

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 October 2017 16:28
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Twitter bots

Here's the most recent version of the line on Twitter bots that I've seen, I've copied in [REDACTED] in case he knows more....

Are you concerned about the use of 'net bots' by campaigners in the EU referendum?

Spending limits and rules on reporting spending and donations all apply to campaigners, parties and individuals if they engage in regulated campaigning around elections and referenda. We do not regulate the contents of campaign adverts.

Social media provides increased scale, speed and specificity of targeting compared with traditional campaigning methods, though the same rules on reporting spending, which we then publish, still apply. For example, if registered parties or campaigners spend money on bots to carry out regulated campaigning on social media then any spending on them must be included in its spending return.

The Electoral Commission's inquiries into online campaigning are ongoing. We have also made a number of recommendations aimed at increasing transparency around online campaigning. These include proposing that online campaign material – like its printed equivalent – should by law have to include an imprint stating who has published it, and that rules around parties' and campaigners' spending returns should be modernised to insist on a clearer breakdown between different types of spending. It is for Government, and ultimately Parliament, to determine whether these recommendations should be implemented.

[REDACTED]
Communications Officer

The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row
London EC1Y 8YZ

[REDACTED]
Advice and guidance line: 0333 103 1928

Advice and guidance email: infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk
electoralcommission.org.uk
yourvotematters.co.uk

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