

# Twitter hands down new rules to beat abusive talk (Update)

August 4 2013

---

Twitter is handing down new rules to control abusive language, the company said Saturday, a move which follows a barrage of nasty, harassing, and threatening messages directed at high-profile female users of the microblogging site.

In a message posted to its website, Twitter says it is introducing a one-click button to report [abuse](#) and updating its rules to clarify that it will not tolerate abusive behavior.

The one-click button means that users will not have to navigate to Twitter's help center in order to fill out an abuse form—a process some said was too cumbersome to deal with a mass of angry messages—while the new rules includes a stricture against "targeted abuse," something which could include slamming a single user with messages from multiple accounts, creating an account purely to harass someone, or making threats.

The company also promised to devote more staff to weed out offending messages.

In a series of statements posted to Twitter, General Manager Tony Wang issued his own [apology](#) "to the women who have experienced abuse on Twitter and for what they have gone through."

"The abuse they've received is simply not acceptable," he said. "It's not acceptable in the real world, and it's not acceptable on Twitter. There is

more we can and will be doing to protect our users against abuse. That is our commitment."

The relative anonymity of the Internet means it has long been hard to police abusive or threatening speech, but the issue recently received attention in Britain after several women went public about the sexually explicit and often luridly violent abuse they receive from online bullies, often called trolls.

Many argue that trolls are an [annoyance](#) which should just be ignored, but the catalogue of graphic threats made public by the women involved have ignited a [national debate](#) over the impunity of those spewing the hatred online.

Wang said in a [tweet](#) that the new anti-abuse policy will apply worldwide.

**More information:** [blog.uk.twitter.com/2013/08/our-commitment.html](http://blog.uk.twitter.com/2013/08/our-commitment.html)

© 2013 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Twitter hands down new rules to beat abusive talk (Update) (2013, August 4) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-08-twitter-abusive.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--