INTERNET, EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

Human Resources
YASC POL 18 – V7

2026

YARRABAH ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL
56 Sawmill Rd Yarrabah, QLD 4871

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1. LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITY

The Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)
Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)
YASC Code of Conduct
YASC Anti-Discrimination Policy
YASC Disclosure of Personal Information Policy

2. COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council ('YASC') conducts its business with integrity, honesty and fairness. All employees are expected to work within the rules and actions of YASC will comply with all relevant laws, regulations, codes and corporate standards.

Everyone representing YASC must reflect the highest standards of behaviour. Our relationships are critical to the ongoing success of our organisation. Our leaders have responsibility for fostering a culture where ethical conduct is recognised, valued and applied at all levels.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, which outlines our standards of behaviour and workplace culture are in accordance with YASC's principles.

3. PURPOSE

This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected of Persons using YASC's computer facilities or social media platforms, or when making reference to YASC on external sites, including social networking sites when the person is using a computer or hand held device not owned or controlled by YASC. This Policy also deals with acceptable use of the social medial platforms during ordinary work hours

4. COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY

This Policy replaces all other policies relating to use of YASC's computers, internet and email facilities (whether written or not).

5. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all people who use YASC's Computer Network by any means (***Users***). The policy also applies to Users who contribute to external blogs and sites including social networking sites who identify themselves as associated with YASC.

This policy also sets out the type of surveillance that will be carried out in YASC's workplace, relating to the use of YASC's Computer Network.

This policy does not apply to personal use of social media platforms where the User makes no reference to YASC or any of YASC's employees, contractors, other YASC Officials, related entities or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of YASC.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. Nor does it form part of any other User's contract for service

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6. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

- "***Blogging***" means the act of using web log or 'blog'. 'Blog' is an abbreviated version of 'weblog' which is a term used to describe websites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog is a frequently updated website featuring diary-style commentary, audio-visual material and links to articles on other websites.

- "***Confidential Information***" includes but is not limited to trade secrets of YASC; non-public information about the organisation and affairs of YASC such as: pricing information such as internal cost and pricing rates, production scheduling software, special supply information; marketing or strategy plans; exclusive supply agreements or arrangements; commercial and business plans; commission structures; contractual arrangements with third parties; tender policies and arrangements; financial information and data; sales and training materials; technical data; schematics; proposals and intentions; designs; policies and procedures documents; concepts not reduced to material form; information which is personal information for the purposes of privacy law; and all other information obtained from YASC or obtained in the course of working or providing services to YASC that is by its nature confidential.

- "***Computer***" includes but is not limited to, desktop computers, laptop computers, mobile phones and other handheld electronic devices, and any other means of accessing YASC's email, internet and computer facilities.

- "***Computer Network***" includes all YASC internet, email and computer facilities which are used by Users, inside and outside working hours, in the workplace of YASC (or a related corporation of YASC) or at any other place while performing work for YASC (or a related corporation of YASC). It includes, but is not limited to, desktop computers, laptop computers, mobile phones and other handheld electronic devices, and any other means of accessing YASC's email, internet and computer facilities, (including, but not limited to, a personal home computer which has access to YASC's IT systems)

- "***Computer Surveillance***" means surveillance by means of software or other equipment that monitors or records information input or output, or other use, of YASC's Computer Network (including, but not limited to, the sending and receipt of emails and the accessing of websites).

- "***Intellectual Property***" means all forms of intellectual property rights throughout the world including copyright, patent, design, trade mark, trade name, and all Confidential Information and including know-how and trade secrets.

- "***Person***" includes any natural person, company, partnership, association, trust, business, or other organisation or entity of any description and a Person's legal personal representative(s), successors, assigns or substitutes.

- "***Social Networking Site***" and "***Social Media Platform***" includes Facebook, My Space, Snapchat, Friendster, Flickr, You Tube, Twitter, Yahoo Groups, Google Groups, Whirlpool and other similar sites.

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- "***YASC Official***" includes employees, agents and contractors (including temporary contractors), administrators appointed under section 256 of the Local Government Act 2009 (QLD), members of YASC committees, conduct reviewers, delegates of YASC, work experience employees and volunteers of YASC.

