

Sex twits caught stalking Premier

EXCLUSIVE

KRISTINA KENEALLY is being targeted by cyber perverts, and police have been called in to track down several online stalkers harassing her.

At least two men have been visited at home in the past fortnight by police attached to the Premier's personal security unit and warned to stop posting menacing and sexually explicit messages for her on social media forums such as Twitter.

The Sun-Herald has learnt that police are taking the online harassment very seriously after several incidents last year in which agitated people turned up at events where Ms Keneally was to appear.

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They believe there is a link between people crashing functions to get near the Premier and her online followers.

Police have coached her on using Twitter so that she no longer says where she will be on a particular day.

Ms Keneally, who has 11,844 Twitter followers, has been advised to tweet "retrospectively", mentioning locations and events by name only after she has left.

Last year she used to regularly tweet sensitive information such as when she was taking her two sons to watch a Sydney FC match.

The Premier's office declined to comment specifically on the harassment but confirmed that a number of individuals - all men - had been blocked from posting comments on Ms Keneally's Twitter page and that police were involved.

Sources described the harassment as "celebrity-style stalking of a sexual nature".

Federal MP Malcolm Turnbull, a veteran tweeter, said he had never received sexually suggestive comments but said all politicians were used to a percentage of "idiotic and gratuitous" posts.

"One of the problems with anonymous social media is that some people feel liberated to say things knowing there is no consequences," he said.

Mr Turnbull said his tweeting had evolved from federal Environment Minister Tony Burke's style of mundane personal observations to focusing on larger issues.

Ms Kenneally, who was once such a prolific tweeter that her staff would fire off updates on her behalf while she was in Question Time, has not tweeted at all since December 17.

All the sexually explicit messages have been erased from her Twitter page but a search of comments already this year reveal Ms Kenneally is also a target of non-sexual abuse.

A tweeter called Ozriotgrrl posted: "seriously, u & all of yr MPs are useless, corrupt & wasting all our time & cash ('cept Verity). JUST GO NOW! JUST GO NOW! GO!!!"

Someone called dvdk said: "... Reopen the parliament so we get a real inquiry. 79 days Kenneally, 79 days!" Others, such as BeauGiles, were kinder, saying "Oh @KKenneally your voice is so dreamy."

Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell, who has just 5998 followers, has discovered the pitfalls of social media.

In October *The Sun-Herald* revealed Mr O'Farrell had appeared to promote pornography by saving as a "favourite" a web link to images of nudity and sex scenes. He blamed his "chunky fingers".

He also referred to Prime Minister Julia Gillard as a "ranga" in an open reply to a radio journalist that he thought was private.

Despite the online gaffes, he has said he will continue tweeting into the state election campaign and if he becomes premier in March.