

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)**Sent:** Wednesday, 25 June 2025 8:55 PM**To:** Wells, Anika (MP) <Anika.Wells.MP@aph.gov.au>; wellsa@aph.gov.au**Subject:** The Wiggles - Letter to The Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications

Dear Minister Wells,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

I have attached a letter for your review, outlining The Wiggles' perspective relating to YouTube within the legislation.

From reports in the media, it appears that the Government is considering a departure from the position established by the previous Communications Minister, the Hon Michelle Rowland.

We fully support the Government's commitment to child safety; however, we believe platforms like YouTube, which provide accessible, family-friendly content, should be viewed differently from traditional social media due to their unique role in delivering age-appropriate resources for children and families. We believe a balanced approach can protect children without limiting family access to essential online resources.

Please let me know if you'd like to discuss this further.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Wiggles Pty Ltd

s22(1)(a)(ii)

PO Box 7873, Baulkham Hills NSW 2159



Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts



25 June 2025

The Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications
1176 Sandgate Rd
Nundah QLD 4012

Dear Minister Wells,

RE: Social Media Legislation / YouTube

s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Wiggles are proud to support your Government's dedication to child safety. We appreciate the recent legislative efforts to implement a minimum age for social media account registration of 16 years. We commend the Government's leadership in making child safety a national priority. **We believe that platforms like YouTube, which function as accessible resources for families, should be categorised differently from social media.**

For over 30 years, The Wiggles have been dedicated to creating enriching content that engages and educates young minds and aligns with children's developmental needs, helping them to grow through positive, inclusive entertainment. This mission is deeply rooted in our team's background in early childhood education.

The role of YouTube

The Wiggles recognise YouTube as an essential platform for early learning, offering young audiences the opportunity to engage with quality content designed to support growth and learning.

Since 2021, when free-to-air stations (7, 9, and 10) ceased actively commissioning and broadcasting children's content due to legislative changes, YouTube has stepped into the gap and served as an essential, free resource for families, filling a role similar to traditional TV and providing a trusted source of content that parents and caregivers rely on. Research estimates 80% of Australian families with young children watch shows such as The Wiggles on YouTube, making it more popular with young families than streaming services such as Netflix or even linear TV stations, with the exception of the ABC (which continues to offer excellent children's content).

s47(1)(a)

we recently celebrated the milestone of 1 billion views on YouTube in Australia alone. Combined with other Australian preschool content, millions of families across Australia turn to YouTube as a primary resource.

We are pleased to have heard that you personally are a fan of The Wiggles. We have also seen that, as a mother of young children, you have expressed your appreciation for the positive role our content on YouTube plays for Australian families.

YouTube and the *Online Safety Act 2021* (Cth)

Last year, we engaged in meaningful discussions with then-Communications Minister Rowland on implications for YouTube of the *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* (Cth) (**Act**). We appreciated that the Act provided age-verification obligations would not impact free user access to sites like YouTube when used without logging in. We were also encouraged that the Exposure Draft of the *Online Safety (Age-Restricted Social Media Platforms) Rules 2025* (Cth) (**Exposure Draft**) specified YouTube as not being an “age-restricted social media platform” for the purposes of the Act (**Specified Platform**).

We are concerned by recent public commentary including eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant’s comments yesterday, suggesting that you move away from the position in the Exposure Draft and not nominate YouTube as a Specified Platform.

We respectfully ask that you specify YouTube as a Specified Platform for the purposes of the Act. Unlike social media platforms (primarily designed for communication and interaction), YouTube serves as a modern, video on-demand channel where parents can select content for their children.

In Australia, over 80% of The Wiggles total watched time on YouTube is on smart TVs — not phones or tablets — and as such, it should not be grouped with interactive social platforms. Our content on YouTube is enjoyed overwhelmingly in parent-led viewing environments more akin to traditional television. This mode of supervised viewing is fundamentally different to the self-directed, algorithm-driven social interaction typical of social media platforms.

There are a suite of platform-wide protections that differentiate YouTube’s children’s content ecosystem from typical social media environments and ensure a safe viewing environment for children. For example, when a channel designated as ‘Made for Kids’ uploads content to YouTube Shorts, several features are automatically disabled, including the ability for viewers to comment or link to longform content. These restrictions typify YouTube’s proactive approach to ensure a safe, controlled environment for young viewers, even at the expense of audience engagement and creators’ interests.

