



## Social media policy

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As Australia's best source of independent news, analysis and opinion, *Crikey* has a strong presence on social media through our owned channels, staff accounts, and our subscribers and readers.

According to the [Digital News Report: Australia 2021](#), 23% of news consumers in Australia primarily get their news from social media. *Crikey* therefore strongly believes in the importance of maintaining and growing this social media presence in order to support a robust and diverse social media information landscape in Australia. However, in response to a [recent High Court ruling](#) which holds publishers liable for defamatory comments posted on their posts by third-party users, *Crikey* also recognises the need for social media moderation that reduces the publisher's risk of liability.

We, therefore, have put the following measures in place to ensure that *Crikey* can continue to engage with its social media readership in a manner that is legally sound, transparent, and does not stifle public and social debate.

## Definitions

**Ban/block:** restricting a user's access to *Crikey's* profile, posts, and the comments section on social media platforms.

**Closed (comment section):** Restricting comments on a post from any user other than *Crikey*.

**Comment/s:** words or images shared in the comments section of a post.

**Delete:** removing a post or comment fully from the social media platform.

**Hidden:** making a comment unviewable by anyone other than the user and the social media admin.

**Platform:** the individual social media website

**Post:** a link, image, or text posted to *Crikey's* social media platforms by a *Crikey* staff member

**Social media:** unless a platform is named, social media refers to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, LinkedIn.

**User:** a third-party social media profile that is not owned by *Crikey*. This can be an individual user or a page.

## Banned words and phrases

On both Facebook and Instagram *Crikey* has submitted a list of words and phrases that are automatically screened by the platform. User comments that use these words (most of which are highly offensive terms) will be automatically hidden by the platform.

### **Monitoring comments, removal of defamatory and offensive comments, and closing the comments section**

*Crikey's* Audience Editor will monitor social media comments throughout the working day between the hours of 7:30am and 4pm, checking for highly offensive or defamatory comments, or comments that incite harm/violence (see definitions below, these three terms will now be replaced with the umbrella term 'antisocial').

**Highly offensive comment:** A comment that uses language in a way that could cause offence to a reasonable person. We are guided by key industry standards, such as [Australian Press Council standards](#), and widely accepted human rights laws such as those enshrined in the [Racial Discrimination Act](#).

**Defamatory comment:** A comment that lowers a person in the estimation of others.

**A comment that incites harm/violence:** A comment that causes or intends to cause (someone) to act in an angry, harmful, or violent way.

A comment will be hidden or deleted by the Audience Editor if it is deemed to be antisocial. In some instances, whole comment threads may be hidden or deleted, even if some comments are allowable, because the thread itself is deemed to be encouraging antisocial engagement.

At the end of the working day, the Audience Editor will close the comments section on posts that are deemed to potentially facilitate antisocial comments. Where a post is deemed as at low risk of this, the comments section may remain open.

The Audience Editor may also choose to close the comments section early if the post is attracting a large number of antisocial comments before the end of the working day.

When a comments section is closed, a link to this social media policy will always be attached.

**Note:** *Crikey* is committed to the moderation of our social media comments, however, it is reasonable that the Audience Editor will not be monitoring comments continuously. They will check all comments at a minimum of four times throughout the day, but if an antisocial comment is posted by a user in between periods of moderation, it is reasonable to assume that the Audience Editor had no knowledge of this comment and did/will do their best to address the

comment in line with *Crikey's* social media policy when they become aware of the antisocial comment.

## Posting controversial content

As a result of a recent High Court ruling which holds the publisher responsible for defamatory comments made on a publisher's post by third-party users, *Crikey* reserves the right to close all comments on certain posts that we believe are particularly likely to result in defamatory comments.

## Banning or blocking users

*Crikey* reserves the right to block or ban a user from our social media platforms if they engage with *Crikey's* posts or other users' comments in a manner that is deemed antisocial.

When a user is blocked or banned the Audience Editor must provide the support team with an example of their antisocial behaviour. The user does not need to be issued a warning before being blocked or banned, nor do they need to be informed that this has taken place. The Audience Editor or support team can reinstate or unblock a user at their own discretion but are under no obligation to do so.

## Conflict resolution

In the event that a user feels that they or another user has been defamed, made to feel unsafe, or offended by anything that *Crikey* has posted on social media, or by a comment from another user that *Crikey* has not moderated, the user's first port of call should be *Crikey's* support team [support@crikey.com.au](mailto:support@crikey.com.au).

*Crikey* will endeavour to address the situation as quickly as possible in accordance with our social media policy. Legal recourse should not be taken by the user until *Crikey's* support has been contacted and a reasonable amount of response time given.

## This policy

This social media policy will be accessible via *Crikey's* platform at [Frequently Asked Questions / General Questions / Social Media](#). The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis or when there is an additional cause to do so.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact *Crikey* support at [support@crikey.com.au](mailto:support@crikey.com.au) and your email will be forwarded to the relevant staff member.