

**OFFICIAL**



**NSW Police Force**

# **New South Wales Police Force**

# **Official Use of Social Media Policy and Procedures**

**Public Affairs Branch**

## OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy applies to the official and overt use of social media by NSW Police Force staff to engage with the public to achieve work goals.

### ESSENTIAL SUMMARY

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An *official* NSW Police Force social media page or platform is a page or platform authorised and managed by the police to represent the agency, either from a corporate, command, Police Area Command/Police District (PAC/PD) or other perspective. The following social media options are available for the NSW Police Force:

- Facebook pages for PACs/PDs (Eyewatch)
- Facebook pages for commands *other than* PACs/PDs
- corporate wide pages or platforms managed by the Public Affairs Branch
- social media pages for corporate sponsor portfolios and CET members
- temporary social media pages for special events.

Proposals for the creation of all social media require approval by the local manager/commander, relevant Assistant Commissioner/Executive Director, and the Executive Director, Public Affairs Branch. Approved social media pages must be registered with the Eyewatch Team or the Digital Media Team, Corporate Communications Unit.

The Commander/Director of a command hosting a social media page is responsible for ensuring processes are in place for creating, managing, publishing, updating, moderating, evaluating and decommissioning the page. The Commander/Director must ensure all publications comply with the *Media Policy* and this policy, and that a process is in place to enable the page to be constantly moderated.

Staff authorised to officially represent the NSW Police Force on social media must be competent in their area of expertise, understand the *Media Policy* rules on releasing information to the public, and understand the requirements in section 2 of this policy.

Only static images relating to summary or Table 2 offences can be posted on social media pages for operational purposes without Public Affairs Branch approval. If an image is posted that clearly identifies a police employee, the page owners must keep a copy of the employee's written consent and complete the Social Media Checklist.

Encourage the public to report information or crimes directly to a police station or Crime Stoppers; not to police social media pages.

When criticism is received from the public, if possible resolve immediately by providing non-confidential information. If a criticism cannot be quickly resolved advise the author of the option to make a formal complaint via the police webpage.

All official NSW Police Force social media pages that seek public comments online must display and enforce the *Acceptable Use Standards* (section 7).

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### Modification History

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1	December 2011	Alan Tongs Executive Officer	New Policy
2	September 2013	Alan Tongs Executive Officer	Policy revised and updated
3	21 December 2017	Alan Tongs Executive Officer	Major amendments to sections 3, 4.2, 5.3, 5.5.2, 6.1.5 and appendices 3-6.
4	August 2021	Osmanthus Hart-Smith Executive Officer	Policy reviewed with minor updates

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE NSW POLICE FORCE

Social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter are vital public communication tools for the NSW Police Force. Social media gives the NSW Police Force the ability to deliver messages directly to the public, complementing traditional media. It also allows for a two-way conversation with the community.

### 1.1.1 Defining Social Media

'Social media' is a broad term for applications or tools that enable the creation and exchange of content over the internet, computer networks or other digital platforms. Social media occur in a variety of platforms including, but not limited to:

- social networking pages (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, IBM Connections)
- video and photo sharing webpages or apps (e.g. YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Flickr, Vimeo)
- blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Twitter, Wordpress, Blogger)
- fora and discussion boards (e.g. Trove Forum, Yahoo! Groups, Google Groups)
- live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook LIVE)
- review pages (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon)
- vod and podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud)
- geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, Yelp)
- online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia)
- instant messaging (e.g. Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber).

In this policy an *official* police social media page or platform is a page or platform authorised and managed by the NSW Police Force to represent the agency, either from a corporate, command, PAC/PD or other perspective.

Official *use* of social media is any comment, post, video etc. that represents the position of the NSW Police Force, made by people who are authorised to do so.

A *personal* social media page is a *page* owned by a NSW Police Force employee and used for personal or private interaction, with content that does not represent the NSW Police Force, a business, charity or other organisation.

In this policy a social media page, platform etc., will be referred to as a *page* or *account*.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The NSW Police Force has two separate policies to assist in harnessing the benefits of social media while minimising the risks associated with the official and the personal use of social media.

### 1.2.1 Official Use of Social Media Policy and Procedures

This document applies to:

- the official and overt use of social media by NSW Police Force employees to engage with the public to achieve work related goals
- all official NSW Police Force social media pages or accounts used to overtly engage with the public.

The policy *does not apply* to the use or creation of social media for other police or law enforcement purposes (for example, investigative or intelligence purposes).

This document sets policy on:

- the creation, management, assessment and decommissioning of official NSW Police Force social media pages and accounts
- the standards required of employees authorised to officially represent the NSW Police Force on both official police and non-police social media
- the standards required of members of the public who wish to contribute to official NSW Police Force social media pages or accounts.

Further guidelines and SOPs exist for the operation of Eyewatch pages.

### 1.2.2 Personal Use of Social Media Policy and Guidelines

A separate policy sets out standards that must be followed when NSW Police Force employees use social media in a *private* capacity. The policy also provides guidelines to help employees protect their safety, privacy and career. The *Personal Use of Social Media Policy and Guidelines* is located on the intranet under Policy > Corporate.

### 1.2.3 Compliance

All employees<sup>1</sup> are required to comply with this policy. Breaches of the *Official Use of Social Media Policy and Procedures* may result in managerial action including withdrawal of the right to represent the NSW Police Force online, loss of confidence or dismissal, and/or criminal or civil sanctions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Media Policy*, the *Personal Use of Social Media Policy and Guidelines* and the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*.

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<sup>1</sup> Employees: persons engaged to assist the NSW Police Force to undertake its responsibilities in accordance with the *Police Act 1990* including Police Officers, Administrative Officers, Volunteers in Policing and temporary employees.  
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## 2. REPRESENTING THE POLICE FORCE ONLINE

### 2.1 RULES FOR REPRESENTING

#### 2.1.1 Authorisation to Represent Online

Authorisation requirements for employees to release information to the public via social media (social networking pages, live streaming, etc) are the same as those for traditional media and are set out in the *Media Policy*. Additional authorisation requirements for employees to represent the NSW Police Force on command or corporate social media pages are found at section 4.1.1.

Staff authorised to officially represent the NSW Police Force on social media must:

- be competent in the area of expertise they will be commenting on
- understand the requirements on the public release of information set out in the *Media Policy* and the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*
- understand the requirements on representing the NSW Police Force online set out in section 2 of this policy.

#### 2.1.2 Rules for Representing Online

If authorised to comment on social media on behalf of the NSW Police Force (including adding or amending content on official NSW Police Force social media Facebook pages or other accounts, live streaming, or commenting via non-police social media accounts) employees are required to:

- ensure any content they publish is factually accurate
- ensure they are not the first to make a police announcement unless they have the authority for releasing information to the public. Authorisation requirements for releasing information to social media are the same as those for traditional media, as set out in the *Media Policy*. For example, police employees may answer questions in social media to explain police policy just as they do face to face in public, but only the senior executive or corporate sponsors can publicly comment on whether police policies and procedures need changing or replacing<sup>2</sup>
- not commit the NSW Police Force or the Government to any action or initiative unless they have authority to do so
- not disclose confidential information unless required by their duties and allowed by law and NSW Police Force policy
- not disclose other people's personal information on social media unless it can be justified on the grounds that the information is being published for legitimate operational and/or law enforcement functions in accordance with Section 6 of the *Police Act 1990* and the *Media Policy*. Any other disclosure may be a breach of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and/or *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*

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<sup>2</sup> The authority to publicly comment on police matters is set out in the *Media Policy* at Appendix 2: Authority to release information, and sections 3 to 7.

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- offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within their area of responsibility or expertise within the NSW Police Force. For other matters, obtain advice from or refer to the relevant topic expert or corporate sponsor, or refer the issue to the more appropriate agency, e.g. NSW Health or Roads and Maritime Services
- not make comments or perform an online action (such as liking) that would bring the NSW Police Force into disrepute or embarrass the agency
- use profile images and photographs that uphold the values and good reputation of the NSW Police Force. Cartoons or other images unrelated to policing must not be used to represent a police employee
- not criticise the decisions, policies or practices of Parliament, Government, Courts, the NSW Police Force or other departments
- not give a personal political view, such as advocating or criticising the statements, policies or promotional activities of political parties or politicians
- not make comments or online actions (such as a Facebook 'like') that would imply commercial endorsement of an organisation, product, service or activity.<sup>3</sup>
- be polite and respectful of all individuals and communities online, even in times of heated discussion and debate. Maintain professional boundaries when communicating with clients, as you would with other forms of work communication
- not use antagonistic, insensitive, inflammatory, condescending or other socially offensive language
- not publish material likely to result in criminal penalty or civil liability
- not publish any material that is prejudicial, defamatory, bullying, libellous, discriminatory, harassing, obscene or threatening, or is otherwise unlawful
- exercise care if referring to pending court proceedings to avoid publishing material that may prejudice those proceedings or breach a court suppression order
- acknowledge copyright and attribute the source of material you share. Do not publish any material that infringes intellectual property, copyright or a trademark
- obtain the permission of colleagues before posting images of them (see section 5.3.3)
- not publish images or otherwise identify undercover or surveillance operatives, or other persons with suppressed identities.

