



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)

Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT

Tuesday, 28 May 2024

Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder MLA on 28 May 2024: Jean Giese, Chief Executive Officer, Volunteering ACT, took on notice the following question:

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 28 May 2024, p 56.

In relation to: Impact of AI on the Community Directory

MS LAWDER: A supplementary?

What impact do you think AI will have on the community directorate? Will people be able to ask their question more easily using AI?

Ms Giese: Yes. So we work with a technology partner in Queensland who is far more adept at answering that question than I would be. But we have asked them that question. We have said, "What sets this apart from Google?" And it really is about the nuance and the layering of information and being able to get people to where they need, which Google does not give you, because with Google you need to know where you are going. I would say the same for AI. Because you would have to build into that all of the nuances that people come to you with around their individual circumstance, exactly what they are looking at.

So at this stage, we do not see a threat from AI. But I can certainly take that question back to the developers if you are interested in us exploring that a little bit further.

Jean Giese, Chief Executive Officer, Volunteering ACT: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and the Future of Directories.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) have already significantly impacted the My Community platform and how we manage data. As the technology has become more accessible, The My Community Team has been able to handle larger volumes of data, validate it in new innovative ways, and provide data in ways that were not possible.

The benefits include:

1. **Better Automation and Efficiency** in the data management process, specifically the automation of validation and verification processes, identifying data needing manual review.
2. **Stronger Security and Reliability** with new ways to monitor and detect activity, prevent malicious activity and protect data.
3. **Bigger Community Impact** by providing the My Community Platform to all Australians, wherever they live.
4. **Smarter Governance and Accessibility** by focusing on governance, middleware, training techniques, and developing the Community Information Exchange, A shared database.

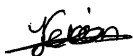
Current Research and Development are assessing how to use Generative AI to create new, personalised, and presented content, with a view to improving ease of posing questions and receiving more tailored and meaningful answers to those questions.

Increased investment is needed in digital infrastructure, including the My Community Platform and Community Information Exchange, which thousands of Australians use every day to find help and get involved in their local community.

While the My Community Platform provides access to information, it also provides access to data, statistics, and insights (to its members). However, the human element within the platform, which includes understanding the local context and developing personalised pathways, cannot be replaced by Technology.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:



Date: 06/06/2024

By Jean Giese, VolunteeringACT CEO