

**From:** VANDENBROEK, Sarah  
**Sent:** Friday, 6 June 2025 11:04 AM  
**To:** DLO Wells  
**Cc:** CHISHOLM, James; Irwin, Andrew; s22(1)(a)(ii); s22(1)(a)(ii); s22(1)(a)(ii); Age Assurance Trial Taskforce  
**Subject:** FW: MO Briefing Request - Due to DLOs by COB Friday 6 June - MO Meeting with TikTok [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]  
**Attachments:** Attachment A - Biographies.docx; Attachment B - TikTok's submission to the Online Safety (Age-Restricted Social Media Platforms) Rules 2025.pdf; Attachment C - s47G(1)(a), s47G(1)(b); Attachment D - TikTok's advertising push as under-16 social media ban looms \_ The Australian.pdf; Attachment E - Digital Industry Group Inc.'s letter on the Age Assurance Technology Trial.pdf

**OFFICIAL:Sensitive**

Hi s22(1)(a) – as requested, the information below and attached is provided to support the Office's meeting with TikTok.

Regards,  
 Sarah V

#### **MINISTER WELLS' OFFICE – MEETING WITH TIKTOK**

##### **Expected Attendees**

- Ms Ella Woods-Joyce, Director of Public Policy, TikTok
- Ms Sabina Husic, Public Policy Lead, Data and Privacy, TikTok

##### **Proposed Objectives:**

To highlight the Government's approach to social media regulation, including:

- the draft rules for excluding certain platforms from the social media minimum age legislation,
- the Age Assurance Technology Trial,
- the independent statutory Review of the *Online Safety Act 2021*,
- the News Bargaining Incentive, and
- Dispute Resolution.

##### **Their Objective:**

To discuss the Government's approach to online safety, including TikTok's objection to the exclusion of YouTube from the social media minimum age obligation.

##### **Key Points:**

###### *Social media minimum age*

- TikTok will likely raise the exclusion of YouTube from the minimum age obligation in the Online Safety (Age-Restricted Social Media Platforms) Rules 2025 (the Rules).
- In November 2024, the *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* (SMMA Act) was passed with bipartisan support, introducing a requirement that certain social media platforms prevent Australians under the age of 16 from having an account on their service. The requirement must come into effect by 10 December 2024, under a deferred commencement provision in the law.
- The requirement applies to 'age-restricted social media platforms', a new term introduced by the SMMA Act. The definition of this term casts a wide net, to ensure the law applies to the diverse range of platforms

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in the social media ecosystem. At the same time, the Minister for Communications can narrow the scope of capture through legislative rules.

- In her second reading speech, the former Minister for Communications, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, proposed that, in the first instance, the legislative rules would be used to exclude the below services from the minimum age obligation:
  - Messaging,
  - Online games,
  - Apps that primarily function to support health or education, and
  - YouTube.
- To give effect to these exclusions, the department developed the draft Rules and conducted targeted consultation between February and March 2025.
- s47C
- 
- 
- s47G(1)(a), s47G(1)(b)
- 
- On 2 June 2025, the Australian reported that TikTok had taken 4 ½ pages of marketing in the Australian Financial Review promoting the platform's utility in education ahead of the social media minimum age obligations coming into effect by 10 December 2025. A copy of the article is at **Attachment D**.

#### Age Assurance Technology Trial

- On 1 May 2024, the Prime Minister announced a \$6.5 million age assurance trial, to examine options to protect children from online harm, including from social media and access to age-restricted content like online pornography.
- The technology trial is assessing the feasibility of age assurance technologies in real-world applications, to identify whether they are accurate, user-friendly and compliant with privacy laws.
- More than 50 providers have submitted their technologies for assessment. This includes age verification, estimation and inference approaches across different levels of the tech stack, as well as parental consent and control solutions.
- The Age Check Certification Scheme is due to report back to Government on the results of the technology trial by July, with the results to be released thereafter.
- The trial does not set industry standards or define universal benchmarks for age assurance performance. It does not evaluate the commercial viability of these systems, assess their business models or provide a comprehensive policy recommendation for deployment.
- s47C
- The Digital Industry Group Inc. (DIGI), on behalf of its members (which includes TikTok), sent a letter to the department raising concerns regarding the process of the technology trial and the ability to robustly inform reasonable steps guidance. A copy of DIGI's letter can be found at **Attachment E**. s47C

s47C

Review of the Online Safety Act 2021

- On 13 November 2024, the Government announced a commitment to legislate a digital duty of care for online services operating in Australia, a key recommendation of the Review.
- TikTok has engaged with the department throughout the Review through meetings and a submission to the Review. As a member of the industry association, TikTok also provided input into DIGI's submission to the Review.
- s47G(1)(a), s47G(1)(b), s47C