7. USE OF INTERNET, EMAIL AND COMPUTERS

Where use is allowed, Users are entitled to use YASC's Computer Network only for legitimate business purposes.

Users are permitted to use YASC's Computer Network for limited and reasonable personal use. However any such personal use must not impact upon the User's work performance or YASC resources or violate this policy or any other YASC policy.

A User must not use YASC's Computer Network for personal use if that use interferes with the efficient business operations of YASC or relates to a personal business of the User.

YASC gives no warranty or assurance about the confidentiality or privacy of any personal information disclosed by any User in the course of using the Computer Network for the User's personal purposes.

8. USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

When contributing to a Social Networking Site or accessing a Social Media Platform, a User must not identify him or herself as representing YASC or any of YASC's related entities unless specifically authorised to do so in writing by the Chief Executive Officer.

As it may be possible for any user of an external site to conduct a search that will identify any blogged comments about YASC except where permitted in the policy otherwise, Users must not publish any material which identifies themselves as being associated with YASC or a related entity of YASC.

A User must not disparage or make any adverse comment about YASC, any policy or decision of YASC or any of YASC's related entities, employees, contractors and other YASC Officials or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of YASC.

A User must not harass, bully, intimidate or threaten another employee, contractor or other YASC Official (or a person the User knows to be a relative or associate of a YASC Official) when contributing to a Social Networking Site or accessing a Social Media Platform.

A User may only disclose publicly available information and must not disclose, or cause to be disclosed, Confidential Information.

A User must ensure that any information they post about YASC or a related entity of YASC is informed and factually accurate.

A User must use a disclaimer when referring to YASC or a related entity of YASC or a YASC Official. Such a disclaimer is "*the views expressed in this post are mine only and do not necessarily reflect the views of Council"*

A User must not transmit or send YASC's documents or emails or text messages (in any format) to any external parties or organisations unless expressly authorised to do so.

If the User subsequently discovers a mistake in their blog or social networking entry, they are required to immediately inform the Chief Executive Officer and then take steps authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to correct the mistake. All alterations should indicate the date on which the alteration was made.

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Use of Social Networking Sites and Social Media Platforms during ordinary work hours

Using Social Networking Sites and Social Media Platforms for personal use must not impact upon the User's work performance or YASC resources or violate this policy or any other YASC policy.

Users must not inappropriately use Social Networking Sites and Social Media Platforms. Inappropriate use includes but is not limited to send, post or otherwise publish:

- obscene messages
- racially and/or sexually harassing messages and,
- sexually explicit material

9. REPRESENTATION

Users must not represent or indicate that they represent YASC or any of its related entities unless specifically authorised to do so in writing by the Chief Executive Officer.

If a User is authorised to represent YASC or any of its related entities, the User must disclose that he or she is an employee, contractor or other Official of YASC or a related entity and what the Users role and accountabilities are.

A User authorised to represent YASC or a related entity must ensure that:

- Any content the User publishes is factually accurate and complies with relevant policies of YASC;
- The User only comments on topics that fall within the User's area of responsibility at YASC;
- The User does not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity or which causes (or could cause) insult, offence, intimidation or humiliation.
- The User does not disclose another person's personal information.
- The User respects copyright, privacy, financial disclosure, occupational health and safety, employment and other applicable laws.
- The User does not create any legal or contractual obligations on behalf of YASC unless expressly authorised by YASC;
- The User does not send or cause to be sent chain or SPAM emails or text messages in any format.

10. STANDARDS IN RELATION TO BLOGS AND SITES OPERATED BY THE COUNCIL

Users must not engage in prohibited conduct. Further:

- Only Users who are authorised by the Chief Executive Officer are permitted to publish a blog or social network entry on any sites operated by Council, and the content of any such blog or entry must first be approved by the Chief Executive Officer before publishing.
- Public communications concerning Council must not violate any provisions of any applicable Council policy, procedure or contract.

If the User subsequently discovers a mistake in their blog or social networking entry, they are required to immediately inform the Chief Executive Officer and then take steps authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to correct the mistake. All alterations should indicate the date on which the alteration was made.

