

Sheridan New

From: s 22 @fb.com>
Sent: Friday, 19 June 2020 5:29 PM
To: Andrew Johnson; Jeff Pope; Tim Courtney; Julie Igglesden; Melissa Tominac
Cc: s 22
Subject: Re: Eden-Monaro by-election and other matters [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Andrew and team

Thank you very much for the chance to speak with you on the call last week.

We very much appreciate the strong working relationship we have had with the AEC and broader Election Integrity Taskforce since the last Federal election. We are always very happy to continue our approach with the AEC of sharing information with each other about developments we see reported.

As you know, there's a number of steps Facebook takes proactively to protect electoral integrity and encourage civic participation, including detection of bad actors and coordinated inauthentic behaviour, ads transparency (including the Ads Library), ensuring ads integrity, and our work to combat misinformation. These efforts will continue throughout the Eden-Monaro by-election.

As mentioned last week, there has been some inaccuracies in the media coverage you had sent to us below. On the ads in question here, once they were escalated to us, we quickly reviewed the ads and removed them. It is not correct to say the ads were repeatedly reported to us and that those reports were rejected.

We remain very committed to working closely with the AEC to look at any specific political ads that may cause you concern. You're very welcome to continue using the same escalation process as during the last election – and the same team (s 22 and myself) will be happy to assist.

The Ad Library will continue to be available (including during the by-election) by users who have opted to use it, which will assist in providing transparency on electoral ads. We are very happy to stay in touch on future product updates.

As always, we look forward to continuing working with you and the AEC team during the by-election and beyond. Please do not hesitate to let us know if it would be helpful to discuss further at any stage.

Cheers

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s 22
s 22 Australia

FACEBOOK

s 22 | s 22 @fb.com

From: Andrew Johnson <Andrew.Johnson@aec.gov.au>

Date: Tuesday, 2 June 2020 at 4:54 pm

To: s 22 @fb.com>

Cc: s 22 @fb.com> s 22 @fb.com>, Jeff Pope
<Jeff.Pope@aec.gov.au>, Tim Courtney <Tim.Courtney@aec.gov.au>, s 22 @fb.com>,
s 22 @fb.com>, Julie Igglesden <Julie.Igglesden@aec.gov.au>, Melissa Tominac

<Melissa.Tominac@aec.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Eden-Monaro by-election and other matters [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s 22

It would be good to have a teleconference next week if we can find a suitable time.

From the AEC Tim Courtney, Julie Igglesden and myself will participate. Some times that currently suit us:

- Tues 9 June – between 12 and 2pm or any time after 2.30pm
- Wed 10 June – any time after 3pm
- Thurs 11 June – between 1.30 and 2pm, 2.30 and 3pm or after 4pm
- Fri 12 June – between 9.30 and 11am, 12 and 1.30pm, 2.30 – 3pm

I have copied to Tim's Executive Assistant, Melisa Tominac, who can help to arrange the time for the teleconference.

Kind regards
Andrew

A/g Chief Legal Officer
Legal & Procurement Branch
Australian Electoral Commission
T: (02) 6271 4759 | M: s 22



AEC
Australian Electoral Commission

Make sure you're **enrolled to vote**.
Visit www.aec.gov.au

From s 22 @fb.com>

Sent: Friday, 29 May 2020 5:14 PM

To: Andrew Johnson <Andrew.Johnson@aec.gov.au>

Cc: s 22 @fb.com>; s 22 @fb.com>; Jeff Pope <Jeff.Pope@aec.gov.au>;
Tim Courtney <Tim.Courtney@aec.gov.au>; s 22 @fb.com>; s 22 @fb.com>

Subject: Re: Eden-Monaro by-election and other matters [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Hi Andrew,

Thank you for your email. We are grateful that you have taken the time to share your concerns upon reading this media coverage with us. There is some context here that it would be helpful to talk through with you.

If you can please let us know some times in the coming weeks that you, Jeff and Tim are available, we'd be happy to talk this all through.

Kind regards,

s 22

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From: Andrew Johnson <Andrew.Johnson@aec.gov.au>
Date: Wednesday, 27 May 2020 at 5:44 PM
To: S 22 @fb.com>
Cc: S 22 @fb.com>, S 22 @fb.com>, Jeff Pope <Jeff.Pope@aec.gov.au>, Tim Courtney <Tim.Courtney@aec.gov.au>
Subject: Eden-Monaro by-election and other matters [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear S 22

As you may be aware, a federal by-election has been called for the division of Eden-Monaro in New South Wales for Saturday 4 July. As with all federal electoral events, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is concerned that information is not published that breaches the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* or contains disinformation that can mislead voters about the electoral process or their obligations under the Electoral Act.

I am concerned about a recent article which suggested that Facebook's controls around disinformation had allowed intentionally misleading advertisements concerning, among other things, the AEC and the obligation of Australians to enrol to vote and to vote at elections to be published on your platform.

The article on www.news.com.au headed "*Facebook fake news failure exposed by Responsible Technology Australia experiment*", reported that Facebook published fake advertisements by the "Ozzie News Network" that:

- told 18-year-olds not to bother to enrol to vote; and
- said the AEC had told people it had assessed that they live in a safe seat and, therefore, should not bother to vote.

According to the report, the organisation responsible for posting these fake advertisements on Facebook reported the fake ads to Facebook, but no action was taken to remove the ads. I understand from the story that the fake ads were not removed until journalists from news.com.au contacted Facebook. I am extremely worried about this. It is concerning that even though the advertisements were clearly wrong and mischievous, the ads were apparently reviewed and approved by Facebook and Facebook did not take the ads down even when your company was told the ads were fake by the advertiser.

For the upcoming Eden-Monaro by-election, the AEC expects to see all political and electoral advertisements published on Facebook platforms to be reported on Facebook's Political Ad Library. The AEC acknowledges that the extension of the Ad Library to Australia since the 2019 Federal Election is a positive step. We will be monitoring the Ad Library during the Eden-Monaro by-election to assess its effectiveness.

Can you please confirm our point of contact at Facebook, if the AEC identifies any communications on your platforms that breach the Electoral Act. At the 2019 Federal Election we made removal requests to

S 47G(1) Is this address still the best point of contact?

Yours sincerely

Andrew Johnson
A/g Chief Legal Officer
Legal & Procurement Branch
Australian Electoral Commission
T: (02) 6271 4759 | M: S 22

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