A simple guideline for assessing content before publishing is that an official police page, comment or image etc., should not contain anything that the authorised officer would be uncomfortable with if published in a newspaper, or if said in public by a police officer in full uniform.

Check with the Digital Media Unit, (E/N: 45217) or the Eyewatch Team (E/N: 45347), Corporate Communications Unit, in the first instance if uncertain about what can be reproduced or disclosed on social media. If in doubt about the proposed content, do not publish it.

Never use personal social media accounts, pages or profiles for official use. Never link your official use to your personal social media pages, profiles or those of your

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<sup>3</sup> See the *Endorsement Policy* for details, including the definition of commercial endorsement, which is prohibited, and non-commercial endorsement, which is allowed if approved.  
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colleagues, friends or family. Employees who identify their or other employee's personal social media pages create a serious safety risk for themselves, their family and any other colleague or individual linked to that personal page.

## **2.2 PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING**

Social Media such as LinkedIn provide employees with the opportunity to professionally network and share best practice information. While profiles on professional social networking pages are usually made as private citizens, personnel who identify themselves as police employees and are commenting on matters relating to policing are commenting in an official, not a private capacity<sup>4</sup> and so must comply with section 2 of this policy.

Some employees (for example Inspectors and above) are authorised by the *Media Policy* to speak to the media on certain topics. Employees who identify themselves as police employees who are not authorised by the *Media Policy* to release information to the public, must obtain authorisation from their commander (Superintendent or equivalent) before sharing policing information on LinkedIn or other professional social networking pages.

For example:

- an Inspector in Newcastle would be authorised to comment on LinkedIn about local licensing initiatives that have reduced crime in their area
- an Officer in Charge of an investigation, with appropriate authority, could comment on their case within the limits set by the *Media Policy*
- with the authority of their commander, a Forensic Evidence and Technical Services Command scientist, an Office of the General Counsel lawyer or a Financial Services accountant could share non-confidential information or advice with colleagues in other agencies or jurisdictions relating to best practice, policy or legislation.

Personnel who do not identify themselves as police employees are commenting in a private capacity and so must comply with section 2.2.1 of the *Personal Use of Social Media Policy*.

### **2.2.1 Security Risk and Professional Networking Pages**

Limit or avoid posting or linking personal information on professional networking pages like LinkedIn as these platforms are targeted by scammers, organised crime (e.g. outlaw motor cycle gangs) and terrorist groups. See Part 2 of the *Personal Use of Social Media Policy* which recommends publishing as little personal information as possible on social media.

The Cybercrime Unit recommends changing passwords on a regular basis and adding two factor authentication which requires a text message every time you sign in from a new computer.

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<sup>4</sup> See section 2.1.3 of the *Personal Use of Social Media Policy*, Public Affair Branch, 2015  
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## 3. APPROVAL OF OFFICIAL POLICE ACCOUNTS

### 3.1 CREATING POLICE SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

Accessing social media is one option available for increased communication between the NSW Police Force and the public.

The following social media options are available for the NSW Police Force:

- Facebook pages for PACs/PDs (Eyewatch)
- Facebook pages for commands *other than* PACs/PDs (see section 3.1.2 for examples)
- corporate wide pages or accounts managed by the Public Affairs Branch
- social media pages for corporate sponsor portfolios and CET members
- temporary social media pages for special events.

The number of official NSW Police Force social media accounts are restricted as too many dilute the police message, increase the risks of duplication and contradiction, and confuse the public. Smaller business units are also less likely to provide adequate content and moderation.

#### 3.1.1 Police Area Commands/Police Districts

Official social media pages for subunits or individuals in a PAC/PD are prohibited. For example, separate Facebook pages or other accounts for local Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers, Multicultural Liaison Officers, for Domestic Violence etc., are not allowed. These topics must be included as subsections of the one stop shop PAC/PD Facebook page.

#### 3.1.2 Non-Region Commands

For non-region commands, only commands of Assistant Commissioners and equivalent can apply to have a Facebook page, such as Police Prosecutions or the Education and Training command. Business units and individuals within these commands can be included as subsections of the one stop shop command Facebook page. (For example, the Homicide Squad could be included as a subsection of a State Crime Command Facebook page.)

#### 3.1.3 Exemption for Non-Region Commands

In *rare* circumstances, a command below Assistant Commissioner and equivalent level may be given an exemption to have its own Facebook page.

All requests for an exemption must be submitted in writing up the chain of command via the Public Affairs Branch for formal Commissioner's Executive Team approval. The submission must justify why the command cannot achieve its policing objectives via having a sub page in their executive command's Facebook page.

## **3.2 AUTHORISATION FOR POLICE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS & PAGES**

### **3.2.1 Authorisation**

Proposals for the creation of all social media require approval as set out below:

- the author's manager/commander, and the
- relevant Assistant Commissioner/Executive Director or equivalent, and the
- Executive Director, Public Affairs Branch.

The approval of the relevant Deputy Commissioner is also required if a major new program has effects beyond a single command or has corporate implications, such as the Eyewatch project, or when opening a police account with a new social media platform for the first time.

### **3.2.2 Proposal Details**

All proposal submissions must include the following details:

- the objectives of the activity (what do you want to achieve, how it relates to your business plan and how it will benefit the NSW Police Force)
- the target audience (who and how will they benefit)
- the type of social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc)
- what type of content is proposed and in what kinds of media (text, video, images, audio) to attract the target audience. Provide examples of the types of information to be posted to the page/activity
- how end users (e.g. members of the public) will be able to contribute to the page, if relevant
- identified risks, and how the risks will be mitigated
- the cost of the proposal to the NSW Police Force. If costs for setting up and ongoing management cannot be met from current budgets, what is the extra funding source and has the funding been approved
- which positions and persons will be responsible for the:
  - implementation and management, including performance against objectives
  - administering and moderating (to enable ongoing moderation)
  - providing content (to enable the regular updating of content)
- records management in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*
- evaluation and reporting - how will the activity be measured against its objectives. What methods, qualitative and/or quantitative, will be used to assess performance? When will the evaluation occur?

## **3.3 REGISTRATION**

All Facebook (Eyewatch) pages for PACs/PDs must be registered with the Eyewatch Team, Corporate Communications Unit.

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All social media pages or platforms for commands *other than* PACs/PDs, for corporate sponsor portfolios, CET members and pages for special events, must be registered with the Digital Media Team, Corporate Communications Unit.

To register, provide the following information:

- command
- name of page
- URL
- key contacts (24/7)
- email and telephone contact, including afterhours contact details
- RMS number of the document approving creation of the page (see section 3.2.1-2).

## 4. MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

### 4.1 COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITY

The Commander/Director of a command which hosts a social media account or page, or the CET member or current Corporate Sponsor who hosts an individual social media account or page is responsible for ensuring processes are in place for creating, managing, publishing, updating, moderating, evaluating and decommissioning the page.

For example, the Superintendent of a PAC/PD is ultimately responsible for the operation and content of that PAC's/PD's Facebook page. The Executive Director, Public Affairs Branch is responsible for all official corporate NSW Police Force social media set up for disseminating information to, or requesting information from, the public.

The Commander/Director may delegate this responsibility as deemed appropriate to other employees in their command. Functions that may be delegated include:

- implementation and management of the activity, including performance against objectives
- approval of employees to administer or moderate the activity or page
- approval of employees to provide content to the activity or page
- records management of the page in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998* and related policies.

#### 4.1.1 Authorisation to Represent

NSW Police Force employees at the rank of Assistant Commissioner/Executive Director or equivalent and above, plus Corporate Sponsors, are authorised to represent the NSW Police Force on official NSW Police Force social media pages.

For all other NSW Police Force employees, the hosting command's Commander/Director, or the CET member or current Corporate Sponsor or delegate is responsible for granting approval to post information to their activity or page. For example, a PAC/PD

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Superintendent or delegate can grant approval for employees in his/her command, or members of other commands such as the Corporate Communications Unit.