The obligation in the Act to prevent age-restricted users from ‘having an account’ does not affect access to ‘logged-out’ versions of a platform.¹ Persons of any age will remain able to access YouTube as they currently can, without age verification. Given that is the case, preventing users under 16 from registering accounts on YouTube may have the unintended consequence of **lessening the level of protection afforded to children using YouTube**, as they will only be able to use the platform as a guest and so **lose access to some of those platform-wide protections applicable to accounts held by minors**, e.g., YouTube supervised experience and teen wellbeing systems.

YouTube is part of the creator economy that supports thousands of Australian jobs in the arts, education, and digital media. The Wiggles employ dozens of creatives, educators, producers, and technicians who rely on YouTube as a platform to reach audiences, sustain employment, and export Australian culture worldwide.

We respectfully highlight that the Government’s original intent to designate YouTube as a Specified Platform received public support — and remains supported by key experts, educators, researchers, and community advocates. The 36 Months campaign, which led the national push for this legislation, has repeatedly confirmed YouTube does not meet the criteria of addictive, interaction-

¹ Explanatory Memorandum, *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024* (Cth) p 3.

driven platforms targeted by the ban. Their director has publicly reinforced YouTube's educational and entertainment value for children and its vital role in classrooms and family homes.

Independent research supports this position. A study by Nature, Australia's leading consumer insights agency, found that across generations, YouTube is viewed more positively than other digital platforms. Children and adults associate YouTube with learning, creativity, and educational value.

Next steps

I understand this policy issue is being reviewed. We are concerned that these discussions might overlook important issues and bypass a thorough consultation process with key stakeholders such as ourselves and other Australian children's content creators.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further and to explore ways to ensure children's safety online without restricting access to platforms that offer vital, child-friendly, developmentally appropriate content.

We were encouraged by the thoughtful and nuanced approach Minister Rowland's department took in our previous engagement on this subject. We respectfully ask that those considerations not be discarded and that you consider our perspective before any final decisions are made.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warmest regards,
s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Wiggles
s22(1)(a)(ii)

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: Irwin, Andrew
Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 2:19 PM
To: Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

s22(1)(a)(ii) – let's drop other things and focus on this, can re-use most of it for another one for youtube coming through.
 2(

OFFICIAL

From: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 2:13 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Cc: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>; VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>; Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Hi All,

Thanks very much for your time on the phone earlier this afternoon, s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Minister is now meeting with The Wiggles on Monday 30 June at 3pm. My sincere apologies for the very tight turnaround, the Minister's office has requested the MB to be with the MO by 4pm Sunday 29 June for the Minister's prep time. Please let me know if there are any issues meeting this timeframe. If this meeting happens to be pushed back, I'll let you know asap.

- PDR - MB25-000874
- What – Minister Wells meeting with The Wiggles
- When – Monday 30 June, 3pm
- Where – TBC
- Attendees –
 - s22(1)(a)(ii) (bio requested)
 - Barnaby Kerdel, Chief of Staff
 - s22(1)(a)(ii), Senior Advisor
- Who requested the meeting – The Wiggles
- Topics for the brief:
 - Please see attached letter from s22(1)(a)(ii) raising the issue
 - The placement of YouTube in the SMMA
- Relevant adviser – s22(1)(a)(ii)

Grateful if you could please let me know who is holding the pen on this meeting brief and I'll assign the PDR to them asap.

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

M s22(1)(a)(ii)

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

infrastructure.gov.au



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.

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 28 June 2025 4:01 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) @COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au
Cc: Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au;
s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au;
<s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s22(1)(a) I've included these.

The brief is good, only thing missing is social media handles. I've sent it to Sarah H in PDMS but we might need to provide the social media handles first thing on Monday if we can. (I would have inserted them but I don't know how to work out what they are – sorry)

Sarah V

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) @COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au
Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 5:10 PM
To: VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au;
s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au;
<s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Sarah V

Please add these bios to the end of the brief:

s22(1)(a)(ii)



Thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii)



OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[redacted]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 4:59 PM
To: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>; Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks for the update s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sarah V – I will send you these bios via email to be added to the PDMS item when you clear it.

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

From: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>
 Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 4:58 PM
 To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au
 Cc: VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>; Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au; DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>; Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au
 Subject: RE: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

The MO has just been advised that s22(1)(a) <[REDACTED]> and s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> from The Wiggles will also be attending the meeting. Grateful if we could please have bios for s22(1)(a) <[REDACTED]> and s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> (in addition to a bio for s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> below).

As previously flagged, the meeting is now at 2:30pm on Monday. But there is no change to the due date.

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
 M s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]>
 GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
 CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS
infrastructure.gov.au



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.

