

Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and
Misinformation

Google Annual Transparency Report, May 2024

1st January 2023 - 31st December 2023

Introduction

As Google's mission is to organise the world's information to make it universally accessible and useful, combating misinformation and disinformation is of utmost importance.

Since Google's founding, our product, policy, and content enforcement decisions have been guided by the following three principles:

1. **Value openness and accessibility**
2. **Respect user choice**
3. **Build for everyone**

With these principles in mind, we implement a multi-faceted approach to address the complex challenges and risks raised by misinformation and disinformation across many of our products and services.

This report discusses these approaches across Google's diverse products and services, particularly in the context of addressing misinformation and disinformation. The contents of the report are organised through the framework of Objectives 1 through 7 of the Code, and cover the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. We highlight relevant policies, product features and tools, and enforcement efforts across Google's key consumer-facing information services, such as Google Search, Google News, Google Advertising, and YouTube. We also include case studies on a range of initiatives including supporting the Australian Federal election campaign, and activities undertaken as a result of the Russia / Ukraine conflict and the Israel-Gaza conflict. Unless stated otherwise, all policies apply to users and content creators in Australia.

Some, but not all, of the updates that took place during 2023 are provided in this report for Google Advertising, Google Search and YouTube are listed below.

Google Advertising:

- Launched the [Ads Transparency Center](#), a searchable hub of all ads from verified advertisers, which helps people quickly and easily learn more about the ads they see on Search, YouTube and Display.
- Updated its Political Content Policy to require that all verified election advertisers in regions where verification is required (including Australia) must prominently disclose when their ads contain synthetic content that inauthentically depicts real or realistic-looking people or events.
- Inclusion of metrics on ad appeals in Australia for enforcement of misinformation policies.
- Processes are in place for advertisers who repeatedly violate certain Google Ads policies, including repeatedly placing digital advertisements that propagate Disinformation or Misinformation.
- Expanded Australian Election Ads policy to include ads that feature an Australian federal political party, a candidate for the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, a current elected

federal office holder in the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by the Australian Election Commission. Additionally, this policy was expanded to include a state or territory political party, a candidate for elected state or territory office, a current elected state or territory officeholder, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by a state or territory election commission.

Google Search

- Rolled out the 'About This Image' feature to users globally, giving people an easy way to check the credibility and context of images they see online and images' metadata.
- Launched a beta version of two new Fact Check Explorer features which allow a user to search an image for a fact-check and to see the full timeline of contextual information on an image.
- Included examples of how Google Search is providing authoritative information relating to the Israel-Gaza conflict.

YouTube

- Updated its Medical Misinformation Policy, removing content that promotes harmful or ineffective cancer treatments.
- Published its approach to responsible AI innovation, which includes its plan to require that creators disclose when they have created altered or synthetic content that is realistic, including using AI tools.
- Included new metrics on videos, channels and comments removed from YouTube as a response to combating misinformation as it relates to the Israel-Gaza conflict.

We will continue to publish updates to this report annually. We are also committed to improving and augmenting future iterations with further insights relevant to our continued efforts to combat misinformation and disinformation.

With respect to terminology, we acknowledge the differences between 'misinformation' and 'disinformation', as outlined by this Code. We use the term 'misinformation' to refer to both disinformation and misinformation and apply our policies and enforcement actions equally across each category.

Commitments under the Code

Google, including YouTube, has committed to all seven Objectives and related Outcomes provided in the Code and detailed below. As we respond and adapt to new and evolving challenges relating to misinformation we continually review our products, policies, enforcement and transparency work to ensure that they are as effective as possible.

Objective and Outcomes		Applicable service(s)
Objective 1 - Provide safeguards against harms that may arise from disinformation and misinformation		
1a	Signatories contribute to reducing the risk of harm that may arise from the propagation of disinformation and misinformation on digital platforms by adopting a range of scalable measures.	Google Search, Google News, Google Advertising ¹ , and YouTube
1b	Users will be informed about the types of behaviours and types of content that will be prohibited and/or managed by Signatories under this Code.	
1c	Users can report content or behaviours to Signatories that violate their policies under section 5.10 through publicly available and accessible reporting tools.	
1d	Users will be able to access general information about Signatories' actions in response to reports made under 5.11.	
1e	Users will be able to access general information about Signatories' use of recommender systems and have options relating to content suggested by recommender systems.	
Objective 2 - Disrupt advertising and monetisation incentives for disinformation		
2	Advertising and/or monetisation incentives for disinformation and misinformation are reduced.	Google Advertising and YouTube
Objective 3 - Work to ensure the integrity and security of services and products delivered by digital platforms.		
3	The risk that Inauthentic User Behaviours undermine the integrity and security of services and products is reduced.	Google Search, Google News, Google Advertising, and YouTube
Objective 4 - Empower consumers to make better informed choices of digital content.		
4	Users are enabled to make more informed choices about the source of news and factual content accessed via digital platforms and are better equipped to identify misinformation.	Google Search, Google Advertising, and YouTube
Objective 5 - Improve public awareness of the source of political advertising carried on digital		

¹ **Note:** Google Advertising refers to both Google Ads and Google AdSense where appropriate. Within the body of the report, 'Google Advertising' is used to refer to both services, whereas the individual service will be named if only applicable to Google Ads or Google AdSense.

platforms.		
5	Users are better informed about the source of political advertising.	Google Advertising
Objective 6 - Strengthen public understanding of disinformation and misinformation through support of strategic research.		
6	Signatories support the efforts of independent researchers to improve public understanding of disinformation and misinformation.	Google Search and YouTube
Objective 7 - Signatories will publicise the measures they take to combat disinformation and misinformation.		
7	The public can access information about the measures Signatories have taken to combat disinformation and misinformation.	Google Search, Google Advertising, and YouTube

Objective 1: Provide safeguards against harms that may arise from disinformation and misinformation.

Outcome 1a: Signatories contribute to reducing the risk of harms that may arise from the propagation of disinformation and misinformation on digital platforms by adopting a range of scalable measures.

The misinformation landscape, and the narratives that propagate through it, are constantly evolving. As such, our efforts and interventions to combat misinformation must adapt accordingly. Across many of our products and services, we deploy a range of measures to address the risk of potential harm caused by the propagation of misinformation. We also monitor certain narratives that pose a risk of harm, and may adjust our policies, and/or the enforcement of those policies, to counter them. We present a number of outcome-focused metrics to this effect below.

Actions taken to address coordinated influence operations

Our Threat Analysis Group (TAG) and Trust & Safety teams work to monitor malicious actors around the globe, disable their accounts, and remove the content that they post, including but not limited to coordinated influence operations and other operations that may affect Australia. TAG publishes a quarterly TAG [Bulletin](#), which provides updates about coordinated influence operation campaigns terminated on Google's platforms, as well as periodic [blog](#) posts detailing specific campaigns, threats, or trends.

Throughout 2023, TAG has identified several campaigns as part of their investigation into coordinated influence operations linked to Russia. In August 2023, TAG identified a campaign linked to the Internet Research Agency (IRA) that was sharing content in Russian that was supportive of Russia and critical of Ukraine, NATO and the United States. Additionally, TAG is closely monitoring activity in Israel and Gaza with regards to the ongoing conflict, focusing on the safety and security of users and the platforms that help them access and share important information.

Enforcement of YouTube's Community Guidelines

As detailed in our [Community Guidelines](#), YouTube does not allow misleading or deceptive content that poses a serious risk of egregious harm. We enforce our policies across the globe, including in Australia,

using a combination of content reviewers and machine learning to remove content that violates our policies as quickly as possible.