Staff given approval to post to a social media account or page must comply with the requirements on representing the NSW Police Force set out at section 2 of this policy.

Authorisation to post information may be time limited or revoked at any time by the hosting command's Commander/Director or delegate.

### 4.1.2 Moderating

The Commander/Director or delegate must appoint sufficient moderators to ensure postings are regularly reviewed so that as soon as is practical, potentially offensive or defamatory posts are removed, out of date posts are removed or updated, and any crime or dangers reported are appropriately processed. See section 6 for details on moderation requirements.

## 4.2 PROFESSIONAL POLICE PROFILES

Staff authorised by the relevant commander to represent the NSW Police Force must create an official social media profile using their police email address. Staff who already have a gmail account associated with a profile such as an Eyewatch Profile on Facebook must change to the police email address.

All police profiles must to be registered and managed by the command responsible for the social media page or account. For example, all Eyewatch profiles must be registered with the Eyewatch Team. All police profiles on the corporate Twitter account must be registered with the Digital Media Team, Public Affairs Branch. All profiles for a Specialist or Corporate Services command social media page must be registered with that command.

Official police social media profiles remain the property of the NSW Police Force and must only to be used for the official reason the profile was created for. Official police profiles can be used for official business only, never for personal use. Professional Police profiles are subject to audit and may be deleted if the profile or its use contravenes police policies.

## 4.3 ASSISTANCE

The Digital Media Team and the Eyewatch Team, Corporate Communication Unit, Public Affairs Branch, can support commands with their social media accounts or pages by:

- assisting in setting up the page<sup>5</sup>
- providing training to nominated administrators, editors and analysts

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<sup>5</sup> Information on setting up a Facebook page can be found in the *Eyewatch Standards Operating Procedures and User Manual*.

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- providing ongoing telephone support.

The Corporate Communication Unit will from time to time monitor the content of police pages to:

- proactively contact the page administrator to offer assistance
- help ensure the messages being conveyed are consistent with corporate priorities, policies and decisions
- help ensure adherence to the *Official Use of Social Media Policy* and/or *Eyewatch* policies and procedures.

The Corporate Communications Unit can advise and assist, or if required, direct commands to modify or remove social media content that contravenes NSW Police Force policies such as the *Official Use of Social Media Policy and Procedures*, the *Media Policy*, the *Sponsorship, Donation and Fundraising Policy*, the *Endorsement Policy* and the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*.

## 5. SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

### 5.1 MEDIA POLICY

Any content published on or via social media must comply with relevant NSW Police Force policies, particularly the *Media Policy*, section 2 of this policy, the *Endorsement Policy*, and the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*.

### 5.2 APPEALS FOR INFORMATION

#### 5.2.1 Appealing for Information and Reporting Crime

When appealing for information, encourage:

- the public to report information directly to a police station or Crime Stoppers (e.g. telephone 1800 333 000 or online via [https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime\\_report](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime_report))
- victims of crime to report via the Police Assistance Line on 131444 or the Community Portal.

See Appendix 2 for templates to use when appealing for information from the public.

Advise members of the public not to post information about a potential POI, tip offs or details of a crime to a social media page such as Facebook. Posting such information onto a police social media page could be prejudicial, defamatory or incorrect. There is also the risk that the information posted may not be attended to immediately, or be overlooked, which could have serious consequences. Moderators need to be alert to postings about crime or suicide.

Members of the public will from time to time post information or tip offs about a crime or POI. When this occurs it is important to capture the information (screen grab) for future

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reference and/or use for evidentiary/intelligence purposes. Next hide or restrict the information from public view and if this cannot be achieved, delete the information from the page. Make an appropriate record of the hiding or removal of the information (for example record in an official Police notebook or duty book).

Promptly forward the copied information to the appropriate command or personnel for follow up. Make a COPs entry if relevant. Encourage the author to contact police directly with any further information. Police officers should attempt to contact the author to establish the validity of the information, the identity of the author and the occurrence of any offence, similar to responding to information received via a telephone at the Police Station.

### 5.2.2 Defamation: Postings and Links

To avoid defamation claims, care must be taken to check all facts before releasing them to the media, including social media. Do not post or re-post false accusations or information based on rumour or confidential sources about a person or business. See section 8.1 of the *Media Policy* for details.

If the NSW Police Force provides a link on a social media page to material that is known to be or suspected of being defamatory, the NSW Police Force may be held legally liable for re-publication of the material.

## 5.3 PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES

### 5.3.1 Wanted Persons, Persons of Interest, Missing Persons

Policy on the types of photographic images that can be published on official NSW Police Force social media for operational purposes, and the authorisation requirements, are set out in the 'Release of Images' section of the *Media Policy*.

For example, only static images relating to either summary or Table 2 offences can be posted on Eyewatch pages by a PAC/PD, unless approval is obtained via the Public Affairs Branch.

If posting a photograph of a Wanted Person, Person of Interest or Missing Person, monitor the post carefully to ensure that comments do not contain information that may be defamatory or prejudicial to any future court matters.

It is also vital that the image and text be urgently removed (e.g., from the Facebook Wall, Notes archive and photo gallery) if the POI is arrested or charged, or the warrant is withdrawn or suspended. Failure to monitor and urgently remove the post or image may result in contempt of court or may jeopardise court proceedings.

Once a Missing Person is found, consider whether the photograph should be quickly removed (for privacy) or temporarily retained to publicise the good news.

### 5.3.2 Photographs and Images: Members of the Public

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The NSW Police Force may photograph or video people in a public place for non-law enforcement purposes, such as at Chinese New Year celebrations, and publish them. To avoid any potential offence or distress, consider asking the people photographed whether they have any objection to publication on a police social media page.

If considering publishing images of people *not taken in a public place* for non-law enforcement purposes, written permission of the person photographed (such as via email or letter) must be obtained before posting the image.

If the photograph was not taken by a police or government employee then the photographer's consent will also be needed as they own the copyright (see section 5.4.1). The NSW Police Force owns the copyright for photographs taken by police employees in the course of their duties.

For images of politicians see section 5.5.2 below.

### 5.3.3 Photographs and Images: Police Employees

A photograph or image that clearly identifies a NSW Police Force employee must not be uploaded to any official NSW Police Force social media (e.g. Eyewatch Facebook pages, corporate Twitter or YouTube accounts) or any other social media unless written consent is obtained (via email, release form<sup>6</sup>, official police notebook etc) from the person depicted in the image.

Any NSW Police Force employee posting an image that clearly identifies an employee to any official Police Force social media, or any other social media, must first:

- possess and keep on record a copy the employee's written consent (release form, email or official police notebook etc)
- complete the process set out in the Social Media Checklist<sup>7</sup>.

If the photograph/video was not taken by a police or government employee the photographer's consent will also be needed as they own the copyright.

### 5.3.4 Exemptions - Police Employees

Written consent and completion of the checklist are not required in the following circumstances.

1. When NSW Police Force employees are visible but not clearly identifiable, such as in a photograph where employees are in the background.
2. Where there are large numbers of police employees in the foreground, such as at attestation or award ceremonies, if it is clearly announced beforehand that a corporate photographer will be taking photographs/video which may be published externally, and

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix 4 for the Release Form

<sup>7</sup> See appendix 5 for the Social Media Checklist

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anyone who does NOT want their image published online has the opportunity to not take part.

Separate photographs/video can be taken of the full group on the clear understanding that these images will not be posted online or otherwise published externally.

3. When police employees are being photographed/filmed by police employed/appointed photographers or multimedia camerapersons while conducting police operations such as arrests, provided that:

- the officers involved in the operation have been briefed on the presence and purpose of multimedia/photographer attendance
- the officers have had the opportunity to raise any concerns/objections to being filmed
- the multimedia/photographer comply with Public Affairs Branch SOPs that address officer privacy concerns such as undercover officers, counter terrorist operatives and other at-risk staff
- any photographs/film released to the media or social media have been processed in accordance with *Media Policy* requirements (for example, approval by the Public Affairs Branch, relevant PAC/PD or business unit, the Undercover Branch where applicable and the Office of the General Counsel).

4. When officers take part in events specifically designed for publication on media and social media, such as media conferences, interviews, public launches and approved reality TV shows. Officers attending publicity events, such as giving a media conference, are deemed to have consented to its publication.

If uncertain of these exemptions, seek advice from the Digital Media Team, Public Affairs Branch.

