AIA Social Media Guidelines

Finalised and approved: October 2019

Aim

These guidelines are here to assist all individuals at AIA to follow the Representing Amnesty Policy when using social media platforms, including in a personal capacity.

Scope

This document is designed to provide all staff, members, activists, Board members and any person who represents Amnesty International Australia (AIA) guidance on communicating in a social media environment.

An individual who is also a spokesperson for AIA (as indicated in their Position Description or identified as part of their volunteer/activism work) must take extra care to maintain AIA's non-partisanship and independence. Spokespeople should be aware that wherever they express their views in public, including on social media, these views may be interpreted as AIA's official position. To avoid this, spokespeople should clearly distinguish between their personal views and those of AIA where necessary – please read the spokespeople section for suggestions on how to do this.

Interaction with other AIA policies

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with AIA's Representing Amnesty Policy.

All staff are required to ensure their social media use complies with AIA's policies and procedures as amended from time to time including the Representing Amnesty Policy, Values and Behaviours Charter, Code of Conduct, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information Policy, and Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy.

If you believe a person has breached AIA's policies listed above, please let your manager or a People & Culture staff member know. Situations will be reviewed and dealt with in accordance with AIA's policies above and, when appropriate, the Grievance Procedure.

How to use social media effectively and responsibly at AIA

AIA recognises the power of social media as a tool to help promote and protect human rights. As with all public communications, but especially given the decentralised and viral nature of social media, AIA staff, members and activists are expected to use good judgment when deciding what to post online.

Whatever role you play at Amnesty, it's fine to talk about interests/opinions/hobbies/passions outside of your Amnesty work on social media. This gives followers a feeling of trust and honesty which reverberates back to the Amnesty movement. Just keep in mind the points below (especially if you're a spokesperson) and check in with your supervisor if you're unsure before posting.

1. Be accurate:
Strive for factual accuracy at all times. If you do make an error, be up front about it. Apologise and correct yourself as soon as possible. For example, replying to yourself on X (formerly Twitter) or

updating a Facebook or Instagram post to include an apology and correction are transparent and effective ways to correct an error. Generally, it's not a good idea to delete a mistake once it has some engagement – you might end up bringing more attention to the error. If unsure, please ask Amnesty's Story and Content team for advice.

2. Be engaging:
Fans and followers are engaged by your experience and expertise, combined with who you are. The most successful X users sound like real people (the social media world knows how to spot PR and spin!). The best thing you can do is find your own authentic voice.

Remember that social media is a two-way conversation. Ensure you're engaged in a dialogue, not a monologue. Focus on constructive comments by sharing and replying.

By using a rhetorical tone @KenRoth is adding his voice to an issue which @HRW has not officially responded to. This keeps him relevant as a human rights expert—and HRW remains part of the conversation without the need for a formal statement.

@jennyleong's tweet about the #eyesonsyria action is individual and enthusiastic. It shows a genuine engagement with her work, appealing to her followers in a personable way.

@jpmlynch helps out a fellow tweeter!

@Colmogorman shows that he is a lover of films and not afraid to voice his opinions!

3. Be responsible:
Use good judgement. Do nothing to damage AIA's reputation as a trusted, non-denominational, non-

partisan movement, independent of all governments, political parties, economic interests and religious institutions. When in doubt, ask yourself: "Would I feel comfortable seeing this quoted in the media?"

A WA police officer found his racist Facebook comments splashed across the media, sparking an internal investigation

Whether you're an official spokesperson for Amnesty or not, if you are using social media in a personal capacity and feel that your connection to AIA is well known and that there's a possibility your personal opinions could be misconstrued as Amnesty's position, and they could damage AIA's reputation, then please do take the step of adding a 'disclaimer' to your account eg. All views expressed here are my own.

Here's a few examples of disclaimers:

Amy Frew
@AmyEFrew Follows you

Lawyering on Larrakia and Yolngu country, views my own.

Colm O'Gorman
@Colmogorman

Executive Director of @AmnestyIreland. Runner. Food blogger. May tweet my dinner. Personal account. Views expressed are my own. A RT is not an endorsement

Celeste Liddle
@Utopiana

Where blackfeministranters tweet. Arrernte, unionist, freelance commentator/writer. Accidentally anarchic. Views on this acc are my own only. Melb dweller

Bill McKibben
@billmckibben

Author, Educator, Environmentalist and Founder of 350.org Opinions emphatically my own

4. Uphold our objectives:
Keep AIA's various campaign strategies and strategic relationships in mind when sharing your views on social media. Do nothing to compromise AIA's brand, human rights impact or other successes (ie. fundraising or advocacy), and keep our organisational values in mind. When in doubt, hold off posting and check in with a campaigner or subject matter expert.

5. Act within the law:
Always be mindful of copyright law, defamation and confidentiality—only post things you have legal permission to post. If you break the law online (for example, by posting something defamatory or in contempt of court) you may face civil or criminal proceedings. In some cases AIA could also be held legally responsible. In some cases such conduct may result in disciplinary action (see Code of Conduct, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information Policy, and Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy).

6. Maintain appropriate workplace conduct:
Employees should not use social media to carry out inappropriate workplace behaviour, including bullying or harassment of other employees or supporters of AIA (see Code of Conduct and Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy).

8. Be respectful:
As you would in 'the real world', always maintain a level of professionalism when dealing with dissenting opinions or attacks from opponents on social media. That said, you should feel free to delete and/or block comments from 'trolls' – those who are intent on derailing discussions by posting rude, defamatory, or off-topic messages. Threats or harassment should be reported to your supervisor immediately.

Consider people's dignity and right to privacy when posting photos/videos featuring or produced by them. If posting material that your audience may find distressing, include a content warning.

