contact the agency about the content.
- When publishing photographs or videos, ensure you have the permission of subjects in the video and photos.
- Privacy rights and copyright ownership must be respected in compliance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* and the *Copyright Act 1968*.

7.6 Moderation

Social media sites that invite comments or input from members of the public and administrators should set clear expectations about the standard of comment or input that will be accepted. This can be done by including moderation guidelines on your page/account. See the [social media strategy template](#) for an example of the moderation guidelines.

Administrators are not required to respond to all comments from members of the public. See Appendix I for a guide on how to respond to comments on social media.

Removing comments from a site is a last resort, unless the moderation guidelines and expectations have clearly been breached. If a comment or other piece of contributed content must be removed, ensure the author is informed of when and why content has been removed. CPU can assist in the decision to remove comments.

7.7 Accessibility

Where possible, efforts should be made for content to be as accessible as possible. This should include:

- Content provided as HTML in preference to PDF or Word documents, or in text-based images. Where PDF or Word documents must be used, access should be provided to the information in another format, such as a link to an accessible PDF, or appropriate contact information should be present so the content can be requested in another format; and
- Captioning videos.

ITS can provide advice on how to ensure that information on external websites is as accessible as possible.

7.8 Socially-sourced information

Some social media sites, such as Wikipedia, Google business pages, or LinkedIn, may contain information relating to the Department or areas of the Department's business that has been provided by the public or has been automatically generated. Business Units are encouraged to monitor social media sites for information relevant to their area and ensure, as much as they are able, that the information is accurate.

7.9 Caretaker

When the Tasmanian Government is operating in caretaker mode in the lead up to a State election, it is important to ensure the Government's activities remain apolitical. The Caretaker Conventions outline a few considerations for managing social media accounts to ensure they remain as apolitical as possible. Site administrators are encouraged to check the advice in the Caretaker Conventions that are released when a State Election is called.

8. Related documents and policies

[Social Media Policy – Personal Use](#)

[Tasmanian Government Communications Policy](#)

[Ministerial Directive No12 – Internet and Email Use by State Service Officers and Employees](#)

[W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.](#)

[State Services Act](#)

[Archives Act 1983](#)

[Libraries Act 1984](#)

[DPAC ICT Security Policy \(June 2014\)](#)

[Acceptable Use of ICT Policy](#)

[Social media strategy template](#)

9. Social media support pages

<https://www.facebook.com/help/>

<https://support.twitter.com/>

<https://help.instagram.com/>

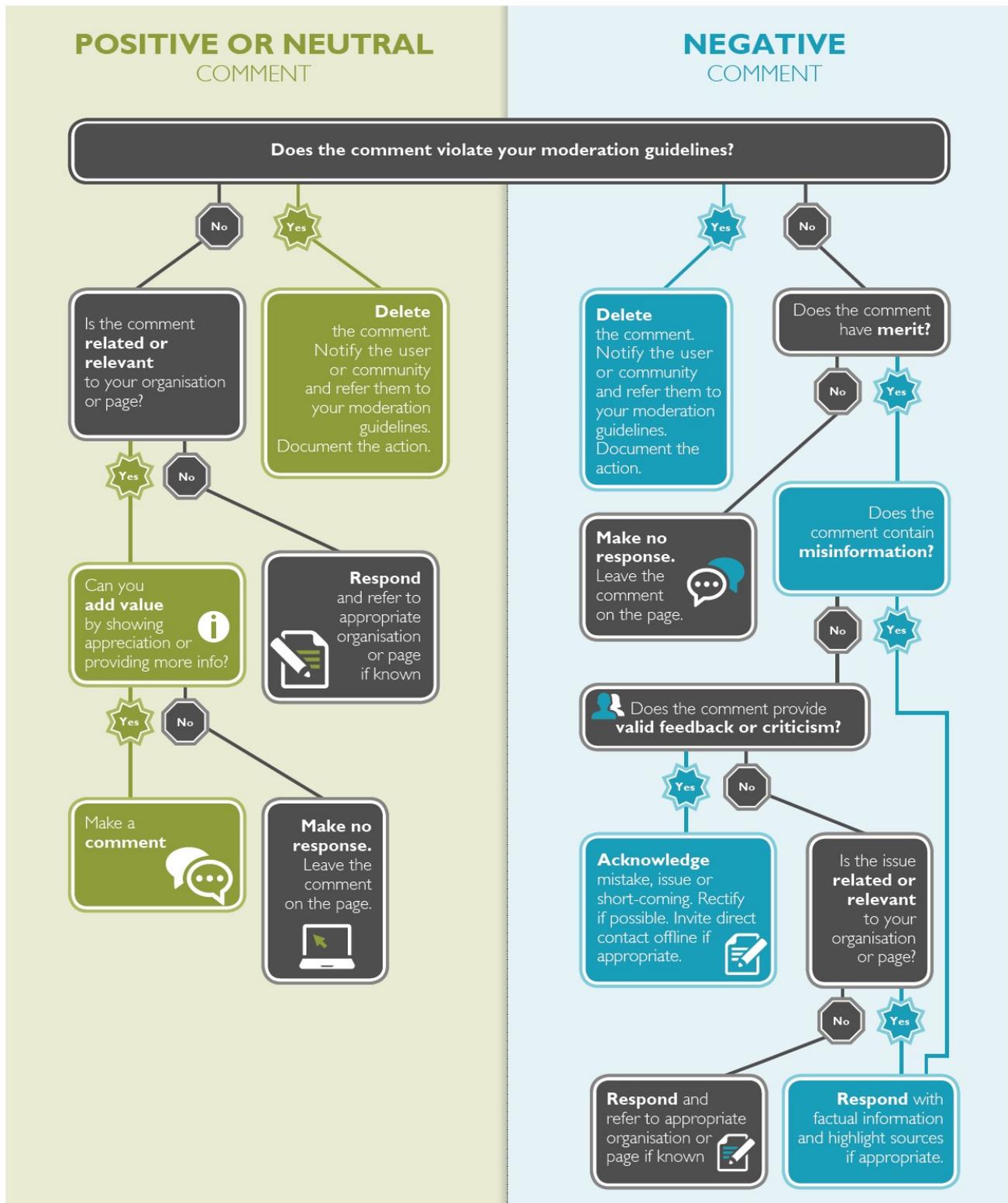
10. Contacts

Communications and Protocol Unit

commsrequests@dpac.tas.gov.au

Appendix I – Social Media Response Flow Chart

SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE



Developed by the Tasmanian Government based on work by Tymado Multimedia Solutions:
<http://tymado.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/SocialMediaResponseFlowChart.jpg>
 Feedback to info@communications.tas.gov.au