## 5.4 COPYRIGHT, DISCLAIMER AND EXTERNAL LINKS

### 5.4.1 Copyright

The NSW Police Force must ensure that any materials published on official police social media pages that are not the property of the NSW Police Force, or a NSW State Government department, do not infringe any third party intellectual property rights including copyright in relation to text, music, images or videos and trademarks.

There may be licensing or copyright issues that either prevent the publishing of external copyrighted material onto social media or require payment of a licence fee or royalties to do so.

Commands must comply with any intellectual property right requirements placed on external material before they post it onto their social media page. Page owners are responsible for any intellectual property breaches on their social media page. If in doubt seek legal advice from the Office of the General Counsel.

### 5.4.2 Disclaimer

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All NSW Police Force social media pages must carry the official Copyright and Disclaimer on their home page via a link to the Copyright and Disclaimer found on the NSW Police Force internet page.

### **5.4.3 External Links and Likes**

The NSW Police Force must be careful when considering whether to 'like' or provide a link to an external page. Other pages may carry different, even conflicting advice which has the potential to cause embarrassment to the NSW Police Force. This is particularly the case with private sector organisations whose operations, standards and attitudes may not reflect those of the NSW Police Force. Links to non-government webpages also need to avoid any implication of police endorsement or sponsorship.

To avoid placing external copyrighted material on a NSW Police Force social media page, a reference or a link can be provided to where that material is hosted (unless such links are prohibited).

## **5.5 ADVERTISING**

### **5.5.1 Commercial Advertising and Sponsorship**

While the NSW Police Force cannot control advertising that is placed *around* our social media pages, commercial advertising is not permitted *on* NSW Police Force social media pages. The NSW Police Force also does not sponsor or endorse products or services from an external person or organisation.

A company or individual sponsoring an approved police activity or program may be acknowledged on a police social media page. The level of acknowledgment must be commensurate with the value of the sponsorship, as specified in the *Sponsorship, Donation and Fundraising Policy*. Any reference to a sponsor should acknowledge the sponsor without endorsing the sponsor or any product or service.

While a sponsor's name may be acknowledged, any link to a sponsor's internet or social media page must be carefully managed to ensure there is no overt or implied police sponsorship or endorsement of the sponsor or their products or services.

For advice on sponsorship or endorsement, contact the Corporate Communications Unit, Public Affairs Branch.

### **5.5.2 Government Advertising, Social Media and Party Political messages**

NSW Police Force paid advertising campaigns published on social media must comply with the *NSW Government Advertising Guidelines*, including the principles of accuracy and appropriateness, political neutrality, need and cost-efficiency.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 'Government advertising campaign' is defined in section 4 of the *Government Advertising Act 2011*.  
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While online content published on police owned social media pages fall outside the *Government Advertising Act 2011*, the Audit Office of NSW expects that agencies should conduct these activities in line with the same principles.<sup>9</sup> Official NSW Police Force social media posts must not:

- be designed to influence support for a political party
- include material that gives prominence to the voice or image of a Minister, any other member of Parliament or a candidate
- include material with the name, logo or any slogan of a political party.

## 5.6 COMMAND PAGES: LOCAL CONTENT

### 5.6.1 Local and Corporate Content

Command pages should contain sufficient identifiable local content relating to the functions, expertise or geographic location of their command, to distinguish them from corporate pages.

A PAC/PD page might, for example, include information about local crime, a local event, or a major traffic accident in a neighbouring PAC/PD that would impact on local residents. State-wide or NSW Police Force wide information of local interest or with local application could also be posted, such as information about the Royal Easter show, Police Careers Day, or supporting White Ribbon Day to combat domestic violence. PACs/PDs could also post a localised version of a major corporate initiative or announcement.

Post information immediately relevant to the broad local community or a specific local target audience. For example, ask the public to report information about a local crime, or provide crime prevention advice applicable to the average person.

Consult with relevant commands or subject experts if information to be posted on a command page will directly impact on those other areas.

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<sup>9</sup> *NSW Auditor-General's Report, Performance Audit: Government Advertising*, June 2015, p.34. The *NSW Government Social Media Policy and Guidelines* advises social media use must remain apolitical and consistent with the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*. On police staff being photographed with politicians, see section 5.8 of the *Media Policy*.

## **5.6.2 Major Emergencies and Incidents**

During major incidents and emergencies, the corporate social media pages and accounts are the designated sources of official police emergency management information. The information posted to these pages during major emergencies will be authorised by the State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCN) in most instances.

To ensure a consistent message during major emergencies, command social media pages wishing to post on the situation are to:

- encourage the public to go to the police corporate social media pages and accounts for information, and/or
- rebroadcast information from the police corporate social media pages and accounts.

PACs/PDs within the affected area may provide additional finer details on their social media pages on local arrangements such as road closures, evacuation centres etc., to provide localised information for residents or people passing through the area. However, any information published must be consistent with, and must not contradict, SEOCN approved messages on corporate pages.

During major emergencies monitor conversations and questions. Answer questions and direct to approved information. Correct misinformation before it spreads.

## **5.6.3 Suggested Topics**

To assist in identifying appropriate content for posting to command social media pages, Appendix 3 provides advice on recommended topics. Appendix 6 provides advice on developing social media communication and marketing strategies.

# **6. MODERATION OF POLICE PAGES**

## **6.1 THE MODERATOR**

### **6.1.1 Discriminatory, Defamatory or Offensive Public Comments**

Social media open to public input inevitably attract comments that are offensive, inappropriate, false, deceptive or irrelevant.

The NSW Police Force may be legally liable for offensive or defamatory comments posted on its social media pages where:

- a person has requested the removal of the comment, or the NSW Police Force ‘turns a blind eye’ to such a comment on its page
- the NSW Police Force has the technical ability to remove the comment; and
- the comment is not removed as soon as reasonably possible.

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Failure to remove racially offensive or other discriminating comments may contravene Commonwealth anti-discrimination and racial discrimination legislation.

Similarly, the NSW Police Force may be legally liable for postings made by others on police pages which are false or likely to mislead or deceive.

Where a person alleges that a comment is defamatory, discriminatory, offensive or false etc., and requests its removal, the NSW Police Force must, as soon as reasonably possible, review and if necessary remove the comment.

Members of the public may also post information about crime on social media pages. Failure to process and respond to this information in a timely manner could have serious consequences. Failure to act when bound by a duty of care is negligence.

### 6.1.2 The Role of Moderators

All official NSW Police Force social media that seek public comments online must have moderators (also known as administrators) appointed to review comments either before or soon after they are posted. The moderator's role is to ensure that online posts placed on official NSW Police Force social media pages are relevant, non-threatening, respectful of the views of other contributors and are not insulting, obscene, prejudicial or defamatory.

Moderators must regularly review their social media page or activity to remove any posts that do not comply with the requirements set out in the *Acceptable Use Standards* below (see section 7). A number of moderators should be appointed to ensure posts are regularly reviewed, including on weekends, so that as soon as is practical, inappropriate posts are quickly removed.

In reviewing online postings:

- the moderation process must assess all content on official NSW Police Force social media pages, whether posted by NSW Police Force representatives or by members of the public
- the moderation process must be sensitive to the diversity of Australian public opinion and avoid any perception of discrimination or censorship
- the moderation process must be objective and impartial. Content that is positive or negative and in context is acceptable. Content that is insulting, obscene, offensive, discriminatory, denigrating, prejudicial or defamatory etc., must be removed
- content about a POI, potential POI or details of a crime, suicide or emergency must be removed and as relevant, recorded on COPs and forwarded to the appropriate personnel or command
- for more serious or repeated breaches of the *Acceptable Use Standards* the moderator can ban members of the public from the police social media page
- when appropriate, the moderator can inform posters of why a post has been rejected and give them an opportunity to resubmit an edited version.

### **6.1.3 Moderator's Guidelines**

Guidelines to assist with moderating social media pages are found at Appendix 1.

### **6.1.4 Assistance**

For advice on interpreting the Moderator's Guide or in assessing difficult posts, PAC/PD moderators can contact the Eyewatch Team (E/N: 45347) and non-PAC/PD moderators can contact the Digital Media Team, Corporate Communications Unit, Public Affairs Branch (E/N: 45217).

### **6.1.5 Constant Moderation**

To ensure any inappropriate content, complaints, reports of crime or attempted suicides, defamation or other issues are promptly dealt with, the page owner must put in place a system to enable the page to be reasonably monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If the page owner/command is unable to directly monitor the page for certain sections of the 24 hour cycle, an alternate strategy must be implemented for those periods. Alternative strategies include, but are not limited to:

- notifications received on the mobile phone or tablet etc., of the commander/duty officer/crime manager (or equivalent)
- temporarily removing the ability for the page to receive posts from the public.