Further guidance for spokespeople

Please follow all of the above guidelines, and consider these extra tips

Am I a 'spokesperson'?
Yes, if you represent Amnesty in public or with key decision makers. This could be in the media, in social media or website content, as a key governance member, or even as a prominent Amnesty activist who often meets with MPs or speaks at public events. If you're unsure, please check with your supervisor, organiser or staff contact.

Always be non-partisan:
If you explicitly affiliate your account with AIA, or you're an official AIA spokesperson, you may not advocate on behalf of a political candidate or political party on social media.

There is a difference between **being non-partisan** and **being political.** You *can* retweet things from MPs in order to criticise or congratulate them on a policy or position. You *can* include handles for MPs in tweets to ask them questions or send them a comment about a policy or position. You *should not* advocate for or denounce an entire political party, or share content that overly praises or disparages an MP or decision maker's character (ie. be respectful, post about the issue and not the person).

Posting your personal views on social media:
If you explicitly affiliate your account with AIA, or you're an official AIA spokesperson, it may not be appropriate to publicly voice a view if it opposes AIA's position or if it may harm our objectives.

A spokesperson might be able to post views that oppose Amnesty's on personal accounts with high privacy settings, a clear disclaimer and a personal audience eg. a Facebook account with a group of people you know well. Unfortunately there's no foolproof way to ensure your opinions will remain private, so if you're posting opinions that differ from Amnesty's please ensure you make it clear you're talking in a personal capacity. Platforms are also constantly updating access levels and you'll need to keep an eye on privacy settings. You might try using a pseudonym or moniker for a private Facebook page, so it's harder for journalists or members of the public to find it. However: Facebook hates accounts with 'fake' names and may ban you; same with duplicate accounts.

X is a platform designed to announce people's opinions far and wide, so unless you want a completely anonymous X account for personal views, it may not be possible to use it for personal views which contradict Amnesty's position. Spokespeople: read more about Twitter and GroupTweet (auto-tweeting).

Can I post this?

Green light (fine to post):

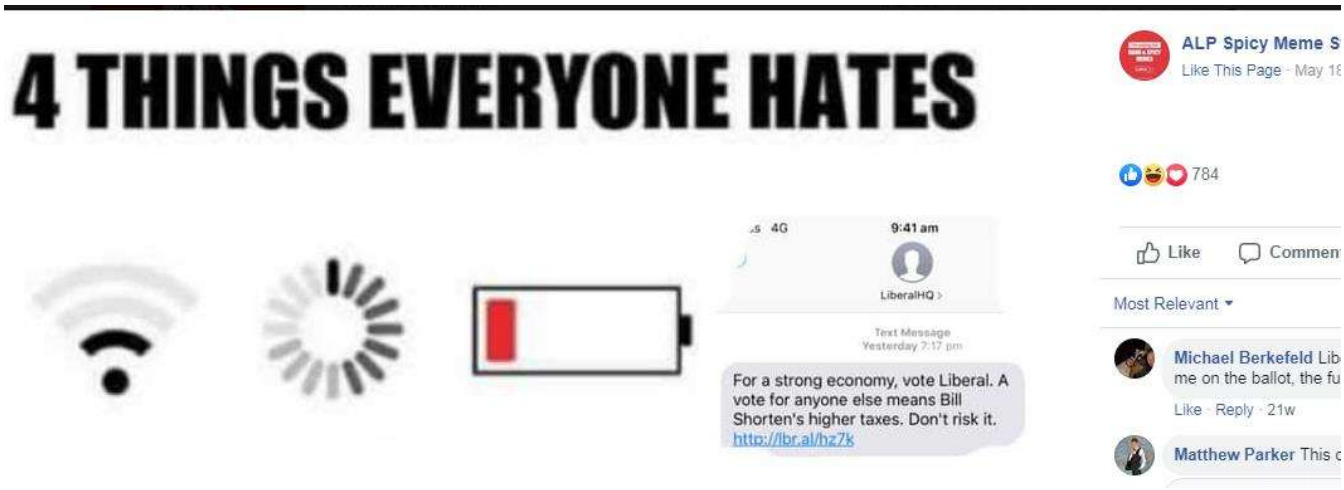
- Information or content that has been posted on an official Amnesty website or social channel.
- Information from Amnesty that is publicly available and non-embargoed (ie. press releases, quotes, official statements).
- Comment or content that supports Amnesty positions, campaigns or strategic relationships.
- Personal opinions/comment/content on topics of interest to staff members that bear no relation to Amnesty's work.

Along with your personal social media posting, you're more than welcome to support Amnesty's campaigns and positions on your own social media

Amnesty campaigner Joel isn't afraid to tweet @ and retweet our MPs. To maintain our non-partisanship, he focuses commentary on the issues at hand and party policies, rather than directing criticism at the political party or person.

Orange light (think twice/ask your supervisor for guidance):

- Comment or content that contradicts Amnesty positions, campaigns or strategic relationships (especially if you're an official AIA spokesperson).
- Comment or content on issues where Amnesty's position is contested or unclear (especially if you're an official AIA spokesperson).



This spicy political meme might be a step too far if you represent Amnesty

Red light (don't post):

- Sensitive or confidential information obtained during the course of your work for Amnesty.
- Amnesty internal communications.
- Advocacy on behalf of a political candidate or political party (if you explicitly affiliate your account with AIA or are an official AIA spokesperson).

- Anything racist or that defames, bullies or belittles another person or group.

Examples

- Rugby Australia sacked footballer Israel Folau over homophobic social media posts
- A former Immigration Department employee was sacked after criticising their employer on social media
- A Western Australia police officer found himself under investigation for his racist comments on Facebook posts.

Spokespeople should not advocate for a politician or political party on social media, including for the United Australia Party!