

## **Molyneux, Jennifer MTIC:EX**

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**From:** Hughes, Bette-Jo MTIC:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, April 25, 2016 7:04 PM  
**To:** Whittier, Joanne GCPE:EX  
**Cc:** Schollen, Tasha GCPE:EX; Molyneux, Jennifer MTIC:EX  
**Subject:** Re: For review IN\_Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms\_SLACK\_Skype

Approved

BJH

On Apr 25, 2016, at 5:31 PM, Whittier, Joanne GCPE:EX <[Joanne.Whittier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Joanne.Whittier@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Hi Bette-Jo: attached is an issues note that we have drafted regarding a couple of FOI requests; one for records relating to Slack and the other Skype. Gary and Ian have both reviewed this IN. Plz let me know if it is ok with you; we will also run by the Ministry of Finance.

Thx in advance - Jo

<IN\_Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms\_SLACK\_Skype\_14 Apr\_2016\_DRAFT7.docx>

## ADVICE TO MINISTER

<b>CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE</b>  <b>Ministry: Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services</b>  <b>Date: DRAFT</b>  <b>Minister Responsible: Hon. Amrik Virk</b>  Created by Government Communications and Public Engagement	<b>Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms – Slack and Skype</b>
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### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Instant messages, chat rooms and video conferencing calls are commonly used by organizations as a cost-effective option for communicating – no different than a phone call or an in-person meeting.
- Government employees are required to keep complete and accurate records sufficient to document key policy decisions and work activities. For example, minutes taken following a weekly meeting.
- The Information Management Act stipulates that information documenting key decisions must be retained in accordance with information schedules approved by the Chief Records Officer.
- Documenting these decisions ensures that information is kept for operational and accountability purposes and is available to the public, subject to limited exceptions, under Freedom of Information legislation.

#### If asked about privacy or security:

- Government is committed to strong privacy and security controls.
- Privacy Impact Assessments and Security Threat and Risk Assessments are required for the use of any new IT system supported by government.
- All ministries are required to conduct a Privacy Impact Assessment when they use any new IT system or when there is a material change to an existing IT system.
- Employees in the public service are required to use only IT systems, downloaded software or applications that have been approved for government use.

#### If asked whether employees can use government email to sign up for Slack:

- Employees are permitted to use government email to sign up for social networking, as long as the purpose is for government business.
- The B.C. Government has clear policy guidelines for employees that govern the use of government email accounts and we expect these policies to be followed.
- BC Public Service employees who comment on social media or collaboration sites in the course of their work must adhere to the BC Public Service

## **professional Standards of Conduct.**

- **The vast majority of BC Public Service employees follow these guidelines.**

### **If asked about employees who do not follow the guidelines:**

- **Employees who are found to have inappropriately used IT resources may be subject to disciplinary action.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

A series of FOI requests have been made to various ministries requesting records pertaining to the use of Slack for government operations. Slack is a web-based instant messaging application designed to support communication and collaboration between teams. There is also an FOI request to MTICS for a list of employees in government who have Skype loaded onto their work stations.

Both of these requests may lead to questions regarding the use of instant messaging applications or chat rooms (collaboration platforms) for government business and whether or not appropriate records of government decision making are being captured and retained.

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) confirms that Skype is approved for government use. Government employees also have the ability to use the Microsoft Lync application, which is pre-installed on government workstations, to be used to connect directly with public Skype users.

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As outlined in the OCIO's Appropriate Use Policy, allegations of inappropriate access, collection or inappropriate use of government IT resources are investigated on a case-by-case basis. If an investigation determines IT resources have been used inappropriately, employees may be subject to discipline.

MTICS FOI **CTZ-2016-61358, applicant type media**, requests a list of email addresses (government and non-government) registered with a Slack team called 2o17. No responsive records have been found in relation to this request. The OCIO does not know if there are government employees registered for a Slack team called 2o17. The OCIO would be required to launch an investigation in order to get additional information.

Slack is promoted as a messaging application designed for teams, providing private channels for the exchange of sensitive information, as well as a direct messaging function. The company offers free and paid-subscription options. s.15

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MTICS FOI **CTZ-2016-61317, applicant type media**, requests records pertaining to the desktop and mobile application Skype; specifically for a list of government employees with workstation installations of Skype. Responsive records include 34 pages listing the name and public-sector organization of staff who have Skype loaded onto their workstations. It is unknown when Skype was loaded onto workstations and whether it is used.

Skype is a Microsoft product that is pre-loaded with Windows 8.1 and distributed with Surface Pro 3, which is used by many employees throughout the public service. Skype provides text, voice and video applications.