News Bargaining Incentive

- In February 2024, Meta announced that it would not renew deals made with Australian news businesses under the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, which was introduced in 2021.
- In response, in December 2024, the Government announced the News Bargaining Incentive (NBI) to ensure large digital platforms contribute to the sustainability of news media in Australia.
- The NBI provides an incentive for a large digital platform, such as TikTok, to make deals with news publishers as they can claim this as a tax offset against the NBI. Where a platform chooses not to enter (or renew) deals, they must pay the NBI – the calculation of the charge will be based on total gross revenues attributable to Australian markets.
- Responsibility for the NBI sits with the Assistant Treasurer, and Treasury. Implementation of the NBI will require new legislation. Since the announcement, Treasury have been engaging with key stakeholders on the design of the NBI. Stakeholders have consistently raised a desire for more information on the NBI, particularly which platforms it would apply to and which organisations would be eligible, the rate and the offset.
- s47G(1)(a), s47G(1)(b), s47C
- TikTok will be keen to see the consultation paper and better understand the detail and how it may affect them.
- s47C

Dispute Resolution

- You may wish to ask TikTok whether they are considering being a signatory to the industry-led voluntary internal dispute resolution (IDR) code (the Code).
- Access to simple, user-friendly and effective complaint and dispute resolution processes builds the trust of Australians in the online environment, allowing them to take full advantage of the benefits digital platforms offer.
- In September 2022, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) Digital Platform Services Inquiry found that digital platforms' existing IDR systems and processes were ineffective. The

ACCC recommended the Government introduce mandatory dispute resolution regulations to address the issues.

- The former Minister for Communications and the Assistant Treasurer jointly requested the digital platforms industry develop a Code setting out how signatories will operate their IDR systems, and asked that this be completed by July 2024.
- DIGI developed a draft Code on behalf of its members, which includes TikTok, that was provided to the former Ministers on 31 July and 23 December 2024. In both cases, the former Minister for Communications responded by encouraging improvements and swift public implementation.
  - The Code has not yet been finalised.
- s47C

**Sensitive and Critical Information:** In the past, TikTok has sought to exploit perceived misalignments in position between the department and Minister Rowland's Office. Statements made in meetings with TikTok have appeared in the media shortly after the meetings.

### Attachments:

Attachment A: Biographical Details

Attachment B: TikTok's submission to the Online Safety (Age-Restricted Social Media Platforms) Rules 2025

Attachment C: s47G(1)(a), s47G(1)(b)

Attachment D: Article in the Australian *"TikTok's advertising push as under-16 social media ban looms"*

Attachment E: Digital Industry Group Inc's letter on the Age Assurance Technology Trial

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**From:** DLO Wells <[DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au](mailto:DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 June 2025 9:47 AM

**To:** s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <[AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au)>

**Cc:** DLO Wells <[DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au](mailto:DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au)>; VANDENBROEK, Sarah

<[Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au)>; Irwin, Andrew <[Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au)>; CHISHOLM, James <[James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au)>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>

s22(1)(a)(ii) <[\[REDACTED\]@INFRASTRUCTURE.gov.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@INFRASTRUCTURE.gov.au)>; CMGroupExecutive <[CMGroupExecutive@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:CMGroupExecutive@infrastructure.gov.au)>

**Subject:** MO Briefing Request - Due to DLOs by COB Friday 6 June - MO Meeting with TikTok [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi All,

The Minister's Chief of Staff is having an introductory meeting with TikTok on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June. The MO has requested a brief to support their meeting. Grateful if we could please have the meeting brief emailed to the DLOs by **COB Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June**. Given the Minister will not be attending the meeting, a formal meeting brief is not required to be provided via PDMS. A similar, if not the same, template can be used for these briefs. I've included meeting details below as available:

- What – Advisor meeting with TikTok
- When – Tuesday 10 June, timing TBC
- Where – APH
- Attendees –
  - Ella Woods-Joyce, Director of Public Policy, Tik-Tok (bio requested)

- Sabina Husic, TikTok (bio requested)
- Barnaby Kerdel, Chief of Staff
- s22(1)(a)(ii), Senior Advisor
- Who requested the meeting – MO
- Topics for the brief
  - Department to advise on likely meeting topics to be raised by TikTok
- Relevant adviser – s22(1)(a)(ii)

Very happy to discuss if you have any questions.

Many thanks,

s22(1)(a)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Department Liaison Officer • Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP • Minister for Communications and Minister for Sport  
[DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au](mailto:DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au)  
 GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**  
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*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.  
 I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.  
 I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

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## ATTACHMENT A

**BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS****Name:** Ms Ella Woods-Joyce**Position:** Director of Public Policy**Organisation:** TikTok**Phone Number:** s47F**Biography:**

Ms Woods-Joyce is the Director of Public Policy for Australia and New Zealand at TikTok. Prior to her role at TikTok, she held a number of adviser positions, including as Principal Adviser to Peter Gutwein, former Premier of Tasmania and Chief of Staff to Elise Archer, former Attorney-General in Tasmania. She has a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Public Policy Analysis and Political Science from the University of Tasmania.

**Name:** Ms Sabina Husic**Position:** Public Policy Lead, Data and Privacy**Organisation:** TikTok**Social Media:** s47F**Biography:**

Ms Husic is the Public Policy Lead for Data and Privacy for Australia and New Zealand at TikTok. Prior to this role, she was the Director of Communications to Daniel Andrews, former Premier of Victoria and the Deputy Chief of Staff in the Office of the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, when he was Leader of the Opposition. She has a Bachelor of Communications and Public Relations from Western Sydney University. Ms Husic is the sister of the Hon Ed Husic MP.

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