YouTube has long been updating, on a regular and ongoing basis, its internal systems and processes related to the detection of content that violates its policies. This includes investment in automated detection systems. In August 2023, YouTube announced changes to its [Community Guidelines warnings](#). After a creator's first Community Guidelines violation, they will typically get a warning with no penalty to their channel. They will now have the chance to take policy training to allow the warning to expire after 90 days. In November 2023, YouTube updated its [Community Posts Policy enforcement](#). While YouTube has always removed Community posts that violate its policies, starting on 17 November 2023, these posts may also result in a Community Guidelines strike applied to the channel. More information on how YouTube addresses misinformation can be found [here](#).

In 2023, the following actions were taken:

30,000,000+

YouTube **videos removed globally** for violating the Community Guidelines.

140,000+

YouTube **videos** that violated Community Guidelines and were uploaded from IP addresses in **Australia** were **removed**.

2,000,000+

YouTube **videos removed globally** for violating Misinformation or Spam, misleading and scams Policies.

20,000+

YouTube **videos** uploaded from IP addresses in **Australia** were **removed** for violating Misinformation or Spam, misleading and scams Policies.

More than 65% of videos that violated Community Guidelines and were uploaded from IP addresses in Australia were removed with 10 or fewer views.

As mentioned above, we rely on a combination of people and technology to flag inappropriate content and enforce these guidelines. These flags can come from our automated flagging systems, from members of the [Priority Flagger program](#) (previously known as the Trusted Flagger program) or from users in the broader YouTube community. YouTube's Priority Flagger program enables NGOs and government agencies who are particularly effective at identifying certain types of harmful content to have access to more sophisticated reporting processes and prioritised review of flags.

In addition to user flagging, YouTube uses smart detection technology to flag videos for review. YouTube developed powerful machine learning that detects content that may violate YouTube's policies and sends it for human review. In some cases, that same machine learning automatically takes an action, if there is high confidence that content is violative given information about similar or related content that has been previously removed.

Additionally, YouTube ensures integrity of its systems through:

- Having a dedicated team to identify and mitigate the impact of sophisticated bad actors on YouTube at scale, while protecting the broader community;
- Partnering with Google's Threat Analysis Group (TAG) and Trust & Safety Teams to monitor malicious actors around the globe, disable their accounts, and remove the content that they post;
- Educating users about Community Guidelines violations through its [guided policy experience](#);
- Providing clear communication on [appeals processes and notifications](#), and regular [policy updates](#) on its Help Centre; and
- Investing in [automated systems](#) to provide efficient detection of content to be evaluated by human reviewers.

Where appropriate, YouTube makes it clear to users that it has taken action on their content and provides them the opportunity to appeal that decision.

In 2023, YouTube received **7,500+** appeals in Australia regarding a Community Guidelines violation removal decision. Following appeals from creators, **750+** removed videos were reinstated.

2023 Violative View Rate Estimate

YouTube strives to prevent content that violates our policies from being widely viewed — or viewed at all— before it is removed. As the overwhelming majority of violative content is detected by automated systems, YouTube's Violative View Rate (VVR) is a good indication of how well our automated systems are protecting our community. VVR is an estimate of the proportion of video views that violate our Community Guidelines in a given quarter (excluding spam). In order to calculate VVR, we take a sample of the views on YouTube and send the sampled videos for review. Once we receive the decisions from reviewers about which videos in the sample are violative, we aggregate these decisions in order to arrive at our estimate.

- In **Q1** (Jan - Mar 2023), VVR was **0.08-0.10%** (i.e., out of every 10,000 views on YouTube, 8-10 were of violative content).
- In **Q2** (Apr - Jun 2023), VVR was **0.09-0.10%** (i.e., out of every 10,000 views on YouTube, 9-10 were of violative content).
- In **Q3** (Jul - Sep 2023), VVR was **0.10-0.11%** (i.e., out of every 10,000 views on YouTube, 10-11 were of violative content).
- In **Q4** (Oct - Dec 2023), VVR was **0.11-0.12%** (i.e., out of every 10,000 views on YouTube, 11-12 were of violative content).

Additional information about the VVR methodology is available in the YouTube Community Guidelines enforcement [transparency report](#) and a third-party [statistical assessment](#) commissioned by Google.

Case Study: YouTube’s response to combating misinformation as it relates to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine

YouTube’s [Community Guidelines](#) are a key part of YouTube’s [broader suite of policies](#) and are [regularly updated](#) in consultation with outside experts and YouTube creators to keep pace with emerging challenges or crises. YouTube’s teams work quickly to remove content that violates its policies.

From 24 February 2022 to 31 December 2023, YouTube removed more than 12,000 channels and more than 140,000 videos related to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine for violating its content policies, including those pertaining to misinformation, hate speech, and graphic violence.

Case Study: YouTube’s response to combating misinformation as it relates to the Israel / Gaza conflict

Following the terrorist attack by Hamas in Israel and the escalated conflict now underway in Israel and Gaza, YouTube removed over 95,000 videos, terminated over 4,500 channels and removed over 70 million comments as of 8 January 2024.

YouTube’s [Community Guidelines](#) are a key part of YouTube’s [broader suite of policies](#) that are [regularly updated](#). One example is YouTube’s [Hate Speech Policy](#) which prohibits content denying, trivialising, or minimising violent historical events, including the 7 October Hamas attacks in Israel.

From 8 October 2023 to 26 October 2023, YouTube launched a crisis resource panel to highlight authoritative and verified information from Israeli authorities for users in Israel. The crisis resource panel directed users towards resources like the Israeli National Emergency Portal.

Streamlining Medical Misinformation Guidelines for Transparency

On 15 August 2023, YouTube provided an update on its long term vision for YouTube’s medical misinformation policies. As medical information – and misinformation – continuously evolves, YouTube needs a policy framework that endures over the long term, and preserves the important balance of removing egregiously harmful content while ensuring space for debate and discussion. While specific medical guidance can change over time as we learn more, YouTube’s goal is to ensure that when it comes to areas of well-studied scientific consensus, YouTube is not a platform for distributing information that could harm people. Moving forward, YouTube will streamline dozens of our existing [medical misinformation guidelines](#) to fall under three categories – Prevention, Treatment, and Denial. These policies will apply to specific health conditions, treatments, and substances where content contradicts local health authorities or the World Health Organization (WHO). YouTube’s approach is to be clear and transparent, so that content creators understand where the policy lines are, and viewers know they can trust the health information they find on YouTube.

Actions taken to combat AI generated mis/disinformation

Google Search 'About this image'

In October 2023, Google Search [rolled out the 'About this image'](#) feature to English language users globally. 'About this image' gives people an easy way to check the credibility and context of images they see online, including an image's history, how other sites use and describe it, and an image's metadata.

With added insights from 'About this image', users will know if an image may have been generated with Google's AI tools when they come across it in Search or Chrome. All images generated with Imagen 2 in Google's consumer products will be marked by SynthID, a tool developed by Google DeepMind that adds a digital watermark directly into the pixels of images generated. SynthID watermarks are imperceptible to the human eye but detectable for identification. Google Search hopes its [SynthID technology](#) can work together with a broad range of solutions for creators and users across society, and it is continuing to evolve SynthID by gathering feedback from users, enhancing its capabilities, and exploring new features.

SynthID could be expanded for use across other AI models and Google Search is exploring the potential of integrating it into more Google products and making it available to third parties in the near future — empowering people and organisations to responsibly work with AI-generated content.