Prepared by: MTICS GCPE

### **Ministry Lead:**

Gary Perkins

Branch: Information Security Branch, OCIO

## ADVICE TO MINISTER

Number: (250) 387-7590

**Signoff:**

ADM: **Ian Bailey**

DM or Associate DM: **xxx**

## ADVICE TO MINISTER

<b>CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE</b>  <b>Ministry:</b> Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services <b>Date:</b> DRAFT <b>Minister Responsible:</b> Hon. Amrik Virk  Created by Government Communications and Public Engagement	<b>Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms – Slack and Skype</b>
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### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

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- Employees are required to keep complete and accurate records sufficient to document their key policy decisions-making and work activities – for example, minutes taken and recorded following a weekly meeting.
- The Information Management Act stipulates that information documenting key decisions, as well as information that documents or supports government's organization, policies, procedures, transactions and operations must be retained in accordance with information schedules approved by the Chief Records Officer.
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- Employees are permitted to use government email to sign up for social networking, as long as the purpose is for government business.
- The B.C. Government has clear policy guidelines for employees that govern the

use of government email accounts and we expect these policies to be followed.

- **BC Public Service employees who comment on social media or collaboration sites in their capacity must adhere to the BC Public Service professional Standards of Conduct.**
- **The majority of BC Public Service employees follow these guidelines.**

**If asked about employees who do not follow the guidelines:**

- **Employees who are found to have inappropriately used IT resources may be subject to disciplinary action**

**BACKGROUND:**

A series of FOI requests have been made to various ministries requesting records pertaining to the use of Slack in government, which is a web-based instant messaging application designed to support communication and collaboration between teams. There is also an FOI request to MTICS for a list of employees in government who have Skype loaded onto their work stations.

Both of these requests may lead to questions regarding the use of instant messaging applications or chat rooms (collaboration platforms) for government business and whether or not appropriate records of government decision making have been captured and retained.

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MTICS FOI **CTZ-2016-61358, applicant type media**, is for a list of email addresses (government and non-government) registered with a Slack team the applicant indicates is called 2o17. No responsive records have been found in relation to this request. The OCIO does not know if there is a Slack team called 2o17 or who is the owner of this team, and does not have access to a list of associated email addresses. The OCIO would be required to launch an investigation in order to get additional information.

Slack is promoted as a messaging application designed for teams, providing private channels for the exchange of sensitive information, as well as a direct messaging function. The company offers free and paid-subscription options. s.15

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Skype is a Microsoft product that is pre-loaded with Windows 8.1 and distributed with Surface Pro 3, which is used by many employees throughout the public service. However, Skype is not currently pre-approved for installation by users on other desktop and laptop computers. Skype provides text, voice and video applications.

Prepared by: MTICS GCPE

**Ministry Lead:**

## **ADVICE TO MINISTER**

Gary Perkins

Branch: Information Security Branch, OCIO

Number: (250) 387-7590

**Signoff:**

ADM: **xxx**

DM or Associate DM: **xxx**

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<b>CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE</b>  <b>Ministry:</b> Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services <b>Date:</b> DRAFT <b>Minister Responsible:</b> Hon. Amrik Virk  Created by Government Communications and Public Engagement	<b>Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms – Slack and Skype</b>
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### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

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#### If asked whether employees can use government email to sign up for Slack:

- Employees are permitted to use government email to sign up for social networking, as long as the purpose is for government business.
- The B.C. Government has clear policy guidelines for employees that govern the



**use of government email accounts and we expect these policies to be followed.**

- **BC Public Service employees who comment on social media or collaboration sites in their capacity must adhere to the BC Public Service professional Standards of Conduct.**
- **The majority of BC Public Service employees follow these guidelines.**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

A series of FOI requests have been made to various ministries requesting records pertaining to the use of Slack in government, which is a web-based instant messaging application designed to support communication and collaboration between teams. There is also an FOI request to MTICS for a list of employees in government who have Skype loaded onto their work stations.

Both of these requests may lead to questions regarding the use of instant messaging applications or chat rooms (collaboration platforms) for government business and whether or not appropriate records of government decision making have been captured and retained.

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MTICS FOI **CTZ-2016-61358, applicant type media**, is for a list of email addresses (government and non-government) registered with a Slack team the applicant indicates is called 2o17. No responsive records have been found in relation to this request. The OCIO does not know if there is a Slack team called 2o17 or who is the owner of this team, and does not have access to a list of associated email addresses. The OCIO would be required to launch an investigation in order to get additional information.

Slack is promoted as a messaging application designed for teams, providing private channels for the exchange of sensitive information, as well as a direct messaging function. The company offers free and paid-subscription options. s.15

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Skype is a Microsoft product that is pre-loaded with Windows 8.1 and distributed with Surface Pro 3, which is used by many employees throughout the public service. However, Skype is not currently pre-approved for installation by users on other desktop and laptop computers. Skype provides text, voice and video applications.