### **6.1.6 Moderating Tools and Settings**

Some social media contain administrative functions or tools that can be used or purchased to assist moderation. For example, some settings can hide from public view, limit or highlight defamatory, discriminatory, or offensive comments. Other filters enable the creation of key word lists to auto-hide, flag or highlight words or phrases (see the Eyewatch Teams' moderating lists and Facebook's 'moderation blacklist').

In setting automatic restrictions, take care to ensure the restrictions do not unnecessarily limit the ability of the social media page to fulfil its objectives. The Eyewatch Team and Digital Media Team have access to tools that can assist with the moderation of official police social media.

## **6.2 COMPLAINTS**

Posts made to NSW Police Force social media pages by members of the public will from time to time contain negative comments. When reviewing negative posts, moderators of police social media pages must identify when a criticism may constitute a complaint.

### **6.2.1 Issues – Quick Resolution**

Some issues can be resolved immediately by providing non-confidential information that explains why an event occurred as it did. For example, a criticism of police officers

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driving while using a mobile phone can be resolved by explaining that police are exempt from the prohibition. A PAC/PD moderator may be able to resolve a criticism that local police took three hours to attend to a car doing burnouts by explaining that police were, for example, responding to a major fatal accident.

A collection of generic answers to frequently asked questions or commonly discussed topics can be kept to help in these situations. PAC/PD moderators can also contact the Police Media Unit on E/N 45101 for holding statements or media releases.

### 6.2.2 Issues – Possible Complaints

If a concern cannot be quickly resolved by the provision of information, moderators should contact the author and advise them of the option to make a formal complaint via the following link:

[https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online\\_services/providing\\_feedback\\_and\\_reporting\\_corruption/feedback\\_compliments\\_complaints\\_and\\_suggestions](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/providing_feedback_and_reporting_corruption/feedback_compliments_complaints_and_suggestions)

The formal application format will:

- help ensure sufficient information is provided to enable the complaint to be assessed
- emphasise the consequences of making a false complaint, and
- start an auditable trail independent of the command to assist with corruption resistance.

If the topic of the possible complaint appears to be of a serious nature, moderators should also capture the post and:

- if it relates to the moderator's own command or its staff, refer it to the Commander, Professional Standards Manager or Professional Standards Duty Officer for information, informing the officer that the author has been advised of the option to make a formal complaint
- if it relates to another command or its staff, refer it to that command's Commander, Professional Standards Manager or Professional Standards Duty Officer for information, informing them that the author has been advised of the option to make a formal complaint
- if it relates to the Commander of a unit, such as a PAC/PD Superintendent, refer it to that Commander's supervisor (such as the Region Commander) or to the Professional Standards Command.

### 6.2.3 Conflict of Interest

If the potential complaint creates a conflict of interest with the moderator who receives the post, then the moderator must advise their supervisor in writing of the conflict and forward the post to their supervisor for processing. For example, the complaint could be about the moderator, a close friend, or an incident the moderator is connected with.

## 7. ACCEPTABLE USE STANDARDS

### 7.1 RULES FOR PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS

The *Acceptable Use Standards* set rules that must be followed by members of the public when they contribute to police social media pages and accounts.

The *Acceptable Use Standards* help to create an environment where community members can contribute their views to assist the NSW Police Force or improve police policy or services, without fear of abuse or harassment or exposure to offensive or otherwise inappropriate content. The standards also help protect the NSW Police Force from legal liability.

All official NSW Police Force social media pages and accounts that seek public comments online must display the following *Acceptable Use Standards*:

*When contributing your views please ensure that you:*

- *protect your personal privacy and that of others by not including any unnecessarily personal information in your posts (such as names, email addresses, private addresses or phone numbers)*
- *report information about crime or persons of interest directly to Crime Stoppers or a police station, not to this page*
- *post material that is relevant to the issues currently being discussed*
- *represent your own views and not impersonate or falsely represent any other person or organisation*
- *do not post material or use language that is obscene, offensive, indecent, pornographic, insulting, provocative, or harasses, intimidates or threatens others*
- *do not use language that incites hatred based on race, gender, religion, nationality, sexuality or other personal characteristic*
- *do not post material that encourages behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence or create a civil liability, or otherwise violate a law*
- *do not post or upload any content that is unlawful, is in contempt of court or breaches a court injunction or may defame, libel or discriminate against others*
- *do not post material that is prejudicial or pre-judges a person who has been arrested and charged, but who has not yet had the opportunity of defending themselves in court*
- *do not post material that infringes copyright, trademark or other intellectual property rights*
- *do not post multiple versions of the same view (spam)*
- *do not promote commercial interests in your posts; and*
- *do not include internet addresses or links to non-government department webpages, or any email addresses, in your contribution.*<sup>10</sup>

*Postings which breach the Acceptable Use Standards may be deleted or the author banned from this page. In extreme cases breaches may result in criminal or civil sanctions.*

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<sup>10</sup> Includes information from circular 2008/8: *Interim protocols for online media participation Australian Public Service (APS Commission) 2008, annexure B.*

### 7.1.1 Online harassment/defamation of police employees

If you are subject to harassment or offending posts on a social media page relating to you as a police employee and/or your work as a public official, inform your supervisor/manager. If the harassment is sufficiently serious consider managing in accordance with the guidelines for *Managing Threats Against NSW Police Force Employees*. Advice on social media can be sought from the Digital Media Team or Eyewatch Team, Corporate Communications Unit.

## 8. EVALUATION & DECOMMISSIONING OF OFFICIAL PAGES

### 8.1 ASSESSING EFFECTIVENESS

#### 8.1.1 On-going Evaluation

An evaluation of official NSW Police Force social media should be conducted every six months to ensure the pages continue to be relevant to the mission of the NSW Police Force, and are achieving the set objectives.

The evaluation of social media should include analysis of benchmarks which may include the following:

- success or failure measured against the agreed objectives
- the effectiveness of promotional techniques
- the effectiveness of the moderators in managing content
- number of unique visits
- feedback from users – positive comments and complaints, problems or other negative experiences, especially feedback that demonstrates whether the page or activity was successful or not in meeting the objectives
- opportunities for further development or enhancements.

Official police social media will typically seek to achieve one or more of the following:

- awareness - increase public awareness of the NSW Police Force and events or incidents in the community
- engagement - foster community engagement with the agency
- influence - influence community opinion and behaviour
- action - mobilise the public to take action (e.g. reporting crime and assisting police).

The Digital Media Unit (E/N: 45217 or E/N: 45416) or the Eyewatch Team (E/N: 45347) Corporate Communications Unit, Public Affairs Branch, can assist with identifying

appropriate tools to enable commands to measure and analyse their social media page, account or activity<sup>11</sup>.

## **8.2 CLOSING DOWN A PAGE OR ACTIVITY**

When decommissioning any official NSW Police Force social media page, account or activity, consideration should be given to:

- reviewing which threads or comments should or should not and can or cannot be deleted
- managing the content and links to any other pages or accounts
- addressing any licences or contracts associated with the page or account
- migrating any necessary content to other pages or accounts
- ensuring that users are advised of the closure of the page, account or activity
- complying with records management policies and processes
- undertaking account closure processes.<sup>12</sup>

# **9. RELATED POLICIES**

## **9.1 NSW POLICE FORCE POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

NSW Police Force policies related to this policy are set out below:

- *Alert Concept of Operations*, State Planning Unit, 2016
- *Code of Conduct and Ethics (Standards of Professional Conduct Booklet)* Professional Standards, 2020
- *Corporate Branding Policy and Standards*, Public Affairs, 2021
- *Endorsement Policy and Procedures*, Public Affairs, 2021
- *Eyewatch User Manual*, NSW Police Force, 2014
- *Eyewatch Standard Operating Procedures*, NSW Police Force, 2014
- *Information Security Manual*, Digital Technology and Innovation, 2021
- *Internet Content Policy*, Public Affairs/ Digital Technology and Innovation, 2016
- *Media Policy*, Public Affairs, 2021
- *Personal Use of Social Media Policy and Guidelines*, Public Affairs, 2015
- *Procedures for Managing Conflicts of Interest*, Professional Standards, 2019
- *Sponsorship, Donation and Fundraising Policy*, Public Affairs, 2021
- *Threats Against NSW Police Force Employees*, Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics, 2017

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<sup>11</sup> Information on possible measurements for assessing the typical four aims is also found at *Department of Health Social Media Action Plan Part 2: Staff Tool Kit*, Victorian Department of Health, 2010 p.27-29.