YouTube's approach to responsible AI innovation

In November 2023, YouTube published its [approach to responsible AI innovation](#), which outlined its plan to require that creators disclose when the content they are uploading is made with altered or synthetic media, including generative AI, and is realistic - that is, a viewer could easily mistake what is being shown with a real person, place or event. YouTube announced that, tied to these disclosures, it will begin applying labels to content indicating that some of the content was altered or synthetic, as well as a more prominent label for certain types of content about sensitive topics. YouTube officially rolled out the disclosure requirements and tools for creators in Q1 2024 i.e. after the reporting period for this report.²

YouTube also announced plans to make it possible to request the removal of AI-generated or other synthetic or altered content that simulates an identifiable individual, including their face or voice, using its [privacy request](#) process. Not all content will be removed from YouTube, and YouTube will consider a variety of factors when evaluating these requests. This could include whether the content is parody or satire, whether the person making the request can be uniquely identified, or whether it features a public official or well-known individual, in which case there may be a higher bar.

YouTube's guiding approach is to ensure we are providing transparency to users in a way that enables creators to experiment with and harness the potential of AI. To build responsibility into its AI tools and features, YouTube is investing in significant, ongoing work to develop guardrails to safely deploy AI tools for YouTube creators. YouTube will also incorporate user feedback and learning to continuously improve protections. Within YouTube, dedicated teams such as the intelligence desk are specifically focused on

² These have been rolled out in Q1 2024. More details can be found in YouTube's blogpost on [how we're helping creators disclose altered or synthetic content](#).

adversarial testing and threat detection to ensure YouTube's systems meet new challenges as they emerge.

Google Ads Update to Political Content policy

In mid-November 2023, Google Ads [updated its Political content policy](#) to include disclosure requirements for synthetic content. This policy requires that all verified election advertisers in regions where verification is required must prominently disclose when their ads contain synthetic content that inauthentically depicts real or realistic-looking people or events. This disclosure must be clear and conspicuous, and must be placed in a location where it is likely to be noticed by users. This policy will apply to image, video, and audio content.

Examples of ad content that would require a clear and conspicuous disclosure include (non-exhaustive):

- An ad with synthetic content that makes it appear as if a person is saying or doing something they didn't say or do; and
- An ad with synthetic content that alters footage of a real event or generates a realistic portrayal of an event to depict scenes that did not actually take place.

Acceptable disclosure language will vary depending on the specific context of the ad, but some examples may include:

- *This audio was computer generated.*
- *This image does not depict real events.*
- *This video content was synthetically generated.*

Outcome 1b: Users will be informed about the types of behaviours and types of content that will be prohibited and/or managed by Signatories under this Code.

We aim to ensure that our policies across products and services are available to the public, users and creators in a form that is clear, predictable and repeatable. Each of our product policies address the types of behaviours and content prohibited on the product, with examples as needed. A list of product-specific policies are available on [this page](#). Those most relevant for this report are included in [Appendix A](#), along with explanations of each policy.

Outcome 1c: Users can report content or behaviours to Signatories that violates their policies under section 5.10 through publicly available and accessible reporting tools.

Our products and services provide publicly available and accessible channels or mechanisms that allow users to report content that they believe has violated our policies. Highlighted below are examples of

reporting mechanisms that users can utilise to provide feedback across Google Search, Google Ads, Google AdSense and YouTube.

- In **Google Search**, users can provide feedback on an overall Search results page or on specific features such as [Knowledge Panels](#) or [Featured Snippets](#).
- On Google-served **Ads**, users can tap the three dots on the top right corner of an ad and select 'Report this Ad' to let us know about ads that they believe are illegal or violate our policies. Clicking on 'Report this Ad' will redirect users to the 'Report an ad/listing' [form](#). Using this feature, individuals can choose the reason that best describes their complaint.
- On **Google AdSense**, users can [report a site](#) that they believe is showing ads in violation of our product policies.
- On **YouTube**, users can [report](#) content using YouTube's flagging feature and indicate information about which of our policies they believe the video is violating. Users can also report inappropriate channels, playlists, comments and other content.

Outcome 1d: Users will be able to access general information about Signatories' actions in response to reports made under 5.11.

We provide regular, publicly available reports on enforcement of our content policies - these include information regarding actions in response to reports of misinformation. A list of these reports (including public links to the materials) is included below. Information from these sources have also been incorporated throughout the relevant sections of this report.

- Our [Google Transparency Report website](#) is a centralised hub for transparency reporting on key content topics across various Google products and services;
- The annual [Ads Safety Report](#) provides updates on policy enforcement in Google Ads;
- Our Threat Analysis Group Quarterly Bulletin (published on our [Threat Analysis Group blog](#)) discloses actions we have taken against coordinated influence operation campaigns on our platforms;
- Our [YouTube Community Guidelines Enforcement report](#) provides a quarterly update on the work we do to enforce our policies on YouTube.

Outcome 1e: Users will be able to access general information about Signatories' use of recommender systems and have options relating to content suggested by recommender systems.

Google's ranking and recommender systems

Google has long invested in ranking and recommender systems that seek to connect people with authoritative sources and elevate high quality content. These systems enable users to make informed choices about content encountered, as further described in Outcome 4 (with additional tools and features highlighted in Appendix B). The below sub-sections highlight some of the ranking and recommender systems in place, as well as user options to manage their recommendations.

Ranking Google Search results

We continue to improve the design of our ranking systems, which are key to helping users make informed decisions and reducing the proliferation of misinformation. For example, Google Search's algorithms consider a host of 'signals' (or characteristics of a web page) that are indicative of high-quality and reliable information and undergo a [rigorous testing process](#) that involves both live tests and thousands of trained external Search Quality Raters from around the world. Raters do not determine the ranking of an individual, specific page or website, but they help us benchmark the quality of our results so that we can meet a high bar for users of Google Search all around the world.

Under our [Search Quality Rater Guidelines](#), raters are instructed to assign the lowest rating to pages that are potentially harmful to users or specified groups, misleading, untrustworthy, and spammy. Examples of such pages include those that contain clearly inaccurate harmful information that can easily be refuted by straightforward and widely accepted facts; harmful information that contradicts well-established expert consensus; and harmful, unsubstantiated theories/claims not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence.

Information such as user location, past Google Search history, and [Search settings](#) all help Google Search ensure user results are what is most useful and relevant at that moment. The user can control what Google Search activity is used to improve their experience, including adjusting what data is saved to their Google account at [myaccount.google.com](#). To disable Google Search personalisation based on activity in a user's account, the user can [turn off Web & App Activity](#). Additionally, users are able to decide whether Search shows personal results based on the information provided in their Google account by managing the 'Show personal results setting'. Users also have the option to [browse the web privately](#) in Incognito mode if they do not want Google Chrome to remember their activity. Google Search systems are designed to match a user's interests, but they are not designed to infer sensitive characteristics like race, religion or political party.

YouTube recommendation systems

YouTube has expanded the ways in which it ensures that its ranking and recommendations systems surface high quality content to curb the spread of harmful misinformation and 'borderline' content — content that comes close to, but does not quite violate YouTube's Community Guidelines. An explanation of how our recommendation system works, including how we raise up authoritative information in ranking and recommendations, can be found [here](#).

Signals used to recommend content

YouTube's recommendation system is constantly evolving, learning every day from information that YouTube calls signals, including but not limited to: watch history, search history, channel subscriptions, likes, dislikes, and satisfaction surveys. There are several ways users can influence their recommendations and search results. Users can remove specific videos from their [watch history](#) and searches from their [search history](#). Users can also pause their watch and search history, or start fresh by clearing their watch and search history. Additional information about how a user can manage their recommendation settings are outlined [here](#) in YouTube's Help Centre.