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#### **Ministry Lead:**

Gary Perkins

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Number: (250) 387-7590

#### **Signoff:**

## ADVICE TO MINISTER

ADM: **xxx**

DM or Associate DM: **xxx**

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### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Instant messages and chat rooms are used by many organizations as a cost-effective option for communicating – no different than a conference call or in-person meeting.
- There are clear guidelines for employees regarding record keeping for all government business; this includes the use of instant messaging or chat rooms.
- Employees are required to keep complete and accurate records sufficient to document their decision-making and work activities – for example, minutes taken and recorded following a weekly meeting.

#### If asked about privacy or security:

- Government is committed to strong privacy and security controls.
- Privacy Impact Assessments and Security Threat and Risk Assessments are required for the use of any new IT system within government.
- Employees in the public service are encouraged to use only IT systems, including downloaded software or applications, that have been approved for government use.

#### If asked whether employees can use government email to sign up for Slack:

- The B.C. Government has clear policy guidelines for employees that govern the use of government email accounts and we expect these policies to be followed.
- BC Public Service employees who comment on social media or collaboration sites in their professional capacity must adhere to the BC Public Service Standards of Conduct.

### BACKGROUND:

A series of FOI requests have been made to various ministries requesting records pertaining to the use of Slack in government, which is a web-based instant messaging application designed to support communication and collaboration between teams. The request specific to MTICS, CTZ-2016-61358, is for a list of email addresses (government and non-government) registered with a Slack team the applicant indicates is called 2o17. No responsive records have been found in relation to this request.

In addition, an MTICS FOI request, CTZ-2016-61317, has been made for records pertaining to the

desktop and mobile application Skype; specifically for a list of government employees with workstation installations of Skype. Responsive records include 34 pages listing the name and public-sector organization of staff who have Skype loaded onto their workstations. It is not known when Skype would have been loaded or if it is used.

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**Slack** is promoted as a messaging application designed for teams, providing private channels for the exchange of sensitive information, as well as a direct messaging function. The company offers free and paid-subscription options. s.15

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The OCIO does not know if there is a Slack team called 2017 or who is the owner of this team, and does not have access to a list of associated email addresses. The OCIO would be required to launch an investigation in order to get additional information.

**Skype** is a Microsoft product that is pre-loaded with Windows 8.1 and distributed with Surface Pro 3, which is used by many employees throughout the public service but is not currently pre-approved for installation by users on other desktop and laptop computers. Skype provides text, voice and video applications.

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<b>CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE</b>  Ministry: Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services  Date: DRAFT  Minister Responsible: Hon. Amrik Virk  Created by Government Communications and Public Engagement	<b>Instant Messaging and Electronic Collaboration Platforms</b>
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### ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Government is committed to strong privacy and security controls.
- There are clear guidelines for employees regarding the use of instant messaging or collaboration platforms such as chat rooms for government business.
- Employees are required to document all records regarding their decision-making and work activities.
- Privacy Impact Assessments and Security Threat and Risk Assessments are required for the use of any new IT system.

### BACKGROUND:

A series of FOI requests have been made to various ministries requesting records pertaining to the use of Slack in government, which is a web-based instant messaging application designed to support communication and collaboration between teams. The request specific to MTICS, CTZ-2016-61358, is for a list of email addresses (government and non-government) registered with a Slack team called 2o17.

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The Office of the Chief Information

Officer (OCIO) does not know the owner of this registered Slack team, and does not have a list of associated email addresses. OCIO would be required to launch an investigation in order to get additional information.

Skype is a Microsoft product that can be installed by users on desktop and laptop computers. Skype provides text, voice and video applications.

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Comment [N1]: This might be jargon. Could be a "Slack team site named 2o17"

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The B.C. government's records keeping guidelines document employee responsibilities to create and retain accurate records to document decision-making; this applies to instant messages. Most

instant messaging exchanges are expected to meet the definition of transitory records and do not need to be kept and filed, however, employees must capture and file any messages that document government business.

**A collaboration platform** is any business tool that adds networking capabilities to work processes. The goal of a collaboration software application is to foster innovation and enable employees to share information and solve business problems more efficiently. Commonly used applications in the B.C. government include Microsoft Lync, which is a part of the preloaded Microsoft suite of applications, and video conferencing.

Prepared by: MTICS GCPE

**Ministry Lead:**

Gary Perkins

Branch: xxx

Number: xxx

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ADM: xxx

DM or Associate DM: xxx

## ADVICE TO MINISTER

### CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry: Technology, Innovation and  
Citizens' Services

Date: DRAFT

Minister Responsible: Hon. Amrik Virk

Created by Government Communications and  
Public Engagement

### Instant Messaging and Electronic Collaboration Platforms

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Gary Perkins

Branch: xxx

Number: xxx

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ADM: xxx

DM or Associate DM: xxx



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Gary Perkins

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