<sup>12</sup> NSW Government Advertising Guidelines, 2011, Appendix p.13

## Appendix 1: Moderator's Guide<sup>13</sup>

Issue	Recommended Action
<b>Text of Posts</b>	
Spelling errors and typos Grammatical or typographical errors as well as spelling mistakes.	Leave as is. Delete if errors make the text unreadable.
Incorrect business or place names Incorrect spelling of the name of a location or person.	Leave as is. Delete if errors make the text unreadable.
Nonsense/Irrelevance Material that cannot be understood or is irrelevant or unrelated to the topic being discussed.	Hide for first offence. Delete if repeated.
Obscene language Swearing within the text or a video either through the use of audio or video overlay.	Low-level swearing or slang: consider leaving as is. Many pages and services offer a customisable list of terms that are not permitted. Delete what cannot be blocked.
Obscene posts or username Material which is offensive, indecent or pornographic, including any material of a sexual nature.	Delete and ban user account.
Foreign language Comments posted in foreign languages.	Translate to assess content, if practical. Leave if not offensive, delete otherwise.
Partial breaches of the guide One element of a comment breaches the moderators guide, but the rest is okay e.g. text is okay but not video.	Assess context. If practical, remove offensive element and publish. For all other breaches, delete comment with email, including a copy of the original comment.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	
Confidential information Secret or confidential information including personal information or addresses.	Screen capture and then delete confidential information.  Members of the public will from time to time post confidential information to a social media page. When this occurs capture the information, remove it from the page and if relevant forward it to the appropriate command or personnel in a timely manner, plus encourage the author to contact police directly (via a

<sup>13</sup> The Moderator's Guide is based on the table provided in the *Department of Health Social Media Action Plan part 2: Staff Tool Kit*, Victorian Department of Health, 2010 p.24-26  
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	police station or Crime Stoppers) with any further information.
Government information Information owned or held by a government department that has not been officially released to the public.	Delete. For persistent cases, ban user account.
<b>Crime and Emergencies</b>	
Information about crime, POIs, emergencies	Screen capture and then delete information.  Members of the public will from time to time post information about a POI, potential POI or details of a crime, suicide or emergency to a social media page. When this occurs capture the information, remove it from the page and in a timely manner, as relevant, record the details on COPs and forward it to the appropriate personnel or command. Also encourage the author to contact police directly via a police station or Crime Stoppers with any further information.
<b>Links, Advertising and Spam</b>	
Advertising Blatant or suspected stealth advertising. Posts with a self-interest in advertising a service or business.	References to commercial brands in contributions may be acceptable if justified or contextually relevant.  Blatant advertising but referring to an event – consider publishing.  Blatant but no event – Delete. For persistent cases, ban user account.  Suspected stealth advertising – seek the advice of a supervisor. If there is a strong enough reason to suspect it is stealth advertising, delete with a message such as: “This post appears to be advertising a service or business.” Ensure that a copy of the original comment is attached to the message.
Endorsement Posts that imply NSW Police Force endorsement of a commercial organisation, service, product or activity which could provide a commercial advantage through the association with the police.	Delete. For persistent cases, ban user account.
Spam Abuse through unsolicited multiple versions of the same message or excessive postings on a particular issue.	Delete. For persistent cases, ban user account.  If you judge that the poster does not have a legitimate reason to be on the page (e.g. they are an overseas spammer), ban immediately.
Duplication More than one copy of the same post.	Delete copy.

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Web links (URLs)	Delete with standard email. Determine if the link should be included on page.
Links Including links to material the moderator considers unsuitable e.g. pornography or pages in poor taste.	Delete. For serious cases, ban user account and report to channel i.e. Facebook.
<b>Harassment and Offensive Behaviours</b>	
Aggressive or harassing posts Harassment is unwanted conduct (including insults and 'jokes') affecting the dignity of another, including written attacks on another person. Such conduct could relate to gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, disability, economic status, physical characteristics, or other similarly sensitive issues.	Screen capture and then delete. Ban user account.
Offensive posts Posts considered to be personally offensive to a reader.	Screen capture and then delete. Issue warning. For serious cases, ban user account.
Negative posts Posts which are critical and in context but not defamatory etc.	Allow.
<b>Misleading Comments, Defamation and Slander</b>	
Misleading comments NSWPF is legally responsible for posts or public comments made by others on police social media pages which are either false or likely to mislead or deceive.	Allow with editor's comment to correct for minor matters. Delete if the post breaches another major rule or if an editor's correction may not be sufficient to override the false impression made by the original comments. For serious cases, delete and ban user account.
Defamation Posts that adversely affect the reputation of a clearly identifiable person, company or organisation.	Screen capture and then delete. Issue warning. Provide copy to appropriate command as relevant. For serious cases, ban user account.
Illegal Incitement - any posting which seeks to encourage another to the commission of a criminal offence, or give rise to a civil liability.	Screen capture and then delete. Ban user account. Provide copy to appropriate command as relevant.

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<p>Risk to safety</p> <p>Material that describes or encourages activities that could endanger the safety or well-being of others.</p>	<p>Screen capture, delete post and ban the user account.</p> <p>Provide copy to appropriate command as relevant.</p> <p>This should be a zero-tolerance offence.</p>
<p>Intellectual Property</p> <p>Postings that may infringe any of the laws governing copyright or intellectual property. Plagiarism.</p>	<p>Screen capture and then delete.</p> <p>Issue warning.</p> <p>Provide copy to appropriate command as relevant.</p> <p>For serious cases, ban user account.</p>
<p>Contempt of Court</p> <p>Do not identify matters that are currently the subject of legal proceedings or would breach a court order, including a suppression order.</p> <p>(Messages containing details, comments or any matter whatsoever relating to people under arrest, charged, issued with a court attendance notice or relating to current court proceedings, whether criminal or civil).</p>	<p>This is an issue that may be hard to identify.</p> <p>Screen capture and then delete if identified.</p> <p>Provide copy to appropriate command as relevant.</p> <p>For serious cases, ban user account.</p>
<p>Prejudicial comments</p> <p>Comments that 'pre-judges' someone before they have had the right to defend their charges at a fair trial. For example, "throw the book at them, throw away the key, hope they rot in jail, what an idiot, they should be ashamed" etc are prejudicial.</p>	<p>Screen capture and then delete.</p> <p>Issue warning.</p> <p>For serious cases, ban user account.</p>
<p>Impersonation</p> <p>Impersonating or falsely claiming to represent another person or organisation.</p>	<p>This is an issue that may be hard for a moderator to identify.</p> <p>Screen capture and then delete if identified.</p> <p>Ban the user account. Impersonation of others should be a zero-tolerance offence.</p>
<b>Complaints</b>	
<p>Complaints</p> <p>A negative comment, including what appears to be a complaint under Part 8A of the <i>Police Act 1990</i>, particularly if against a specific NSW Police Force employee or action.</p>	<p>Some issues can be resolved by providing the author with non-confidential information that explains why an event occurred as it did.</p> <p>If a concern cannot be quickly resolved by the provision of information, contact the author and advise them of the option to make a formal complaint via the NSWPF Internet page so that the matter can be officially assessed and investigated.</p>
<b>Other Issues</b>	
<p>Content Conflicts with Policy</p> <p>Content conflicts or is otherwise incompatible with any New South Wales Police or NSW Government policy.</p>	<p>Delete unless part of a justified and contextually relevant discussion or criticism.</p> <p>For serious cases, ban user account.</p>

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HTML Mark up affecting the look of the comment.	Remove HTML and publish or delete.
Typing in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS	Short post: Approve, email user asking them to use mixed case in the future. Long post or subsequent occasions: delete with email, inviting user to resubmit as an appropriately formatted post.
Financial information Posts containing financial information, share tips, etc.	Delete. May also be suspected stealth advertising, see 'Advertising' above.
Party Political Posts designed to influence support or promote a political party and its policies, slogans or logos, or give prominence to a Minister, politician or candidate. Propaganda.	The Police Force is always high on the political agenda, so references to political parties and their policies may be justified or contextually relevant. Delete posts that are overtly party political in nature. For persistent cases, ban user account.

## Appendix 2: Appeals for Public Assistance Templates



### Police appeal for information following <offence> – <Suburb>

Issued at <time>, <date> <year>

Police are appealing for public assistance following the <offence> in <location>. –  
**Mention the offence and location.**

About <time>, <date>, <brief description of offence> – In this paragraph outline the  
time, date, and the address (not the street number).