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11. REQUIREMENTS FOR USE

Users must comply with the following rules when using YASC's Computer Network:-

- Users must use their own username/login code and/or password when accessing the Computer Network.
- Users in possession of YASC electronic equipment must at all times handle the equipment in a responsible manner and ensure that the equipment is kept secure.
- Users should protect their username/login code and password information at all times and not divulge such information to any other Person, unless it is necessary to do so for legitimate business reasons.
- Users should ensure that when not in use or unattended, the Computer System is shut down.
- A disclaimer is automatically included in all YASC emails, and must not be removed.
- If a User receives an email which the User suspects contains a virus, the User should not open the email or attachment to the email and should immediately contact their Director for assistance.
- If a User receives an email the content of which (including an image, text, materials or software) is in breach of this policy, the User should immediately delete the email and report the matter to their Director. The User must not forward the email to any other Person.

12. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Users must not send (or cause to be sent), upload, download, use, retrieve, or access any email or material on YASC's Computer Network that:

- is obscene, offensive or inappropriate. This includes text, images, sound or any other material, sent either in an email or in an attachment to an email, or through a link to a site (URL). For example, material of a sexual nature, indecent or pornographic material;
- causes (or could cause) insult, offence, intimidation or humiliation;
- may be defamatory or could adversely impact the image or reputation of YASC. A defamatory message or material is a message or material that is insulting or lowers the reputation of a Person or group of people;
- is illegal, unlawful or inappropriate;
- affects the performance of, or causes damage to YASC's Computer System in any way; or
- gives the impression of or is representing, giving opinions or making statements on behalf of YASC without the express authority of YASC. Further, Users must not transmit or send YASC's documents or emails (in any format) to any external parties or organisations unless expressly authorised to do so.

Users must not use YASC's Computer Network:

- to violate copyright or other intellectual property rights. Computer software that is protected by copyright is not to be copied from, or into, or by using YASC's computing facilities, except as permitted by law or by contract with the owner of the copyright;
- to create any legal or contractual obligations on behalf of YASC unless expressly authorised by YASC;
- to disclose any Confidential Information of YASC or any customer, client or supplier of YASC's unless expressly authorised by YASC;
- to install software or run unknown or unapproved programs on YASC's Computer Network. Under no circumstances should Users modify the software or hardware environments on YASC's Computer Network;

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- to gain unauthorised access (hacking) into any other computer within YASC or outside YASC, or attempt to deprive other Users of access to or use of YASC's Computer Network;
- to send or cause to be sent chain or SPAM emails in any format;
- to use YASC computer facilities for personal gain. For example, running a personal business.

Users must not use another User's Computer Network facilities (including passwords and usernames/login codes) for any reason without the express permission of the User or YASC.

13. DETAILS ON BLOCKING EMAIL OR INTERNET ACCESS

YASC reserves the right to prevent (or cause to be prevented) the delivery of an email sent to or from a User, or access to an internet website by a User, if the content of the email or the internet website is considered:

- obscene, offensive or inappropriate. This includes text, images, sound or any other material, sent either in an e-mail message or in an attachment to a message, or through a link to an internet website (URL). For example, material of a sexual nature, indecent or pornographic material;
- causes or may cause insult, offence, intimidation or humiliation;;
- defamatory or may incur liability or adversely impacts on the image or reputation of YASC. A defamatory message or material is a message or material that is insulting or lowers the reputation of a Person or a group of people;
- illegal, unlawful or inappropriate;
- to have the potential to affect the performance of, or cause damage to or overload YASC Computer Network, or internal or external communications in any way;
- to give the impression of or is representing, giving opinions or making statements on behalf of YASC without the express authority of YASC.

In the case that an email is prevented from being delivered to or from a User, the User will receive a prevented delivery notice. The notice will inform the User that the delivery of the email has been prevented. The notice will not be given if delivery is prevented in the belief that:

- the email was considered to be SPAM, or contain potentially malicious software; or
- the content of the email (or any attachment) would or might have resulted in an unauthorised interference with, damage to or operation of any program run or data stored on any of YASC's equipment; or
- the email (or any attachment) would be regarded by a reasonable Person as being, in all the circumstances, menacing, harassing or offensive.

