

**From:** s 22  
**To:** s 47F  
**Subject:** FW:s 47F enquiry - AEC's use of Tik Tok ads [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Date:** Monday, 8 May 2023 1:41:45 PM  
**Attachments:** s 22

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See below the earlier media enquiry response re Tik Tok advertising.

Cheers  
Evan

**Evan Ekin-Smyth | Director**  
Media & Digital Engagement  
Australian Electoral Commission

s 47F

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**From:** s 22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 19 April 2023 8:44 AM  
**To:** s 47F  
**Cc:** s 22  
**Subject:** RE: s 47F enquiry - AEC's use of Tik Tok ads [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s 47F

Feel free to attribute any of the below to me as a spokesperson of the AEC.

To be clear up front, the AEC (to date) has not used Tik Tok during an AEC advertising campaign.

The AEC is in-market with digital advertising now as part of an early information campaign for the referendum - this body of communications activities does not include Tik Tok advertising. Further information about this early awareness phase is available at [Referendums: it's been a while... AEC launches information campaign - Australian Electoral Commission](#).

The AEC's referendum advertising campaign for later stages of 2023 remains in planning. These future phases of AEC advertising for the referendum will commence after the Constitutional Alteration Bill passes Parliament and then during the referendum period itself. The use of Tik Tok for advertising was suggested in an early strategy document prepared by an external advertising agency but such recommendations, amongst a whole range of other factors, are considerations for the AEC to then make a decision. This is something that will be done as part of finalising our advertising plans in the coming weeks and months. We are aware of broader government considerations regarding the use of Tik Tok as a channel and this will be a key factor in a final decision regarding AEC advertising. As you would expect, we also continue to monitor the ongoing public discussions about Tik Tok, its demographic user base, and key security considerations.

The use of Tik Tok as an advertising channel has been recommended to the AEC before and, to reiterate again, we have not used Tik Tok during an AEC advertising campaign. However, we have engaged with Tik Tok Aus/NZ previously to ensure users have access to appropriate AEC information - at the 2022 federal election this included an 'election hub' (something put in place by Tik Tok not the AEC) that was surfaced to users on the platform during the election period.

As with all national electoral events, the AEC will run a multi-channel advertising campaign to help

people fulfil their right and responsibility to vote at the referendum. We look at a variety of audience segmentations and cater to those segmentations through appropriate mediums. The referendum will almost certainly have the largest and most complete electoral roll Australia has ever had at more than 97 per cent of people enrolled. It is a phenomenal base for democratic participation that our current and future communication will seek to build upon.

Planning for the AEC's referendum advertising campaign, including determining the final mix of social media channels to be targeted, is ongoing.

Cheers

Evan

**Evan Ekin-Smyth**  
Media & Digital Engagement  
Australian Electoral Commission

s 47F

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From: s 47F

Sent: Tuesday, 18 April 2023 2:00 PM

To: s 22

Cc: s 47F

Subject: s 47F query

s 22

Hi there,

I am emailing with regards to a proposed advertising campaign by the AEC for the Referendum. As part of an FOI request, it was revealed the Department of Finance approved a trial campaign proposed by Universal McCann to run an advertising campaign. It had not received approval from the AEC and CAB yet as of early February.

The Department of Finance today told us that "non-corporate entities have not used TikTok for government advertising."

Did the AEC proceed with this trial campaign? If it did, why? As the platform has been banned on government issued devices. If it did not, why?

s 22

Any questions please sing out.

Many thanks,

s 47F

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s 47F

s 22