Initial reports received by police indicate that <further details of offence>. – Give more  
information about the offence, what happened, but keep the description of the  
offence broad, without specific details. See sections 4.1 and 6.1 of the *Media Policy*.

Police were notified and officers from < PAC/PD > attended. A crime scene has been  
established and enquiries into the incident are continuing. – Include the PAC/PD  
investigating the incident.

Police are appealing for anyone who witnessed the incident, or who may have any  
information about suspicious activity in the area at the time, to come forward.

The first man is described as being of <ethnicity>, about <height> tall, of <build> build  
with <colour, length of hair> hair. – Description of the offender including, ethnicity,  
height, size, build, and hair colour/description. See section 9 of the *Media Policy*.

At the time he was wearing <description of clothing >.

**Repeat the above for each offender.**

Anyone with information is urged to contact < PAC/PD > Police on xxxx or Crime  
Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



## Police appeal for information following armed robbery – Penrith (offence and suburb)

Issued at 4.00 pm, 10 September 2011

Police are appealing for public assistance following the armed robbery of a hotel in Sydney’s west last night. – **Mention the offence and location.**

About 9pm on Thursday 9 September 2011, two men entered the hotel on George Street, Penrith, and threatened a number of employees with a firearm. – **In this paragraph outline the time, date, and the address (not the street number).**

Police have been told the men demanded money before fleeing with a sum of cash and other items. – **Give more information on the offence, what happened, but keep the description of the offence broad, without specific details. See sections 4.1 and 6.1 of the Media Policy.**

No one was injured during the incident. – **Broadly describe injuries if any occurred.**

Police were notified and officers attached to Penrith LAC attended, established a crime scene and canvassed the area. – **Include the PAC/PD investigating the incident.**

Police are appealing for anyone who witnessed the incident or any suspicious activity to come forward.

The first man is described as being of Caucasian appearance, about 180cm tall, of heavy build with short black hair and a moustache. – **Description of the offender including, ethnicity, height, size, build, and hair colour/description. See section 9 of the Media Policy.** At the time he was wearing jeans, a black jumper and white shoes. – **If given, include details of clothing etc.**

**Repeat the above for each offender.**

Anyone with information is urged to contact Penrith Police on xxxx or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

\*\*\*\*\*

Issued by NSW Police Force Media Unit (02) 8263 6100  
Authorised by Xxxx, Xxxx PAC/PD



## Police seek missing person – Tweed Heads

Tuesday, 15 November 2011 10:04:29 AM

Police are seeking public assistance to locate a woman missing from a Caravan Park in Tweed Heads since Friday - **Mention the event and location.**

70 year old Carol Anderson left the caravan park on Dry Dock Road at about 1.40pm on Friday 11 November 2011. She was last seen walking toward Fraser Drive and has not been seen since. – **In this paragraph give more information about the event, and outline the time, date, and the address (not the street number).**

Carol Anderson is described as of Caucasian appearance, 160cm tall, of a medium build, with brown/grey collar length hair. She was last seen wearing a long white dress with shoe string straps. - **Describe the missing person including, ethnicity, height, size, build, and hair colour/description. See section 9 of the *Media Policy*.**

Police have concerns for her welfare due to her age and the amount of time she has been missing.

Anyone with information about Carol Anderson's whereabouts should contact < **local PAC/PD** > or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

\*\*\*\*\*

Issued by NSW Police XXXXX Unit (02) 8263 6100

Authorised by Xxxx, Xxxx PAC/PD

	<h1>NSW POLICE FORCE</h1> <h2>MEDIA RELEASE</h2>	 <p>CRIME STOPPERS .com.au 1800 333 000</p>
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## Man/woman sought on arrest warrant/s – Region

Issued at <time>, <date> <year>

Police are appealing for public assistance to locate a <man/woman> wanted by virtue of arrest warrants.

<Name>, <age>, is wanted on a <type of warrant> warrant.

He/she is wanted in relation to the alleged <offence>. - **When issuing a release for a person wanted via an arrest warrant, the description of the offence should be broad, with no specific detail i.e. ‘the man/woman is wanted in relation to an alleged armed robbery at Greystanes in 2008.’ See sections 4.1 and 6.1 of the *Media Policy*.**

Police have received information that he/she could be in the <region/suburb> area.

<Surname> is described as being of <ethnicity> appearance with a <thin/solid etc> build, <colour> hair and <colour> eyes. **Describe the missing person; see section 9 of the *Media Policy*.**

Anyone who sees him/her or knows of his/her whereabouts should not approach him/her but contact police via Triple Zero (000) or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

\*\*\*\*\*

Issued by NSW Police XXXXX Unit (02) 8263 6100

Authorised by Xxxx, Xxxx PAC/PD



## Police appeal for information following motorcycle crash - Leppington

Thursday, 10 November 2011 01:46:16 PM

Police are appealing for information after a motorcycle crash in Sydney's south west. - **Mention the event and location.**

About 6.15pm yesterday (Wednesday 9 November 2011) a 22 year old man rode a blue Kawasaki motorcycle south along Cowpasture Road, Leppington, when it left the road near the intersection of Camden Valley Way. – **In this paragraph give more information about the event, and outline the time and date, the address (not the street number).**

The 22-year-old rider was thrown from the bike and suffered critical injuries to his head, chest, back and abdomen. - **Broadly describe injuries if relevant.**

He was treated by Ambulance Paramedics before being taken to Liverpool Hospital, where he remains in a serious condition.

Police from Green Valley attended the scene and are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident. - **Include the local PAC/PD investigating the incident.**

Anyone who witnessed the incident or the events leading up to the incident, is urged to contact Green Valley Police or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

\*\*\*\*\*

Issued by NSW Police XXXXX Unit (02) 8263 6100

Authorised by Xxxx, Xxxx PAC/PD



## Police Release CCTV images following taxi robbery

Issued at 3.15pm, Monday 24 October 2011

Police have released CCTV images of a man they wish to speak to in relation to the robbery of a taxi driver last month. - **When a media release is accompanied by a photo or CCTV image, do not attribute blame or guilt in the release to the person depicted in the images. See section 5 of the *Media Policy*.**

Between 9.10pm and 9.15pm on Saturday 10 September 2011, a man entered a taxi on Casula Road, Casula, and directed the taxi driver to Acacia Avenue at Prestons. – **In this paragraph outline the time, date, and the address (not the street number).**

Once at the location the man produced a knife and threatened the driver, before obtaining an amount of cash and running from the location. – **Give more information on the offence, what happened, but keep the description of the offence broad, without specific details. See sections 4.1 and 6.1 of the *Media Policy*.**

The taxi driver alerted police to the incident a short time later.

Following investigations, police from < local PAC/PD > have obtained images of a man who they believe may be able to assist with their enquiries. – **Include the PAC/PD investigating the incident.**

The man is described as being of Mediterranean/Middle Eastern appearance, about 25-years-old, 170cm tall of medium build with a short, closely trimmed beard. – **Description of POI including, ethnicity, height, size, build, and hair colour/ description. See section 9 of the *Media Policy*.**

Police are investigating whether this incident might be related to a number of other robberies in the area.

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Liverpool Acting Crime Manager, Detective Inspector Paul Smith, said “We have concerns that this might happen again and we need the community’s help to stop it,”

“We believe the person pictured may be able to assist police with their enquiries and provide information in relation to the investigation. We are asking that the community take some time to look at the images.” - **Do not attribute blame or guilt to the person of interest depicted in the images.**

Anyone with information about the incident, or who has information about the identity and whereabouts of the man depicted in the video, is urged to contact Liverpool Detectives or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Information can be supplied anonymously and will be dealt with in strict confidence.

\*\*\*\*\*

Issued by NSW Police Force Media Unit (02) 8263 6100  
Authorised by Detective Inspector Smith, Acting Crime Manager Liverpool LAC

## Appendix 3: Command Pages - Suggested Content

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To assist in identifying appropriate content for posting on command social media pages, the following are recommended.

### Crimes

Suggested crime related topics include:

- successes - good arrests by the host command, or related arrests of local interest by other sections of the NSW Police Force or other law enforcement agencies
- local crime hotspots and what police are doing to address these locations
- warnings of possible criminal or suspicious behaviour (e.g. stalkers or bag snatchers).

Only crime statistics provided by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) can be used. See section 3.1.2 of the *Media Policy* for details.