OFFICIAL

From: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>
 Sent: Friday, 27 June 2025 2:13 PM
 To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au; Age Assurance Trial Taskforce <AgeAssuranceTrial2@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au
 Cc: DLO Wells <DLO.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au>; VANDENBROEK, Sarah <Sarah.Vandenbroek@infrastructure.gov.au>; Irwin, Andrew <Andrew.Irwin@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <[REDACTED]> @infrastructure.gov.au
 Subject: Meeting Brief - Minister Wells Meeting with Wiggles - Due to MO Sunday 29 June 4pm. [SEC=OFFICIAL]
 Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Hi All,

Thanks very much for your time on the phone earlier this afternoon, s22(1)(a)(ii)

The Minister is now meeting with The Wiggles on Monday 30 June at 3pm. My sincere apologies for the very tight turnaround, the Minister's office has requested the MB to be with the MO by 4pm Sunday 29 June for the Minister's prep time. Please let me know if there are any issues meeting this timeframe. If this meeting happens to be pushed back, I'll let you know asap.

- PDR - MB25-000874
- What – Minister Wells meeting with The Wiggles
- When – Monday 30 June, 3pm
- Where – TBC
- Attendees –
 - s22(1)(a)(ii) (bio requested)
 - Barnaby Kerdel, Chief of Staff
 - s22(1)(a)(ii), Senior Advisor
- Who requested the meeting – The Wiggles
- Topics for the brief:
 - Please see attached letter from s22(1)(a)(ii) raising the issue
 - The placement of YouTube in the SMMA
- Relevant adviser – s22(1)(a)(ii)

Grateful if you could please let me know who is holding the pen on this meeting brief and I'll assign the PDR to them asap.

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
DL.O.Wells@mo.communications.gov.au

M s22(1)(a)(ii)

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
 CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

infrastructure.gov.au




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.

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

OFFICIAL

 <p>Australian Government</p> <hr/> <p>Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts</p>	<p>Meeting / Event Brief</p> <p>MB25-000874</p>
---	---

To: The Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications and Minister for Sport

Subject: MINISTER WELLS MEETING WITH THE WIGGLES

Date & Time:	Monday 30 June 2025, 2:30pm
Meeting type & Location:	TBC
Traditional custodians:	TBC
Staffing:	Ministerial office to include.
Intended objective:	To hear The Wiggles' concerns and convey you are still considering the advice of the eSafety Commissioner.
Key Attendees:	The Wiggles – s22(1)(a)(ii)
Stakeholder's objective:	To ensure YouTube is excluded from the social media minimum age.
Media	Nil

Purpose – why you are attending:

- The Wiggles requested a meeting with you to discuss their support for excluding YouTube from the social media minimum age obligation.
- The Wiggles previously met with your predecessor ahead of the introduction of the social media minimum age bill.
- You are not making any decisions in this meeting. You are meeting to hear The Wiggles' concerns and convey you are still considering the advice of the eSafety Commissioner.

Key Matters / Issues:

- On 21 November 2024, Minister Rowland, then Minister for Communications, announced her intent to exclude YouTube from the social media minimum age (SMMA) obligation.
- In line with section 63C(7) of the Online Safety Act, you sought the advice of the eSafety Commissioner on the draft Online Safety Rules to exclude platforms from the SMMA.
 - The eSafety Commissioner advised that YouTube should be an age restricted service under the SMMA due to the known risks of harm and having similar functionality to other social media services.
- The target audience for The Wiggles, and other early learning content creators, is highly unlikely to be impacted by YouTube being included in the SMMA.
- The SMMA obligation will only apply to 'holding an account' with age-restricted platforms.

OFFICIAL

- The Wiggles content is available to view on YouTube without holding an account as the only content that requires a user to hold an account is explicit or age-restricted content.
- Regardless of your decision, YouTube Kids is unlikely to fall within the definition of ‘age-restricted social media platform’ as it operates more like a video streaming service, without the same interactive features as YouTube or other forms of social media (e.g. comments and likes). Further, accounts on YouTube Kids are held by the parent or guardian, rather than the child themselves.
 - YouTube Kids is designed for children 12 and under, which is the target market for The Wiggles content.
- While access for Australian children is unlikely to be affected, revenue to creators like the Wiggles could be affected. In particular, while YouTube offers a number of ways for creators to monetise their content, many of these focus on creators’ subscriber numbers. Users can only subscribe if they have an account.
 - The Wiggles currently have 7.01 million subscribers, however not all would be Australian.

