

From: Louise Parrott
Sent: Wed, 7 Apr 2021 09:29:16 +1000
To: Jude Bremer; Craig Batchelor
Subject: FW: Laming Facebook pages without political authorisation [SEC=OFFICIAL]

FYI

From: media <media@aec.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 7 April 2021 8:17 AM
To: Louise Parrott <Louise.Parrott@aec.gov.au>
Cc: Legal Services Mailbox <Legal@aec.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Laming Facebook pages without political authorisation [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Louise, I've subsequently discussed this with the Deputy. Grateful if you could let me know when you're in and I'll come to discuss.

Cheers
 Evan

Evan Ekin-Smyth
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 Australian Electoral Commission
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From: media <media@aec.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 7 April 2021 7:40 AM
To: Louise Parrott <Louise.Parrott@aec.gov.au>; Andrew Johnson <Andrew.Johnson@aec.gov.au>
Cc: media <media@aec.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Laming Facebook pages without political authorisation[SEC=OFFICIAL]

Louise / Andrew - see the below enquiry from the Guardian, which is an expected follow-up to their earlier published piece on the matter. A fresh angle of media scrutiny on the under fire Mr Laming.

The journalist is looking for a yes or no around whether these pages meet the definition of electoral matter and therefore whether they should contain an electoral authorisation. If the answer is yes, the question she's also asking is what action we will take.

The third option for us in terms of this media response is a holding line that 'we are reviewing the material with reference to the requirements of the Electoral Act' - with background info re the requirements that they already know.

The three different options for response will no doubt be categorised as 'AEC pursuing Laming for wrong-doing', 'AEC lacking teeth yet again', or 'AEC investigating'.

Whatever our interim answer is I think we should aim to give it by early afternoon - and I will give the journalist a line about a forthcoming response 'today'.

Let me know an ETA. I'm also happy to come up to level 6 to discuss. I'll provide a separate heads-up email to Tim / Tom.

Cheers
Evan

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@theguardian.com>
Date: Tuesday, 06 Apr 2021, 5:04 pm
To: media <media@aec.gov.au>
Subject: Laming Facebook pages without political authorisation

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Hi Evan, as discussed, here is the story,
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/apr/06/liberal-mp-andrew-laming-used-dozens-of-facebook-pages-to-promote-lnp-and-attack-opponents>

And have a look at [REDACTED] Tweets which have pulled out some examples from some of the pages which he says suggests disclosure required.
[https://twitter.com/\[REDACTED\]status/1379303705447591936?s=20](https://twitter.com/[REDACTED]status/1379303705447591936?s=20)

Also keen to know if paid advertising makes any difference or not to the requirement of disclosure.

Thanks so much.

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[REDACTED]
 Chief political correspondent
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