User choice and control on ads

Google is committed to giving users transparency, choice and control when it comes to the ads they see on Google platforms. That is why Google has long offered tools like Ad Settings which allows people to control how ads are personalised or even opt out of personalised ads altogether, as well as features like 'Why this ad?' which helps explain why a specific ad is being shown. [My Ad Center](#) offers tools that let users choose the kinds of ads they see on Google and YouTube. These tools are only available when personalised ads are on.

Objective 2: Disrupt advertising and monetisation incentives for disinformation.

Outcome 2: Advertising and/or monetisation incentives for disinformation and misinformation are reduced.

Relevant policies across our products and services

Our advertising and monetisation policies prohibit a range of behaviours and types of content that are clearly connected to misinformation, or that commonly overlap with misinformation. These policies include, but are not limited to:

- [Google Ads Policies](#)
- [Google Publisher Policies](#)
- [YouTube Advertiser-friendly Content Guidelines](#)
- [YouTube Channel Monetisation Policies](#)

Further details on these policies can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Updating our monetisation policies related to misinformation

As the misinformation landscape and the narratives that propagate through it constantly evolve, our efforts and interventions to combat misinformation must adapt accordingly. This includes updating our policies and monitoring risks associated with misinformation in the context of broad societal issues that impact our users' lives. Examples of updates made to our Ads and YouTube policies are explained below.

Google Ads also provides its advertising partners with features that enable them to maintain control over where their ads appear, the format in which their ads run, and their intended audience. In addition to performing regular review of our monetisation policies, Google Ads leverages its Dynamic Exclusion Lists feature to help our advertisers to seamlessly and continuously prevent ads from serving alongside certain content. Further information can be found [here](#).

Enforcing our policies to reduce monetisation incentives for misinformation

To verify that advertisers and publishers on our networks are complying with our policies, we continuously monitor our advertising networks and use a combination of algorithmic and human reviews. The metrics below highlight Australia-specific enforcement actions taken for violation of misrepresentation-related ads policies. Google AdSense provides a way for publishers to earn money

from their online content. AdSense works by matching ads to publisher sites based on site content and visitors. The ads are created and paid for by advertisers who want to promote their products.

647,703

AdSense pages actioned for violating Unreliable and Harmful Claims, Replicated Content, Manipulated Media, or Dangerous or Derogatory Content, Deceptive Practices, and Shocking Content Policies in Australia.

136

AdSense domains actioned for violating Unreliable and Harmful Claims, Replicated Content, Manipulated Media, or Dangerous or Derogatory Content, Deceptive Practices, and Shocking Content Policies in Australia.

35,392,987

creatives actioned for violating [Destination Requirements Policies](#) (i.e. Insufficient Original Content) in Australia.

162,140

creatives actioned for violating [Inappropriate Content Policies](#) (i.e. Dangerous or Derogatory Content, Shocking Content, Sensitive Events, Animal Cruelty) in Australia.

762,078

creatives actioned for violating [Misrepresentation Policies](#) (i.e., Unacceptable Business Practices, Coordinated Deceptive Practices, Misleading Representation, Manipulated Media, Unreliable Claims, Misleading Ad Design, Clickbait Ads, Unclear Relevance, Unavailable Offers) in Australia.

Ads that do not follow Google Ads policies will be disapproved or (if appropriate) limited in where and when they can show. Advertisers have multiple options and pathways to appeal a policy decision directly from their Google Ads account.

In 2023, Google Ads received 50,461 ads appeals in Australia for the following policies: [Destination Requirements](#), [Inappropriate Content](#), and [Misrepresentation](#). Of these, 13,579 were successful (i.e., all entities that were reviewed as part of the appeal were overturned), 5,979 were partially successful (i.e., some entities were overturned) and 30,903 failed (i.e., no entities were overturned, as we confirmed they were correctly labelled initially).

For more information about the appeal process, check the [Help Centre page](#).

Our [2023 Ads Safety Report](#) and [Ads Safety blog post for 2023](#) are publicly available and contain additional data that exemplify enforcement actions taken on ads and publisher content.

Efforts to deter advertisers from repeatedly placing digital advertisements that propagate Disinformation or Misinformation

Google Ads prohibits [coordinated deceptive practices](#) on its platform and takes violations of this policy very seriously. If we find violations of this policy, we will suspend the advertisers' accounts upon detection and without prior warning, and they will not be allowed to advertise with Google Ads again. For more information, see [here](#).

Furthermore, Google Ads [updated its misrepresentation policy](#) to better enable us to rapidly suspend the accounts of advertisers who entice users to part with money or information by impersonating or falsely implying affiliation with or endorsement by a public figure, brand, or organisation. We've trained our automated enforcement models to detect these ads and begin removing them at scale.

Objective 3: Work to ensure the integrity and security of services and products delivered by digital platforms.

Outcome 3: The risk that Inauthentic User Behaviours undermine the integrity and security of services and products is reduced.

Google is continually working to address and mitigate risks associated with behaviours that seek to undermine the integrity and security of our products and services ('Inauthentic User Behaviours'). Targeted policies are in place across our products and services, tailored to the specific risks faced by each product or service in relation to Inauthentic User Behaviour. Further details on these policies can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Google Search & Google News

- Google Search [Webmaster Guidelines](#) prohibit techniques which may be misused to deceive our ranking systems or users.
- The [Google Search Content Policies](#) include policies related to Search Features. Content on Google News must follow all Google Search Content Policies, as well as [Google News-specific Policies](#).

Google Ads

- Google Ads [Advertising Policies](#) list unacceptable practices, content, and behaviours that advertisers must avoid.

Google AdSense

- AdSense users who wish to monetise their content with Google ad code are required to adhere to the [AdSense Program Policies](#).

YouTube

- Our [YouTube Community Guidelines](#) include policies to prohibit content intended to impersonate a person or channel, as well as fake engagement, which aims to artificially increase the number of views, likes, comments, or other metrics either by using automatic systems or serving up videos to unsuspecting viewers.

- More information related to 'Inauthentic User Behaviours' can be found in the Threat Analysis Group case study (see [Outcome 1a](#)) and advertisement policy enforcement metrics (see [Outcome 2](#)).

Objective 4: Empower consumers to make better informed choices of digital content.

Outcome 4: Users are enabled to make more informed choices about the source of news and factual content accessed via digital platforms and are better equipped to identify misinformation.

Tools and features enabling users to make more informed choices

Across many of our products, we provide users with a variety of opportunities to make informed choices about content encountered, thereby allowing users to identify misinformation. With more tools to identify misinformation, users are then empowered to report instances of misinformation using the mechanisms outlined in [Outcome 1c](#), thus helping reduce the overall risk of harm from misinformation.

Case Study: How Google supported the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum

In October 2023, Australians voted in a national referendum on a proposal to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Australian Constitution. On top of [measures already in place](#), Google provided support to help people participate and stay informed, protect vote integrity, and assist Yes and No campaigns to manage their digital presence. Some ways Google provided further support include:

- **Connecting voters to helpful and authoritative information** by working with the Australian Electoral Commission to surface official information about enrolment and voting on Google's platforms (including Search and YouTube). This included information about the referendum and how to vote, and prompts to go and vote on referendum day. YouTube also ran a prominent banner in the lead up to the referendum that linked Australian users to an Australian Electoral Commission playlist of informative videos.
- **Helping voters better understand the political advertising they see** by [expanding the Political Content policy](#) in May 2023. This requires advertiser verification, in-ad disclosures, and that any ad which features any of the following be included in our [political advertising transparency report](#):
 - a. An Australian federal political party, a candidate for the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, a current elected federal officeholder in the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission;

- b.** A state or territory political party, a candidate for elected state or territory office, a current elected state or territory officeholder, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by a state or territory election commission, from any of the following states and territories: Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.
- **Protecting information online** by (i) working with the different Voice campaign groups, electoral bodies and civil society groups to help everyone understand digital best practices and their responsibilities through [Google Ad policies](#) and [YouTube Community Guidelines](#) and (ii) raising up authoritative sources and removing violative content quickly using a combination of machine learning and people.
- **Collaborating with Australian Associated Press (AAP)** via the [Google News Lab](#) to provide and distribute fact-checks to the 300 Australian news publishers that subscribe to its service. Helping to ensure Indigenous journalists' experiences are included in reporting has also guided Google's partnership with AAP, which is why Google supported the placement of two Indigenous trainees in their newsrooms.