Sensitivities:

- s47C
-

Background:

- On 19 November 2024, The Wiggles publicly criticised the SMMA Bill for including YouTube and welcomed a discussion with Minister Rowland on the educational benefits and safety features on YouTube.
- The Government provides funding for Australian children’s content, regardless of which platform children watch it on. Through the 2024-25 Budget, the Government committed additional funding of \$14.5 million to the Australian Children’s Television Foundation over four years from 2024-25 and a further \$3.9 million a year from 2028-29 to help support the production of Australian children’s screen content.

Consultation:

- Office for the Arts – Australian children’s screen content

Name: Sarah Vandebroek
 Position: First Assistant Secretary
 Division: Digital Platforms, Safety and Classification
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)
 Date Cleared: 28 June 2025

Contact Officer: Andrew Irwin
 Division: Online Safety Branch
 Ph: s22(1)(a)(ii)
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Logistics Summary
- Attachment B: Biographies
- Attachment C: Letter from The Wiggles to Minister Wells

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

ATTACHMENT A

LOGISTICS SUMMARY

Overview	
Meeting / Event Name	Minister Wells meeting with The Wiggles
Date	Monday 30 June 2025
Arrival Time	
Departure Time	
Duration	
Format	
Speaking Arrangements	
Other key information	

Physical Location Details	
Location (full address)	TBC
Parking arrangements	
Traditional Custodians	
Map	
Other key venue information	

Visit / Meeting Organiser Contact Details	
Minister to be met by	
Title	
Contact Phone	
Secondary Contacts	

Virtual / Conference Call Details	
Dial in / Online Details	Phone numbers, meeting codes, etc
Online Platform	Webex / Teams / Platform
Video conference instructions	
Additional instructions	

Meeting / Event Runsheet	
Time	Arrival and is met by
Time	Details
Time	Details
Time	Minister departs

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Cover page for packaging to MO/AMO

Ensure ALL fields are completed on this page, including contact details, before sending this response to Ministerial Services. Incomplete records may be reassigned back to your area to have this information added.

Minister	Minister Wells
PDR Number	MB25-000874
Subject	Minister Wells Meeting with The Wiggles
Contact Officer	Andrew Irwin s22(1)(a)(ii)
Clearance Officer	Sarah Vandebroek s22(1)(a)(ii)
Division/Branch	DIV - Digital Platforms Safety and Classification
Has Budget Branch been consulted if there are financial implications?	Not Applicable

Adviser/DLO comments:	Returned to Dept for: REDRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> NFA <input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------	---

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts



Australian Government
 Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
 Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

OFFICIAL

Social media minimum age rules

Talking Points

- Today we're providing more certainty for parents and kids as to which platforms will be affected by the upcoming social media age restriction.
- As we've made clear all along, in bringing forward these new, novel laws our foremost priority is keeping younger Australians safer online.
- At the same time, we know the social media minimum age is not the end-all and be-all solution in this. It's one element of our broader, extensive online safety agenda.
- The digital world is part of almost every Australian's life, and we know that some online platforms can and do provide beneficial experiences for young people.
- This is particularly the case where those platforms are grounded in connection, learning, recreation, health, and support.
- With these rules, we've sought to strike the right balance between protecting young people from the harms associated with social media use and ensuring they remain connected and engaged in their digital lives.
- We've carefully considered feedback from our extensive consultation with community and industry stakeholders, parents and young people, as well as evidence-based advice from the eSafety Commissioner.
- Once in effect, we'll be closely monitoring the operation of the minimum age obligation, as well as changes in technology and the evolving digital environment.
- In response, we'll make any changes or updates to the rules necessary to ensure they are working as intended.

Q&As

Which platforms are excluded from the social media minimum age obligation?

Excluded services under the rules	Examples
(a) Messaging, email, voice calling or video calling	s47G(1)(b)
(b) Online games	
(c) Services that enable information about products or services	
(d) Services that enable engagement on professional networking or professional development	

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

OFFICIAL

(e) Services that have the sole or primary purpose of supporting the education of end-users	s47G(1)(b)
(f) Services that have the sole or primary purpose of supporting the health of end-users	
(g) Services that have a significant purpose of facilitating communication between educational institutions and students or students' families	
(h) Services that have a significant purpose of facilitating communication between providers and users of health care services	

Which platforms are included?

- All services that meet the definition of 'age-restricted social media platform' in the Act, and are not excluded in the rules, will be subject to the social media minimum age obligation.
- This includes Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube, amongst other platforms.

Commented [IA1]: Subject to Minister's decision

How were the excluded platforms selected?