### Appeals

Direct requests for information from the general public or a specific group, including:

- keep a look out for<sup>14</sup>
- can you help us?
- missing persons<sup>15</sup> and property
- cold case appeals relevant to the local area or command
- persons of interest<sup>16</sup>
- witnesses.

Moderators should encourage people to share appeals and urgent posts, such as for an Amber Alert.

Templates to use when appealing for information are found at Appendix 2. Encourage the public to report directly to Crime Stoppers or a police station, *not* to the social media page (see section 5.2.1).

### Posts of Wanted Persons

To help ensure images and text are urgently removed if a POI is arrested or charged or the warrant is withdrawn or suspended, it is recommended that posts seeking a wanted person be placed on the PAC/PD's own Eyewatch Facebook page in the first instance. If wider distribution is needed it should be shared *from* the PAC/PD's Eyewatch page to other pages, such as the NSW Police Force corporate page.

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<sup>14</sup> See section 5.3.1 and 5.2.1 of this policy and section 5 of the *NSW Police Force Media Policy*.

<sup>15</sup> See section 5.3.1 of this policy and section 5 of the *NSW Police Force Media Policy*.

<sup>16</sup> Section 5.3.1 of this policy and section 5 of the *NSW Police Force Media Policy*.

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When the warrant status changes, the originating PAC/PD should be best placed to quickly learn of the change and remove the post from their PAC/PD Eyewatch page. This will have the effect of removing the post from all other Facebook feeds to which the post has been shared to.

If a video post, an expiry date should also be set for the post so that if human error fails to remove the post, it will eventually be automatically removed from the PAC/PD page and all other pages it had been shared to.

### General Emergencies

Provide information on emergencies that could impact on members of the local community. For example, provide information on local floods, bushfires, power blackouts, road closures or delays. Provide warnings, relevant contact numbers for further information, and suggestions or information that may help residents make decisions to manage or avoid the problems associated with such incidents.

For emergencies primarily involving the work of other agencies, draw content from the lead agency's social media page and/or provide a link to that page. Limit official NSW Police Force announcements on the emergency to the police role in the situation, such as alternate traffic arrangements or crowd control.

### Safety and Security

Proactive safety and security messages, consistent with the position of the Corporate Sponsor, if relevant:

- community safety — promoting responsible behaviour in connection with alcohol, road safety, school safety, outdoor venues and licensed premises (parks, beaches, pubs and clubs)
- crime prevention — personal security, home security, vehicle security, business security and fraud prevention.

### Command or Corporate Campaigns

Promote relevant campaigns that are being run by individual commands or the organisation such as Police Career Day, traffic operations such as Operation Safe Arrival, campaigns on mobile phones and driving, or missing persons. Also encourage people to consider a career in the NSW Police Force.

### Events and Community Programs

Post information on significant events that could impact on the local community such as music festivals, sporting and community events. Provide advice on potential traffic issues, crowd management, crime prevention and safety. For example:

- seasonal issues and events such as summer and beach safety, New Year's Eve and ANZAC Day

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- promotion of events organised by the host command or the NSW Police Force, such as a shopping centre exhibit or station open day, or Police Careers Day (post links to event information, share event posters etc)
- promotion of community programs such as PCYC, Blue Light Discos, Neighbourhood Watch
- promotion of the NSW Police Force or command stand at events such as a local show or the Sydney Easter Show, V8 or Police Expo
- Community Safety Precinct Committee Meetings - upcoming meetings and the outcomes from previous meetings.

### General Interest

- Good work by members of the command or NSW Police Force in raising money for a charity.
- Sporting success by a command member or team.
- A historical topic involving police such as a local police station turning 50 years old.
- Awards/recognition given to police or emergency service employees or members of the public (e.g. local recipients of bravery awards).
- Information that reflects well on the local community and could help improve perceptions on crime, such as a lost wallet being handed in to a police station.

### Corporate Information

Media releases issued by the Police Media Unit, and information on the NSW Police Force internet page that relate to the local community or specialist command functions are options for selecting content for command social media pages. These two sources offer the advantage of containing information already corporately endorsed for public distribution.

### Cross Promotion

Cross promote relevant content or messages from other government departments such as the:

- Bureau of Meteorology
- SCAMwatch
- Live Traffic NSW
- Roads and Maritime Services
- other State or Federal government agencies.

### Responding to Questions

In responding to questions from the public consider providing a link or explaining where readers can find more information on the NSW Police Force or other government agency webpage. For example, for questions regarding legislation, a link could be provided to the appropriate section of the Act on the Legislation NSW webpage ([www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)). This option enables the reader to seek out further

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information, as well as helping to avoid inconsistencies between the answer given and government policy and legislation.

Do not speak on behalf of another command or on topics outside your expertise without first seeking advice and authorisation. Do not criticise NSW Police Force or Government policies or programs.

### Postings

Several authorised contributors should be appointed to ensure that postings are regularly made or updated throughout the day.

Post regularly, focusing on issues of relevance today or on events coming up soon. Where possible, mix up posts to provide varied content i.e. an appeal for information followed by a crime prevention tip. For short posts, consider providing links to more information and related content.

Try to make posts easy to like, share or comment on, to enable users to spread police information into the community, for example by providing options to post links to Twitter or Facebook.

Posts must be consistent with the corporate view. If in doubt, check with the relevant expert command or corporate sponsor.

### Internal Command Logos

There is only one official NSW Police Force *Corporate Brand* for external use. Individual Command Logos (known as Internal Logos) are approved for *internal use only*. Internal Logos must never be posted to any official police or external social media unless an Internal Logo has been given an exemption in writing for external use by the Cabinet Standing Committee on Communication and Government Advertising.<sup>17</sup>

### iASK for Social Media

Police officers investigating social media posts who want information from social media carriers are advised to contact Information Services, Operational Information Agency, or visit the following iASK Support intranet page: Organisation Units > Specialist Support > Operational Communications & Information Command > Operational Information Agency > iASK Support.

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<sup>17</sup> For details see the *Corporate Branding Policy and Standards*, section 2.4.

## Appendix 4: Release Form

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# Individual Reproduction and Publicity Release Form

### Project Title:

I hereby give permission for the NSW Police Force to use my name, any still, digital and video images, and/or audio, as well as any relevant information provided by me for the purpose of publicity relating to the role and activities of the organisation.

I understand that this may be used in:

- External media (TV, Radio, Newspaper, Webpage, Social Media, Print)
- Internal (NSW Police Force Intranet, Police Monthly, Training Video, Print)
- All of the above

I acknowledge that my participation in any promotional or educational capacity for the NSW Police Force is undertaken without any financial recompense in the form of royalties or similar payments.

Should my role or circumstances within the NSW Police Force change to the point that it requires removal of my image, voice and/or information from publicity or media material, I will undertake to inform my command and the Public Affairs Branch at the earliest possible opportunity.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the above and I hereby consent to the use of my image, audio and/or information by the NSW Police Force on the terms set out above.

Name	
Rank/Position	
Registered/Serial Number	
Date	
Signature	

## Appendix 5: Social Media Checklist



# Social Media Checklist

### Considerations before posting on NSWPF Social Media

This checklist has been developed, in consultation with the NSW Police Association, for the information of those who are responsible for using NSWPF Social Media accounts such as Eyewatch Facebook pages and the NSWPF Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter.

This checklist provides some important considerations to take into account before posting information online, especially when the post has the potential to identify a Police Officer or other employee, and attract unwanted online attention in their professional and/or personal life.

This information includes: Photographs and video that clearly identify a NSWPF employee, and posts that give out employee names.

This checklist supports the ALERT operation orders by strengthening protective measures regarding social media and members of the NSWPF.

## CHECKLIST

### Posts that identify NSWPF Employees - please ensure:

- The NSWPF Employee has signed the release of information consent form.
- The NSWPF Employee has advised he/she has reviewed/will immediately review their personal social media pages to ensure the privacy settings are adequate.

### Further considerations:

- Are there media issues or other local issues that might obviously cause the intended post to generate unwanted and unreasonable comment, thus damaging the reputation of the NSW Police Force or the Police employee?
- Does your command have the capacity to monitor the comments made by the public on your post? (e.g. posting on a Friday afternoon knowing your post will not be monitored over the weekend).

**CHECKLIST COMPLETED**

The Checklist was completed by the following officer:

Name	
Rank/Position	
Command/Unit	
Signature	
Date	

## Appendix 6: Model Communication & Marketing Strategy

This is a guide for developing a social media strategy to target a particular crime category or promote an event using your existing social media page.