See Google's blog post on how it supported the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum [here](#). More information about how Google is supporting democratic processes around the world is available [here](#).

The below sub-sections highlight some of the tools and features created to elevate authoritative sources and to help users make informed choices; an overview of additional tools and features for these purposes can be found in [Appendix B](#). Note that these tools and features are automatically available to all users in Australia, and their availability does not require an individual user to select and/or activate them.

Google Search content advisories

Google Search's content advisory notices help alert users to when they have encountered a query and results set that may not yet include high quality information from reliable sources or when the results retrieved are likely to be off-topic and therefore unhelpful. These are specifically designed to address data voids which include queries for which either content is limited or nonexistent or when a topic is rapidly evolving and reliable information is not yet available for that topic.

Google Search releases these content advisories, following both user research and multiple rounds of consultations with academic experts in mis- and disinformation. Content advisories include:

- those when a topic is rapidly evolving, available to users globally (see more regarding this feature [here](#)); and
- where Google Search systems do not have high confidence in the overall quality of search results in English (see [blog](#) on New Ways We're Helping you Find Quality Information and this [blog](#) for further details).

YouTube information panels

YouTube highlights information from authoritative third-party sources using information panels. As users navigate YouTube, they might see a variety of different information panels, including but not limited to:

- **Panels on topics prone to misinformation:** Topics that are prone to misinformation, such as the moon landing, may display an information panel at the top of search results or under a video. These information panels show basic background info, sourced from independent, third-party partners, to give more context on a topic. The panels also link to the third-party partner's website. YouTube continues to expand its deployment of these information panels globally. More details can be found [here](#).
- **Information panel providing publisher context:** If a channel is owned by a news publisher that is funded by a government, or publicly funded, an information panel providing publisher context may be displayed on the watch page of the videos on its channel. The information panel providing publisher context explains how the publisher is funded and provides a link to the publisher's Wikipedia page. More details can be found [here](#).

Information panels provide additional context, with each designed to help users make their own decisions about the content they find. These information panels appear in relevant search results and video watch pages, regardless of what opinions or perspectives are expressed. In 2023, YouTube displayed information panels on topics prone to misinformation below relevant videos or above search results **over 80 million times** in Australia.

Google Search structured authoritative information

Through '**SOS Alerts**', Google brings together relevant and authoritative content from the web, media, and Google products, and then highlights that structured content across Google products such as Google Search and Google Maps. The content includes authoritative help links and relevant local information aiming to make emergency information more accessible during a crisis. See [Help Centre](#) for more information. In 2023, there were **over 4,200,000 views/impressions** on Crisis Response alerts (e.g., 'SOS Alerts', 'Public Alerts') in Australia.

Case Study: Providing authoritative information on Search during the Israel-Gaza conflict

- Google Search launched an SOS Alert on 7 October 2023 to highlight authoritative and verified information related to the terrorist attacks and the ongoing hostage situation for users in Israel. The SOS Alert directed users to governmental and expert resources including the Home Front Command, blood donation, missing persons hotlines, and mental health and trauma support. The SOS Alert ran until 26 October 2023.
- Google Maps & Local Search added locations of authoritative bomb shelters for users in Israel. It also added a warning to listings of certain critical businesses in Israel and Gaza to alert users that the listed hours may no longer be accurate due to the conflict.

Media literacy

In the face of near limitless access to information, Google remains committed to supporting efforts that deepen users' collective understanding of misinformation. Google aims to improve users' media literacy and empower users to think critically through investing in media literacy campaigns and designing tools and features in a way that allows users to feel confident and in control of the information they consume and the choices they make.

Google Search

Google Search aims to connect users with high quality information, and help users understand and evaluate that information. Google Search has deeply invested in both information quality and information literacy, as described below.

Google Search's 'About This Result' feature enables users to quickly learn more about a result and make a more informed decision about the sites they may want to visit and what results will be most useful for them (more information found [here](#)). Further information on this feature is available in [Google's 2022 Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation Annual Transparency Report](#). In 2023, the 'About this Result' panel was **viewed 59,758,626 times** in Australia.

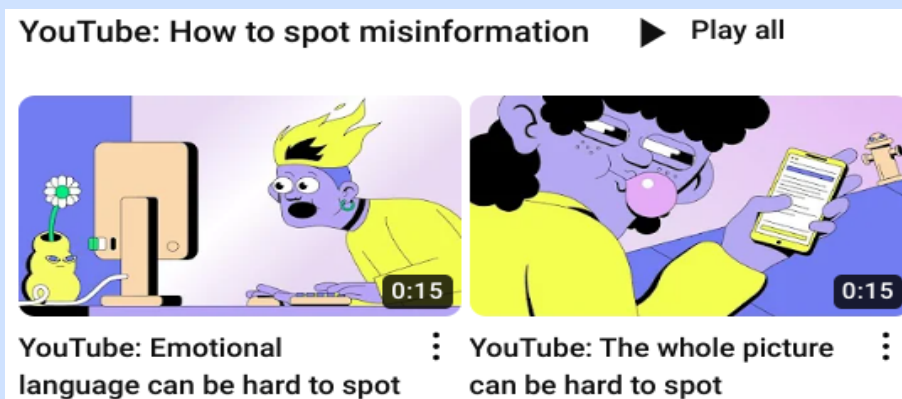
The 'More About This Page' link within the 'About This Result' feature provides additional insights about sources and topics users find on Google Search. When a user taps the three dots on any search result, they will be able to learn more about the page. Additional information can be found in the Google Search blog post [here](#). In 2023, the 'More About This Page' feature was **viewed 1,765,504 times** in Australia.

As mentioned in Outcome 1a, Google Search [rolled out the 'About this image'](#) feature to English language users globally in October 2023. 'About this image' gives people an easy way to check the credibility and context of images they see online, including an image's history, how other sites use and describe it, and an image's metadata.

YouTube

YouTube takes its responsibility efforts seriously, outlining clear [policies](#) used to moderate content on the platform and providing content that viewers can leverage to improve their digital media literacy skills. To empower viewers to think critically and share responsibly, YouTube invests in media literacy campaigns to support educating viewers on how to spot misinformation online; the most recent global media literacy campaign is highlighted below.

Case Study: YouTube's 'Hit Pause' Program



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@HitPause>

YouTube's global media literacy program, 'Hit Pause' was developed in partnership with The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE). The program launched in November 2022 and is available in over 70 countries around the globe, including Australia where the program is co-branded with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

'Hit Pause' seeks to teach viewers critical media literacy skills through engaging and educational public service announcements (PSAs) via YouTube home feed and pre-roll ads, and on a dedicated [YouTube playlist](#). Throughout 2023, the program continued to roll out new videos that provided members of the YouTube community with the opportunity to increase critical thinking skills around identifying different manipulation tactics used to spread misinformation – from using emotional language to cherry picking information.

In 2023, there were **over 45 million** impressions of YouTube's 'Hit Pause' campaign in Australia.

Fact checks on Google Search and News

Fact checking is an important part of tackling misinformation. Google Search has developed policies and processes to label fact-checked articles that are displayed in Search results (if they meet the eligibility and technical criteria). Google also provides tools like [Fact Check Explorer](#) and the [Google FactCheck Claim Search API](#). Fact Check Explorer allows anyone to explore the Fact Check articles that use the '[ClaimReview](#)' HTML mark-up, an open standard that lets any fact-checker mark up their content so it can be identified and used by any online service (including but not limited to Search Engines or Social Media). To make it easier for fact-checkers to leverage the ClaimReview mark-up, Google developed a [free tool](#) that simplifies the process of marking up webpages using this standard. Additional information about the Fact Check Markup Tool can be found [here](#). Using the [Google FactCheck Claim Search API](#), users can query the same set of Fact Check results available via the [Fact Check Explorer](#) or a developer could continuously get the latest updates on a particular query. Fact-checks from the Australian Associated Press (AAP) are included in this database. The metrics below relate to the availability of fact-checked articles and use of the Fact Check Explorer tool.

73,093

articles available in English in Google Search **Fact Check Explorer** at the beginning of 2023, globally.

115,472

articles available in English in Google Search **Fact Check Explorer** at the end of 2023, globally.

4,904

Fact Check Explorer tool users in Australia in 2023.

Fact-check features on Google are another way to easily find information that has been verified by independent fact-checking organisations. The 'Fact Check' label in Google Search applies to published stories with fact-checked content that is indicated by the [schema.org ClaimReview markup](#), like round-up stories that contain multiple fact-check analyses within a single article. Google News may apply this label to publisher content, where applicable. This helps users find fact-checked content for major stories appearing on Google News; when browsing Google News on desktop, they can see recently fact-checked claims from independent publishers in their region, when related to the top stories of the day. Likewise, when users search for a topic that may be disputed, they might see fact-check articles in their results. These results display snippets to help users get context about a claim that was made.

In June 2023, Google Search launched a beta version of two new Fact Check Explorer features which allow a user to (i) search by image to see if a fact-check has been written on it already; and (ii) see the context and timeline of an image to see when it was first indexed by Google and how it has been used since. More information is available [here](#).

In October 2023, Google Search [announced](#) a beta version of Image Search functionality in the FactCheck Claim Search API under which approved journalists and fact-checkers will be able to search the fact-check image corpus on Fact Check Explorer via an API and integrate the knowledge into their own solutions. This will make it even easier for them to investigate images and build unique products for their readers.

More information about fact-check features can be found on '[Check the facts with these Google features](#)'.

Ads Transparency Center

We want to empower users to make informed decisions about the ads and advertisers they see through Google. This means providing greater transparency about who our advertisers are, where they are located, and which ads they show. This is why, in 2023, Google Ads launched the [Ads Transparency Center](#), a searchable hub of all ads from verified advertisers, which helps people quickly and easily learn more about the ads they see on Search, YouTube and Display. This is part of Google's wider efforts to provide users transparency, choice, and control in the ads they see.

Objective 5: Improve public awareness of the source of political advertising carried on digital platforms.

Outcome 5: Users are better informed about the source of political advertising.

Google's broader ads policies, as described in [Appendix A](#), apply to all ads, including election ads. Australia Election Ads are ads that feature: an Australian federal political party, a candidate for the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, or a current elected federal office holder in the Australia House of Representatives or Senate. Ahead of the referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice, we updated the definition of Australia Election Ads to include ads that feature any of the following:

- An Australian federal political party, a candidate for the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, a current elected federal office holder in the Australian House of Representatives or Senate, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by the Australian Election Commission;
- A state or territory political party, a candidate for elected state or territory office, a current elected state or territory officeholder, or a referendum or plebiscite conducted by a state or territory election commission, from any of the following states and territories: New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory.

Additionally, in mid-November 2023, Google Ads [updated its Political Content Policy](#) to require that all verified election advertisers in regions where verification is required (including Australia) must prominently disclose when their ads contain synthetic content that inauthentically depicts real or realistic-looking people or events. This disclosure must be clear and conspicuous, and must be placed in a location where it is likely to be noticed by users. This includes:

- Ads with synthetic content that makes it appear as if a person is saying or doing something they did not say or do;
- Ads with synthetic content that alters footage of a real event or generates a realistic portrayal of an event to depict scenes that did not actually take place.

Political Advertising Transparency Report - User interface & tools

Google has made significant investments in [enhancing transparency around election advertising](#). In addition to election ads verification policies, the [AU Political Advertising Transparency Report](#) makes it easy for voters, researchers, and journalists to see - among other things - who is purchasing election ads on Google, YouTube, and Partner properties in Australia and how much money is being spent on those ads.

Anyone can access and use this information, and Google has aimed to ensure that it is easy for third parties to analyse it more effectively: the report is searchable and downloadable, and can be filtered by spend, number of impressions, type of ad format, time and region/country. It is updated after an ad is first served, and displays election ads from verified advertisers that have one or more impressions. The data from the AU Political Advertising Transparency Report and Ad Library is also available on [Google Cloud's BigQuery](#). Using BigQuery's API, any interested third party can write code and run their own unique queries on this data set to develop charts, graphs, tables, or other visualisations of election ads on Google platforms.

Within the Google Advertising Political Advertising Transparency team, a User Experience team has been devoted to understanding target users' (including researchers') needs and working with Product Managers, Engineers, and others to develop new and improve existing features and functionalities of the Political Advertising Transparency Report. For example, Google Advertising has an always on survey that surfaces for anyone who views the Political Advertising Transparency Report. Via this survey, Google Advertising consistently gets feedback from researchers, as well as other user groups, and uses this feedback to inform improvements to the website.

Case Study: Political Advertising Transparency Report insights

The [Political Advertising Transparency Report](#) can be filtered by country/region, date and ad format (text, image, video) to get insights into the top advertisers during specific election periods and their respective ad spend.

Only [verified advertisers](#) are permitted to run election ads in Australia. All election ads run by verified election advertisers must contain a [disclosure](#) that identifies who paid for the ad. During 2023:

- **70 verified advertisers** ran Australia Election Ads in Australia
- **27,136 ads were rejected due to unverified advertisers** attempting to run Australia Election Ads.

The New South Wales state election was held on 25 March 2023, and the Referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice was held on 14 October 2023. The below metrics summarise selected insights about Australia Election Ads shown in Australia in 2023.

- Total election ad spend amounted to **A\$6,016,800 (AUD)**, spent across **2,324 ads**
- The top three advertisers by ad spend were the Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition Ltd (**A\$2.1M**), Australian Labor Party (New South Wales Branch) (**A\$1.3M**), and

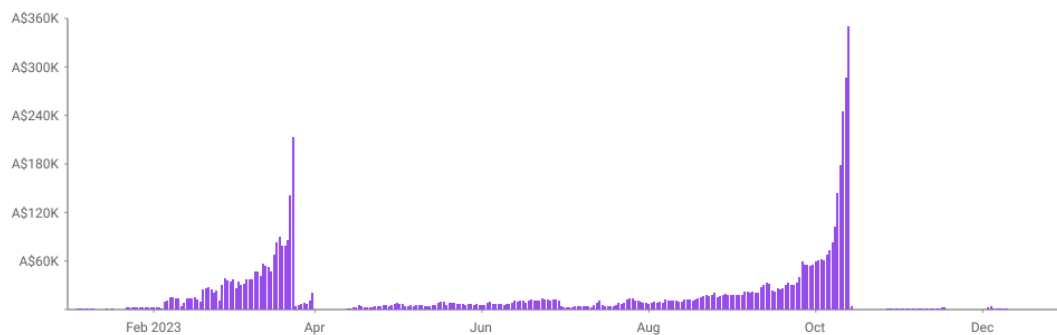
the Australian Electoral Commission (**A\$728K**)

- The top three states or territories by ad spend were New South Wales (**A\$2.8M**), Victoria (**A\$1.0M**), and Queensland (**A\$847K**)
- Video ad formats accounted for the highest ad spend at **A\$3.9M**, followed by text ad formats (**A\$1.8M**) and image ad formats (**A\$263K**).

Spending over time

Shown in Australia, custom Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2023

Daily Weekly Monthly Yearly



Source: [Political Advertising Transparency Report](#) as of March 28, 2024

Note: Google is continuously reviewing its data and improving its classification of election ads. As Google constantly increases the accuracy of our data, historical data may slightly fluctuate over time.

Objective 6: Strengthen public understanding of disinformation and misinformation through support of strategic research.

Outcome 6: Signatories support the efforts of independent researchers to improve public understanding of disinformation and misinformation.

We continue to support global and Australia-specific efforts to enhance awareness and detection of misinformation and promote authoritative sources of information. Examples of these collaborations are provided in the table below.

Name of university, institute, or company	Overview of research
Australian Associated Press (AAP)	AAP worked with Indigenous journalists to create fact-checks regarding the 2023 Referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. They then provided these fact-checks to Indigenous publications, free of charge. For more information, see here .
First Draft	First Draft worked with 10 news publishers (a mix of small and large) and additional community organisations to help them identify false, misleading and confusing claims during the 2022 Federal election campaign. They supported journalists through simulations and masterclasses and created an online community for the partner publishers. First Draft also provided daily alerts and weekly briefings on false and misleading claims that were circulating online. The partners they worked with included: Asian Alliance Australia, AAP, Canberra Times, SBS, NITV, Launceston Examiner, Northern Daily Leader Tamworth Wimmera Mail-Times, Codebreakers, Democracy in Colour, Crikey, Joy, Guardian Australia, 3CR Community Radio, RMIT ABC Fact Check, The Drum, ABC and The Humanism Project.
Squiz Kids	Google funds the development of Squiz Kids' media literacy program Newshounds which is delivered in Australian classrooms to help primary school children understand which media stories they should trust. Over 2,000 Australian classrooms are using the 8 part training module to

	<p>teach children how to ‘stop, think and check’ when they read or hear a story. The program has had early success, 86% of pilot students said Newshounds has changed the way they consume media and every teacher said they can see improvements in students’ abilities to critically consume media.</p>
YouGov & Poynter Report	<p>In 2022, Google Search partnered with YouGov and Poynter on a report (‘A Global Study on Information Literacy’) that summarised findings from a survey of 8,585 respondents from 7 countries around the world. The report focused on consumer habits and practices related to misinformation, search literacy, and information journeys - see the infographic and full findings.</p>
YouTube Researcher Program	<p>The YouTube Researcher Program provides scaled, expanded access to global video metadata across the entire public YouTube corpus via a Data API for eligible academic researchers from around the world, who are affiliated with an accredited, higher-learning institution. The program allows researchers to independently analyse the data they collect, including generating new/derived metrics for their research. Information available via the Data API includes video and channel title and description, views, likes, comments, channel metadata, search results, and other data.</p> <p>There is an application process with detailed policies, eligibility criteria, and guidance that can be found on the YouTube Research Policies page.</p>
Google Researcher Program	<p>As of 28 August 2023, eligible EU researchers can apply for access to publicly available data across some of Google’s products, including Search and YouTube, through the Google Researcher Program. Search and YouTube will provide eligible researchers (including non-academics that meet predefined eligibility criteria) with access to limited metadata scraping for public data. This program aims to enhance the public’s understanding of Google’s services and their impact. For additional details, see the Researcher Program landing page.</p>
Google Trends	<p>Google Search and YouTube provide publicly available data via Google Trends, which provides access to a largely unfiltered sample of actual search requests made to Google Search and YouTube’s search function. By sampling data, Google can look at a dataset representative of all Google and YouTube searches, while finding insights that can be processed within minutes of an event happening in the real world. It is anonymised (no one is personally identified), categorised (determined by the topic for a search query) and aggregated (grouped together). See Trends Help Centre for details.</p>

Objective 7: Signatories will publicise the measures they take to combat disinformation and misinformation.

Outcome 7: The public can access information about the measures Signatories have taken to combat disinformation and misinformation.

In [Objective 1 / Outcome 1d](#) of this report, we provide details (and links to corresponding materials) regarding publicly available and accessible information outlining measures we take to combat misinformation.

Additionally, Google published '[How we're fighting misinformation across Australia](#)' in March 2023 with additional details on how it is making it easier for people in Australia to evaluate information online.

Google has also made investments in developing and publishing videos to help advertisers and publishers understand our policies, including misinformation policies. These videos can be viewed on the [Google Transparency Center](#).

Concluding remarks

Through the framework of the Objectives and Outcomes set forth in the Australian Code of Practice on disinformation and misinformation, we have discussed how our products and services aim to mitigate the risk of harms arising from misinformation. We have outlined the various policies, safeguards and measures implemented across our products and services during 2023 to reduce the propagation and impact of misinformation. The case studies, examples and quantitative data points provided highlight the impact of these approaches. Additionally, we have detailed how we engage with the public and users, how we support other organisations tackling this issue, and how we provide further transparency regarding our own ongoing efforts.

We recognise that misinformation, and the risks associated with this issue, will continue to evolve. As such, we will continue to evaluate and adapt the measures and policies that we put in place across our products and services and invest in developing effective ways to protect our users and the integrity of our services. As we continue to report on the progress of this work, we look forward to engaging further with the Government, DIGI, the industry, civil society, users, academia and other key stakeholders on this issue.

Appendices

Appendix A: Google Misinformation/Disinformation Policies

Google Search & Google News Policies

- **[Google Search Webmaster Guidelines](#)**: Our webmaster guidelines prohibit techniques which could be used to deceive our ranking systems or abuse our users.
 - [Automatically generated content](#)
 - [Participation in link schemes](#)
 - [Cloaking](#)
 - [Sneaky redirects](#)
 - [Hidden text or links](#)
 - [Doorway pages](#)
 - [Scraped content](#)
 - [Loading pages with irrelevant keywords](#)
 - [Creating pages with malicious behaviour](#)
 - [Abusing structured data markup](#)
 - [Sending automated queries to Google](#)
- **[Google Search Content Policies](#)**: These policies apply to content surfaced anywhere within Google Search, which includes web results. These policies include additional Search Features policies that apply to Google News and other specialised features, which include but are not limited to:
 - **Deceptive Practices Policy**: This policy prohibits sites or accounts that impersonate any person or organisation, or that misrepresent or conceal their ownership or primary purpose. We do not allow sites or accounts that engage in inauthentic or coordinated behaviour that misleads users.
 - **Manipulated Media Policy**: This policy prohibits audio, video, or image content that's been manipulated to deceive, defraud, or mislead by means of creating a representation of actions or events that verifiably didn't take place.
 - **Medical Content Policy**: This policy does not allow content that contradicts or runs contrary to scientific or medical consensus and evidence-based best practices.
- **[Google News Policies](#)**: These content and behaviour policies help ensure a positive experience for users and publishing partners. Along with Google Search's overall Content Policies, Google News has additional feature-specific policies as noted below:
 - **Ads & Sponsored Content Policy**: Ads and other paid promotional material should not exceed content on pages. This policy states that we do not allow content that conceals or misrepresents sponsored content as independent, editorial content.

- **Misleading Content Policy:** This policy states that News does not allow preview content that misleads users to engage with it by promising details which are not reflected in the underlying content.
- **Transparency Policy:** This Google News Policy notes that news sources on Google should provide clear dates and bylines, as well as information about authors, the publication, the publisher, company or network behind it, and contact information.

Google Ads Policies

- **Google Ads Policies:** These policies are designed not only to abide by laws but also to ensure a safe and positive experience for our users. This means that our policies prohibit some content that we believe to be harmful to users and the overall advertising ecosystem. Our policies cover four broad areas:
 - Prohibited content
 - Prohibited practices
 - Restricted content and features
 - Editorial and technical.
- **Google Ads Misrepresentation Policy:** This policy prohibits content and behaviours that deceive users by excluding relevant product information or providing misleading information about products, services, or businesses. Violations of this policy, although not a comprehensive list, include unacceptable business practices, coordinated deceptive practices, unreliable claims (such as making claims that are demonstrably false and could significantly undermine participation or trust in an electoral or democratic process) and misleading representation.
 - **Unacceptable Business Practices Policy** does not allow:
 - Scamming users by concealing or misstating information about the advertiser's business, product, or service;
 - Ad destinations that use 'phishing' techniques to gather user information.
 - **Coordinated Deceptive Practices Policy** prohibits two practices:
 - Coordinating with other sites or accounts and concealing or misrepresenting your identity or other material details about yourself, where your content relates to politics, social issues, or matters of public concern;
 - Directing content about politics, social issues, or matters of public concern to users in a country other than your own, if you misrepresent or conceal your country of origin, or other material details about yourself.
 - **Misleading Representation Policy** prohibits advertisers from:
 - Making misleading statements, obscuring, or omitting material information about your identity, affiliations or qualifications;
 - Providing an inaccurate business name or business name that does not clearly represent the advertised business or disambiguates from similar businesses in the ad or user interactions.
 - **Manipulated Media Policy** does not allow advertisers to manipulate media to deceive, defraud, or mislead others.

- **Unreliable Claims Policy** does not allow advertisers to make inaccurate claims or claims that entice the user with an improbable result as the likely outcome a user can expect. This includes claims related to health and weight loss, financial products or money making schemes, and politics, social issues, or matters of public concern.
- **[Google Ads Inappropriate Content Policy](#)**: As noted in our help centre, this policy prohibits ads or destinations that display shocking content or promote hatred, intolerance, discrimination, or violence.

Google AdSense Policies

- **[Google Publisher Policies](#)**: Users who monetise content with Google must adhere to all Google Publisher Policies. Prohibited content and behaviours include but are not limited to: dangerous or derogatory content, misrepresentative content (such as making claims that are demonstrably false and could significantly undermine participation or trust in an electoral or democratic process) or coordinated deceptive practices.
- **[AdSense Program Policies](#)**: AdSense publishers are required to adhere to the AdSense Program Policies or risk their ad or account being disabled. It is the publisher's responsibility to keep up to date with and adhere to the following policies: invalid clicks and impressions, encouraging clicks or views (non-rewarded inventory), traffic sources, ad behaviour, ad placement, site behaviour, deceptive site navigation.

YouTube Policies

- **[YouTube Community Guidelines](#)**: These Community Guidelines outline what type of content is and is not allowed on YouTube. These policies apply to all types of content on our platform, including videos, comments, and links. These policies cover: spam & deceptive practices, violent or dangerous content, regulated goods, [harmful conspiracy theories](#), and misinformation among other areas.
- YouTube Misinformation Policies detailed below can be found on this [landing page](#).
 - **[YouTube Misinformation Policies](#)**: Certain types of misleading or deceptive content with serious risk of egregious harm are not allowed on YouTube. This includes certain types of misinformation that can cause real-world harm, like promoting harmful remedies or treatments, certain types of technically manipulated content, or content interfering with democratic processes.
 - **[YouTube Elections Misinformation Policies](#)**: Certain types of misleading or deceptive content with serious risk of egregious harm are not allowed on YouTube. This includes misinformation that can cause real-world harm, like certain types of technically manipulated content, and content interfering with free and fair democratic election processes.
 - **[YouTube Medical Misinformation Policy](#)**: YouTube does not allow content that poses a serious risk of egregious harm by spreading medical misinformation that contradicts

local health authorities' (LHAs) or the World Health Organisation's (WHO) guidance about specific health conditions and substances in relation to prevention, treatment or denial.

- **[YouTube Impersonation Policy](#)**: This policy states that content intended to impersonate a person or channel is not allowed on YouTube. YouTube also enforces trademark holder rights. When a channel, or content in the channel, causes confusion about the source of goods and services advertised, it may not be allowed.
- **[YouTube Fake Engagement Policy](#)**: YouTube does not allow anything that artificially increases the number of views, likes, comments, or other metrics either by using automatic systems or serving up videos to unsuspecting viewers. Content and channels that do not follow this policy may be terminated and removed from YouTube.
- **[YouTube Spam, Deceptive Practices, and Scam Policies](#)**: YouTube does not allow spam, scams, or other deceptive practices that take advantage of the YouTube community. We also do not allow content where the main purpose is to trick users into leaving YouTube for another site.
- **[YouTube Advertiser-friendly Content Guidelines](#)**: Users in the YouTube Partner Program can share revenue from ads. This policy exemplifies content that is not suitable for ads that will result in a 'limited or no ads' monetisation state.
- **[YouTube Channel Monetisation Policies](#)**: YouTube Monetisation Policies include YouTube's Community Guidelines, Terms of Service, Copyright, and Google AdSense Program Policies. YouTube enforces these Monetisation Policies by:
 - Turning off Ads from your content;
 - Suspending your participation in the YouTube Partner Program; and
 - Suspending or even terminating your YouTube channel.

Appendix B: Tools and features used to empower users in making informed choices

Google has developed many features and interventions to provide more context to users and ensure that authoritative sources are elevated in response to searches or browsing intents related to health, civic participation, current events, and other topics where users want content that they can trust. The features and interventions listed below are all available to Australian users of our services.

- **Surfacing Fact-Checks on Google Search, Images, and News**: easily enable users to find articles that fact-check public information;
- **Elevating original reporting in Google Search**: provide greater context to subsequent news stories;

- **'Full Coverage' in Google News:** help users access context and diverse perspectives about the news stories they read;
- **'Information Panels', including those providing topical context on YouTube:** provide greater context around topics related to searches or videos (additional information can be found [here](#));
- **'Breaking News' and 'Top News Shelves' on YouTube:** prominently surface news content from authoritative sources only;
- **Authoritativeness in YouTube recommendations:** prioritise information from authoritative sources for newsworthy events and topics prone to misinformation in search results and recommendations (additional information can be found [here](#)); and
- **Labelling state-funded news channels on YouTube:** label publishers that are government or publicly funded on the watch pages of their videos.

Appendix C: Advertiser Verification Process

Google's advertiser verification program verifies advertiser identity, then discloses the advertiser behind specific ads in the ['Why this Ad' \(in some places, 'About this Ad'\)](#) menu. This verification and disclosure feature applies to the ads that Google shows on our own properties and those of our publishing partners. Note that the disclosures view can vary slightly between products. Google users can control what types of ads they see, and whether they would like to see more or less of any specific advertiser, through [My Ad Centre](#).

Verification process for Australian election advertisers

Prospective advertisers who wish to run election ads in Australia are also required to go through a verification process. Once Google verifies the advertiser's eligibility to run election ads, they receive an email and an in-account notification. Verifying their identity may require two steps and each step can take up to 5 business days. Our teams are trained to handle this process at scale across Australia, and are equipped to respond to related questions from the political parties and candidates participating in, and institutions responsible for, Australian elections.