YASC is not required to give a prevented delivery notice for any email messages sent by a User if YASC is not aware (and could not reasonably be expected to be aware) of the identity of the User who sent the e-mail or is not aware that the e-mail was sent by the User.

14. TYPE OF SURVEILLANCE IN YASC'S WORKPLACE

On a continuous and ongoing basis during the period of this policy, YASC will carry out Computer Surveillance of any User at such times of YASC's choosing and without further notice to any User.

Computer Surveillance occurs in relation to:

- storage volumes;
- internet sites - every web site visited is recorded including the time of access, volume downloaded and the duration of access;

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- download volumes;
- suspected malicious code or viruses;
- emails - the content of all emails received, sent and stored on the Computer Network. (This also includes emails deleted from the Inbox); and
- computer hard drives - YASC may access any hard drive on the Computer Network.

YASC retains logs, backups and archives of computing activities, which it may audit. Such records are the property of YASC, are subject to State and Federal laws and may be used as evidence in legal proceedings, or in workplace investigations into suspected misconduct.

15. WHAT WILL THE COMPUTER SURVEILLANCE RECORDS BE USED FOR?

YASC may use and disclose the Computer Surveillance records where that use or disclosure is:

- for a purpose related to the employment of any employee or related to YASC's business activities; or
- use or disclosure to a law enforcement agency in connection with an offence; or
- use or disclosure in connection with legal proceedings; or
- use or disclosure reasonably believed to be necessary to avert an imminent threat of serious violence to any Person or substantial damage to property.

For example, use or disclosure of Computer Surveillance records can occur in circumstances of assault, suspected assault, theft or suspected theft of YASC's property (or that of a related corporation of YASC) or damage to YASC's equipment or facilities (or that of a related corporation of YASC).

16. STANDARDS IN RELATION TO BLOGS AND SITES NOT OPERATED BY YASC

YASC acknowledges that Users have the right to contribute content to public communications on websites not operated by YASC, such as social networking sites like Facebook, My Space, Snapchat, Friendster, Flickr, You Tube, Twitter, Yahoo Groups, Google Groups, Whirlpool and other similar sites. However, inappropriate use of such communications has the potential to cause damage to YASC, employees, clients and suppliers. For that reason, the following provisions apply to all Users:

- As it may not be possible for any user of an external site to conduct a search that will identify any blogged comments about YASC, Users must not publish any material which identifies themselves as being associated with YASC.
- Users must not publish any material that may expose YASC to any possible legal liability. Examples include, but are not limited to, defamation or discrimination proceedings.

17. WARNING

Apart from the potentially damaging effects a blog or social networking entry may have on YASC, inappropriate blogs on internal or external sites can also have adverse consequences for a User in terms of future career prospects, as the material remains widely and permanently accessible to other site users.

18. ENFORCEMENT

Users must comply with the requirements of this policy. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action which may include termination of employment (or, for Persons other than employees, the termination or non-renewal of contractual arrangements).

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Other disciplinary action that may be taken includes, but is not limited to, issuing a warning, suspension or disconnection of access to all or part of YASC's Computer Network whether permanently or on a temporary basis.

19. VARIATIONS

Council reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

20. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Adoption Date:	12 January 2016	Resolution No.	Version No. 1
Amended Date:	30 January 2020	Resolution No. 03:30/01/2020	Version No. 2
Amended Date:	17 February 2021	Resolution No. 05:17/02/2021	Version No. 3
Amended Date:	18 May 2022	Resolution No. 09:18/05/2022	Version No. 4
Amended Date:	29 June 2023	Resolution No. 11:29/06/2023	Version No. 5
Reviewed date:	26 July 2024	Resolution No. 12:26/07/2024	Version No. 6
Reviewed Date:	19 August 2026	Resolution No. 28:19/08/2026	Version No. 7
Next Review Date:	2027		
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer		

Richard Wright
Chief Executive Officer

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