- The online platforms excluded from the new minimum age obligations have been chosen on the basis that they pose fewer of the harms associated with social media use to those under 16 years, or are regulated under different laws.
- Ahead of making the rules, we've consulted extensively with community and industry stakeholders, parents and young people.
- The rules have been made with regard to advice from the eSafety Commissioner, as required under the legislation.
- The eSafety Commissioner provided this detailed advice to me last month, based on a broad evidence base including domestic and international research.

Why has the Government's position changed on excluding YouTube?

Commented [IA2]: IF required, subject to Minister's decision

- The eSafety Commissioner was clear in her advice that the rules should avoid naming any specific platform, given the rapidly evolving nature of technology and the potential for changes in the features, functionality and safety practices of platforms.
- The eSafety Commissioner's advice also noted that YouTube employs many of the design features common to social media platforms— such as infinite scroll, auto-play and algorithmic feeds – that may be associated with harms.
- On the basis of this advice, excluding YouTube from the minimum age obligation would not be consistent with the objective of the legislation.
- The laws restrict under-16s from having a YouTube account. Young people will be able to continue to access content on YouTube in a logged-out state.
- There is also nothing in the legislation that prevents educators with their own accounts from continuing to incorporate school-approved educational content on YouTube or any other service, just as they do now.

How do you respond to YouTube creators who have built their livelihood from creating educational, age-appropriate content for kids?

Commented [IA3]: If required, subject to Minister's decision

- We fully expect under-16s to continue to access valuable and educational content via YouTube, including at school.

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

OFFICIAL

- The change that the new laws bring in will be that people under the age of 16 will no longer be able to have a YouTube account.
- I note that YouTube Kids is unlikely to fall within the definition of age-restricted social media due to it not having the interactive features commonly found on social media. In addition, parents hold the accounts on YouTube Kids, so it will be largely unaffected by the delay. Children can continue to enjoy their favourite creators such as the Wiggles in a safer environment.
- There is strong community support for social media age restrictions, with our research showing nearly 9 in 10 Australians backing the use of age assurance technology to restrict children's access to harmful online content.
- To achieve this, it's vital that the minimum age obligations capture those platforms where children are most at risk of being exposed to harmful content online.

Why have you excluded services that we know expose kids to harm? For example, cyber bullying or grooming can occur via messaging services or online games.

- The social media minimum age is not the be-all and end-all solution to keeping kids safe online.
- The purpose of the laws is to prevent under-16s from being exposed to harms associated with social media use – including exposure to harmful content, excessive screen-time, social isolation and poor mental and physical health.
- We've sought to exclude services that pose fewer of these risks, or that are regulated under different laws.
- Online games, for example, are regulated under the National Classification Scheme, which applies classifications ratings and consumer advice to provide information on the age suitability of games.
- Likewise, messaging services are subject to the broader Online Safety Act and the proposed digital duty of care, which will place the onus firmly on digital platforms to proactively keep Australians safe and better prevent online harms.
- Our message to all online platforms is consistent: they have an obligation to keep their users safe from harm.
- The social media minimum age is just one way we are ensuring industry steps up to the plate.

What can under-16s and their parents expect when the minimum age comes into effect in December?

- Today's announcement provides additional certainty to parents and kids on how the social media minimum age will impact them when it comes into effect in December.
- We know these new laws will bring significant change, and we'll continue to provide further detail to the Australian community as we get closer to implementation.
- In particular, the eSafety Commissioner will soon provide guidance on what young people and their parents can expect to happen on 10 December.
- We're also continuing to work closely with industry, relevant agencies and community organisations ahead of its commencement.

When will you release the findings of the age assurance technology trial?

- The Government expects to receive the findings of the independent age assurance technology trial later this month. They will be published in due course.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Departmental contact

[enter Firstname Surname] | [enter email address] | [enter phone 0X XXXX XXXX], [enter mobile 04XX XXX XXX]

OFFICIAL

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Wednesday, 23 July 2025 2:52 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); Age Assurance Trial Taskforce; Irwin, Andrew; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Input to advice for Minister on children's content on YouTube [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Attachments: High-level points about YouTube in relation to age restrictions on social media.docx

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi s22(1)

Thanks for reaching out. Here are some AS-cleared points on children's content on YouTube and funding for children's content generally. There's some further detail in the attached. I think we may have provided this previously, but all information remains current.

s47C



Please let me know if you need anything further!

Thanks

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director • Content Section • Screen and Arts Workforce Development

s22(1)(a) @arts.gov.au

(s22(1)(a)(ii)

GPO Box 2154 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts



*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.*

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Released under the FOI Act 1982 by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts