∞ Meta

Meta response to the Australian disinformation and misinformation industry code

REPORTING PERIOD – 2021

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Executive summary

Meta is proud to be a founding member and signatory to the Australian industry code on misinformation and disinformation. The code is a credible step in encouraging collaboration between the technology industry and governments to combat misinformation and disinformation.

Meta has opted into every commitment under the code. In 2021, our transparency report outlined 43 specific commitments to meet our obligations across both Facebook and Instagram. This 2022 transparency report outlines the steps we took to meet every commitment. Our report covers the reporting period of January to December 2021, as outlined in the guidelines provided by the independent reviewer engaged by DIGI, with additional information voluntarily provided on the Australian 2022 election and the conflict in Ukraine, given the current level of interest in these developments.

In the interests of transparency, this report contains updated data about our steps to combat misinformation.
- In 2021, we removed over 11 million pieces of content from Facebook and Instagram globally for violating our Community Standards in relation to harmful health misinformation. Over 180,000 of these pieces of content were from Pages or accounts specific to Australia.[1]
- We have made a COVID-19 Information Centre available around the world to promote authoritative information to Facebook users. Over 350 million people globally visited the Information Centre in Q4 of 2021, over 3.5 million of these visits were from Australian users.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic to June 2021, globally, we have displayed warnings on more than 190 million pieces of content on Facebook that our third-party fact-checking partners have rated as false, partly false, altered or missing content.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic to June 2021, globally, Meta has removed over 3,000 accounts, pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation.

In 2021, some Australia-specific highlights of our work include:

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[1] Note - This figure does not include pieces of content from Pages and accounts from other countries that were removed, but may have been viewed by people in Australia.

- Securing an additional third-party fact-checking partner, RMIT FactLab, to join Australian Associated Press and Agence France Presse as fact-checking partners.

- Expanding our ad transparency requirements to cover social issue advertising since June 2021, well before the Australian federal election.

- Launching a new product, Local Alerts, in Australia to allow first responders to communicate directly with Facebook users on urgent announcements such as COVID-19 outbreaks.

- Providing millions of dollars worth of Facebook advertising credits to federal, state and territory governments and NGOs, to increase access to COVID-19 vaccine and preventative health information.

- Funding the first Australian national media literacy survey.

- Launching new research to encourage a deeper understanding of misinformation and disinformation in Australia, including the Australian Strategic Policy Institute on disinformation-for-hire, and First Draft on misinformation among Chinese-speaking diaspora groups and trends in the national election.

- Launching two, national media literacy campaigns: (1) a consumer-focussed campaign with Australian Associated Press called 'Check the Facts'; and (2) a creator-focussed awareness campaign with First Draft called 'Don't be a Misinfluencer'.

- Launching the Climate Science Information Centre on Facebook to provide Australians with authoritative information on climate change.

- Sponsoring campaigns with the Business Council of Australia and UNICEF Australia's Vaccine Alliance to provide authoritative information about vaccines.

- Supporting civic participation in the federal election campaign via a package of measures to combat misinformation.[2]

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[2] Note: given the reporting period for this report covers calendar year 2021 only, we provide additional information announced in March 2022 regarding the federal election campaign to voluntarily provide greater transparency. Please note we will report on all steps taken during the Australian federal election campaign in our 2023 report.

These steps are in addition to our extensive global efforts to combat misinformation and disinformation.

This report also outlines our commitments for the next reporting period. We have confirmed 45 specific commitments for the next annual reporting period, including the following new commitments:

- Meta will continue to provide greater transparency of our content ranking algorithms and give users more control over the content they see.

- Meta will continue to add greater transparency around political and social issue advertising.

- Meta will fund training for Australian journalists on how to identify and prevent amplifying mis- and disinformation.

- Meta will focus on new areas of research relating to misinformation and disinformation in 2022, including media literacy of First Nations peoples.

We will report against these commitments in the next annual report under the code.

We look forward to continuing to work with Australian policymakers, civil society, academics and experts on steps to combat misinformation and disinformation in Australia over the next year.

List of Meta commitments under the Australian industry code on misinformation and disinformation for 2022

A copy of the 2021 commitments can be found in **Appendix A**.

The 45 commitments for 2022 are outlined below:

Outcome 1: **Combatting misinformation / disinformation**	- Meta removes networks of accounts, Pages and Groups that violate our inauthentic behaviour policy, including disinformation that violates our policy on Inauthentic Behaviour. - Meta provides transparency about accounts, Pages and Groups removed under our Inauthentic Behaviour policy. - Meta partners with experts and organisations who assist in providing tips or further investigation about possible inauthentic behaviour on our services. - Meta removes misinformation that violates the misinformation section of our Community Standards. - Meta removes manipulated media, also known as "deepfakes", that violates our Manipulated Media policy. - Meta removes material that violates our Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network policy. - Meta removes election-related misinformation that may constitute voter suppression. - Meta removes fake accounts. - Meta allows for appeals in instances where users may disagree with our enforcement, including to the independent and external Oversight Board. - Meta partners with third-party fact-checking organisations, globally and in Australia, to assess the accuracy of content on our services. - Meta applies a warning label to content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations.

	• Meta reduces the distribution of content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations.
	• Meta proactively searches for content that makes claims debunked by our fact-checking partners, to apply the same treatments.
	• Meta takes action on Pages, Groups, accounts or websites found to repeatedly share misinformation.
	• Meta takes steps to limit the possible distribution of misinformation via recommendations.
	• Meta makes available a detailed list of claims that we consider to violate our COVID-19 Misinformation & Harm policy.
	• Meta makes information available via a dedicated website that outlines our efforts to combat misinformation.
	• Meta makes on-platform reporting channels available to users for false information.
	• Meta makes global transparency reports available regularly.
	• Meta will supplement these reports with additional Australia-specific statistics, provided as part of this Annual Report process.
	• Meta makes the service CrowdTangle freely available to journalists, third-party fact-checking partners, and some academics.
Outcome 2: **Disrupt monetisation and advertising incentives**	• Meta sets a higher threshold for users to be able to advertise on our services, and takes action against users who spread misinformation.
Outcome 3: **Combat inauthentic user behaviour**	See items listed under Outcome 1.

Outcome 4: **Empower consumers to be informed**	● Meta provides contextual information around posts that users see from public Pages. ● Meta provides a COVID-19 Information Centre with verified, authoritative information about COVID-19. ● Meta provides a Climate Science Information Centre in Australia to connect users to authoritative information from leading climate organisations. ● Meta uses in-product prompts to direct Australians to authoritative information on key topics. ● Meta promotes authoritative information by providing significant support to organisations such as the Australian, state and territory governments and First Nations health organisations to promote authoritative health information. ● Meta directs users to authoritative information when they search for high-priority topics on Facebook and Instagram. ● Meta directs users to authoritative information once they have seen or shared COVID-19 related misinformation. ● Meta will look for opportunities to continue to work with the Government on other ways to promote authoritative information. ● Meta promotes public service announcements to our users to encourage them to be wary of potential misinformation. ● Meta will continue to provide greater transparency of our content ranking algorithms and give users more control over the content they see. ● Meta will fund training for Australian journalists on how to identify and prevent amplifying mis and disinformation.
Outcome 5: **Political advertising**	● Meta requires all advertisers of political and social issue ads to complete an ad authorisation, which includes verifying the advertiser's identity. ● Meta requires political and social issue ads to include a disclaimer disclosing who is paying for the ad.

	• Meta provides the Ad Library, a searchable archive of all political and social issue ads on our services in Australia. • Meta enables an Ad Library report that provides aggregated spend information about Pages undertaking political and social issue ads. • Meta will continue to add greater transparency around political and social issue advertising.
Outcome 6: **Research**	• Meta supports research and events in relation to misinformation and media literacy. • Meta supports research and events in relation to disinformation. • Meta provides free public CrowdTangle live displays on key topics to allow anybody to track public content on our platforms. • Meta collaborates with researchers to undertake surveys of our users to assess their views on topics such as vaccines and climate change. • Meta provides data to researchers in a privacy-protective way via the Facebook Open Research and Transparency initiative. • Meta will focus on new areas of research relating to misinformation and disinformation in 2022, including media literacy of First Nations peoples.
Outcome 7: **Annual reports**	• Meta will continue to publish annual reports in Australia, such as these, to be transparent about the steps we are taking to combat disinformation and misinformation.

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Meta's new 2022 commitments

Meta has committed the following new commitments:

Meta will continue to provide greater algorithmic transparency of our content ranking algorithms and give users more control over the content they see (outcome 4).

There is ongoing debate about the role of digital platforms' "algorithms" in determining the content people see and consume. Some commentators have expressed concern that social media spreads misinformation, and creates echo chambers and polarisation.

Academic research on the role of algorithms and political and social polarisation has mixed results, with many studies suggesting that social media is not the primary driver of polarisation.

Boxell, Gentzkow and Shapiro's studies indicate there has been a decrease in polarisation in Australia since the mid-1990s when comparing trends in affective polarisation (the measure of someone's negative feelings about the opposite party) across nine OECD countries over the past 40 years.[3]

Other research finds that polarisation in the United States has increased the most among the demographic groups least likely to use the internet and social media,[4] and studies by Harvard ahead of the 2020 U.S. election found that election-related disinformation is often driven by elite, mass-media and cable news, rather than social media.[5] Further, research from both Pew[6] in 2019 and the Reuters Institute[7] in 2017 showed that people are likely to encounter a more diverse set of opinions and ideas using social media than if they only engage with other types of media.

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[3] L Boxell, M Gentzkow & J Shapiro, *Cross-Country Trends in Affective Polarization*, June 2021, https://web.stanford.edu/~gentzkow/research/cross-polar.pdf

[4] L Boxell, M Gentzkow, J Shapiro, 'Greater Internet use is not associated with faster growth in political polarization among US demographic groups', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 19 September 2017, https://www.pnas.org/content/114/40/10612

[5] Y Benkler et al., 'Mail-In Voter Fraud: Anatomy of a Disinformation Campaign', *Berkman Center Research Publication*, 8 October 2020, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3703701

[6] L Silver, Christine Huang, 'In Emerging Economies, Smartphone and Social Media Users Have Broader Social Networks', *Pew Research Centre*, 22 August 2019, https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2019/08/22/in-emerging-economies-smartphone-and-social-media-users-have-broader-social-networks/

[7] N Neuman et al., Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2017, *Reuters Institute,* 2017, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Digital%20News%20Report%202017%20web_0

The available evidence therefore does not support the idea that many assert – that social media is a driver of polarisation.

Nonetheless, Meta aims to provide greater transparency and control for users around how algorithms rank and distribute content. To this end, we have included an additional commitment to provide transparency of the work we do here.

We have launched three new initiatives that provide greater transparency around the distribution of content on our services.

Content Distribution Guidelines

In September 2021, we published Facebook's first Content Distribution Guidelines which make it clear what content receives reduced distribution on Feed because it's problematic or low quality. This includes a number of areas that relate to misinformation and disinformation:

- content that has had its distribution reduced because it's been found to be false by fact-checkers;
- sensational health content and commercial health posts;
- posts from broadly untrusted news publishers; and
- behaviour that represents artificially boosting engagement or views.

These guidelines were built after extensive consultation with more than 100 stakeholders to solicit feedback on how to limit the spread of problematic content and bring more transparency to our efforts.

Recommendation Guidelines

To help people understand our approach to recommendations, we published a set of Recommendation Guidelines, both on Facebook[8] and Instagram,[9] which outline the types of content that may not be eligible for recommendations.[10]

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[8] Meta, 'What are recommendations on Facebook?', *Help Centre,*
https://www.facebook.com/help/1257205004624246
[9] Instagram, 'What are recommendations on Instagram?', *Help Centre,*
https://help.instagram.com/313829416281232
[10] G Rosen, 'Recommendation guidelines', *Meta Newsroom,* 31 August 2020,
https://about.fb.com/news/2020/08/recommendation-guidelines/

Some categories of the Recommendation Guidelines relate to misinformation, including:

- Content containing claims that have been found false by independent fact-checkers; and
- Vaccine-related misinformation that has been widely debunked by leading global health organisations (and would not otherwise be removed for Community Standards violations).

In developing these guidelines, we consulted 50 leading experts specialising in recommendation systems, expression, safety and digital rights.

Widely Viewed Content Report

In August 2021, we released the first Widely Viewed Content Report (WVCR) which provides transparency about the type of broad content that is being widely seen on Facebook in the United States.[11]

Since releasing our inaugural WVCR, we have engaged with academics, civil society groups and researchers to identify the parts of our first report they found most valuable in understanding content distribution on Facebook.

We plan to expand the scope of this report to other countries in future iterations.

Meta will fund training for Australian journalists on how to identify and prevent amplifying mis and disinformation (outcome 4).

Meta consistently invests in new research, partnerships and programs to combat misinformation. To expand the benefits of this work, we will provide training to news publishers so they can identify misinformation, avoid amplifying mis- or disinformation, and help connect Australians to credible information.

Meta will focus on new areas of research relating to misinformation and disinformation in 2022, including media literacy of First Nations peoples (outcome 6).

Our research in 2021 on media literacy and misinformation in Australia has identified that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. It is also apparent that there are opportunities for new research relating specifically to indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities: the Australian Media Literacy Alliance's report 'Towards a National

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[11] A Stepanov, 'Introducing the Widely Viewed Content Report', *Meta Newsroom,* 18 August 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/widely-viewed-content-report/

Strategy for Media Literacy' noted that these communities can experience specific challenges related to media literacy.[12] For this reason, Meta will focus its investment on new research on media literacy within indigenous and diverse communities so we can best tailor our programs and partners going forward.

Meta will continue to add greater transparency around political and social issue advertising (outcome 5).

The Meta Ad Library is an industry-leading transparency initiative which provides information to anyone about the ads on Facebook and Instagram, and who is behind them.[13]

Meta will commit to providing researchers and the public with more access to ad information, such as targeting decisions, to allow people to further analyse the impact of digital advertising on elections and public discourse.

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[12] Australian Media Literacy Alliance, 'Towards a National Strategy for Media Literacy', *AMLA,* 25 October 2021, https://medialiteracy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/AMLA-Consultation-Workshop-Report_UPDATE-25-10-2021.pdf
[13] Meta, Ad Library, https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?active_status=all&ad_type=political_and_issue_ads&country=AU&media_type=all

Reporting against 2021 commitments

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.

Signatories will develop and implement measures which aim to reduce the propagation of and potential exposure of users of their services and products to Disinformation and Misinformation

Our approach to misinformation and disinformation is consistent with that which was outlined in our 2021 transparency report.[14] Below we outline developments from 2021, is well as some updates from Q1 2022:

- **Meta removes networks of accounts, Pages and Groups that violate our inauthentic behaviour policy, including disinformation that violates our policy on Inauthentic Behaviour.**

  Meta has a strong commitment to authenticity, we don't allow people on Facebook to misrepresent themselves.

  We will remove inauthentic actors - including accounts, Pages and Groups - if they violate our Inauthentic Behaviour (IB) or Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour (CIB) policies. While CIB is typically designed to mislead people about who is behind an operation to manipulate public debate for a strategic goal, IB is primarily centered around amplifying and increasing the distribution of content.[15]

- **Meta provides transparency about accounts, Pages and Groups removed under our Inauthentic Behaviour policy.**

 We use a combination of policies, tools, expert teams and partnerships to detect

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[14] J Machin, 'Meta's response to the Australian disinformation and misinformation industry code', *Facebook Australia blog*, May 2021, https://australia.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/69/2021/05/Facebook-commitments-under-disinfo-and-misinfo-code-final-1.pdf

[15] B Nimmo, D Agranovich & N Gleicher, 'Adversarial Threat Report', *Meta,* April 2022, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Meta-Quarterly-Adversarial-Threat-Report_Q1-2022.pdf

and remove networks of IB and CIB – both foreign and domestic. We report regularly on these efforts. [16]

In December 2021 we reported that since 2017, Meta has removed over 200 covert influence operations for violating our policy against CIB.[17] These operations targeted public debate across both established and emerging social media platforms, as well as local blogs and major newspapers and magazines.

Figure 1: Global Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour Disruptions, 2017 – 2021

GLOBAL CIB DISRUPTIONS, 2017-2021
(by country of origin)

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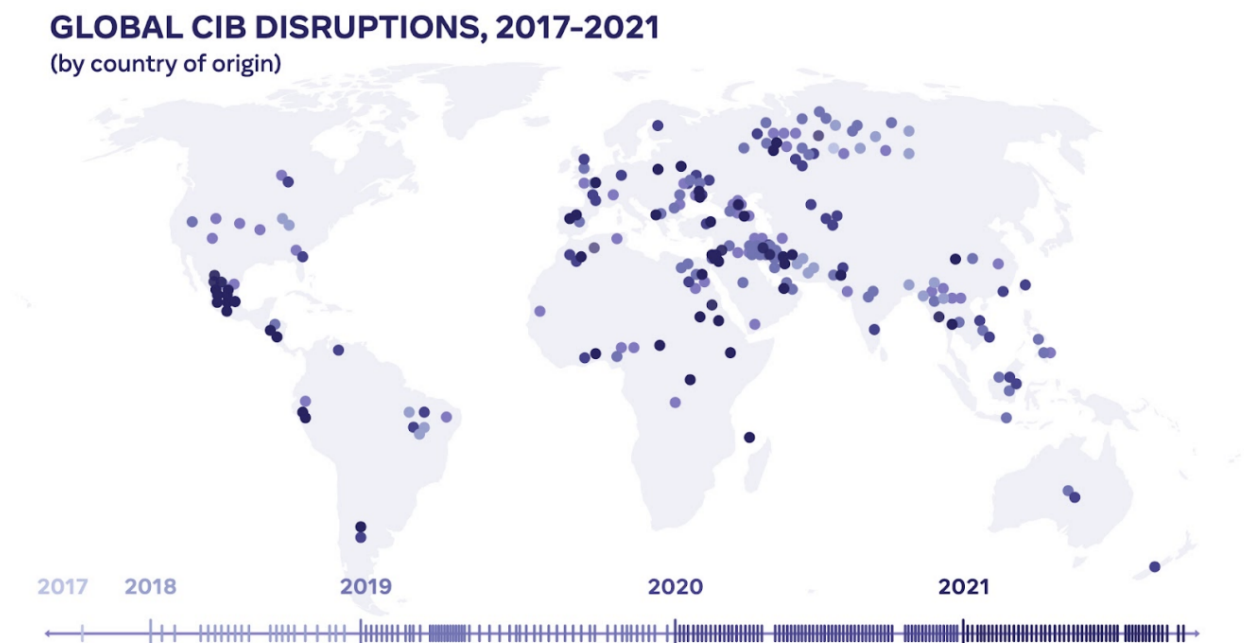
[16] Meta, *Coordinated inauthentic behaviour monthly report,* about.fb.com/news/tag/coordinated-inauthentic-behavior/

[17] Meta, 'Threat Report - State of Influence Operations 2017-2020', *Meta Newsroom*, May 2021, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IO-Threat-Report-May-20-2021.pdf and Meta, 'December 2021 Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour Report', December 2021, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/December-2021-Coordinated-Inauthentic-Behavior-Report-2.pdf

Figure 2: Target of Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour Disruptions, 2017 – 2021[18]
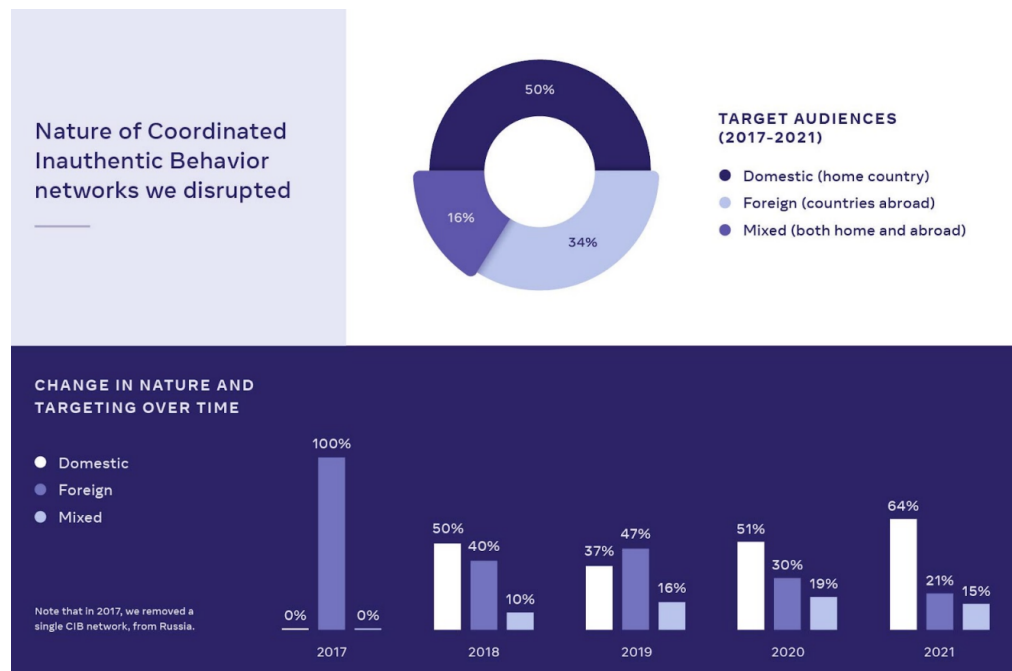
Since 2017, we have taken action on four instances of CIB operations in order to protect Australians, outlined below.

- In 2020, we removed an operation that operated from many regions around the world including the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Germany, the UK, Finland and France.[19] It targeted primarily English and Chinese-speaking audiences globally and Vietnam. Our investigation linked this network to Truthmedia, a digital media outlet, which is now banned from our platforms.

- In 2019, we took action against CIB that originated in Macedonia and Kosovo.[20] The individuals behind this activity operated fake accounts to administer Pages sharing general, non-country specific content like

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[18] We define targets as:
- Domestic: IO that targets public debate in the same country from which it operates.
- Foreign: IO that targets the public debate in a different country from which it operates.
- Mixed: We also see IO campaigns and threat actors that run campaigns that target both domestic and foreign audiences

[19] Meta, Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior Report, *Meta Newsroom*, 6 August 2020, https://about.fb.com/news/2020/08/july-2020-cib-report/

[20] N Gleicher, 'Removing Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour from Iran, Russia, Macedonia and Kosovo, *Meta Newsroom,* https://about.fb.com/news/2019/03/cib-iran-russia-macedonia-kosovo/, 26 March 2020.

astrology, celebrities and beauty tips. They also ran a small number of Pages purporting to represent political communities in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Our investigation benefited from open source reporting, including from the press in Australia.

- In 2019, we took action against CIB that originated in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Nigeria that were promoting content about the UAE.[21] There were multiple sets of activity, primarily in the Middle East and Africa, and some in Europe, North and South America, South Asia and East Asia, and Australia.

- In 2019, we took action against a domestic operation in March 2019 that was linked to local political actors related to the New South Wales state election.

- **Meta partners with experts and organisations who assist in providing tips or further investigation about possible inauthentic behaviour on our services.**

  Meta continues to maintain close relationships with experts and organisations around the world so we can share threat findings and adapt our enforcement. This includes:

  - **Australian Government agencies.** We engaged with Australian security agencies in the 6-9 months leading up to the Australian election campaign to share information and work together if threats arose during the campaign.
  - **The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI).** We are a major sponsor of ASPI. In late 2020, we launched a CrowdTangle-enabled research pilot where we've shared over 100 of the recent coordinated inauthentic behavior (CIB) takedowns with a small group of researchers. ASPI is one of our initial 5 key partners for this archive.[22]

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[21] N Gleicher, ' Removing Coordinated Behaviour in UAE, Nigeria, Indonesia and Egypt', *Meta Newsroom,* 3 October 2019, https://about.fb.com/news/2019/10/removing-coordinated-inauthentic-behavior-in-uae-nigeria-indonesia-and-egypt/

[22] B Nimmo, D Agranovich & N Gleicher, 'Adversarial Threat Report', *Meta,* April 2022, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Meta-Quarterly-Adversarial-Threat-Report_Q1-2022.pdf

- **Meta removes misinformation that violates the misinformation component of our Community Standards.**

  As outlined in the 2021 transparency report, Meta removes misinformation that violates our Community Standards,[23] including misinformation that is likely to directly contribute to the risk of imminent physical harm.

  We continue to work with experts around the world to update our policies on misinformation. Since the 2021 transparency report, we have expanded our policies to reduce the spread of false claims about COVID-19 vaccines and children.[24]

  In August 2021, Meta began reporting on its misinformation efforts to reflect the work we're doing to remove harmful COVID-19 related misinformation. We reported that since the beginning of the pandemic, we have removed more than 20 million pieces of content from Facebook and Instagram globally for violating our policies on COVID-19 related misinformation.[25]

  We have also managed to secure new, global data for this 2022 report. In 2021, we removed over 11 million pieces of content from Facebook and Instagram for violating our policies on COVID-19 related misinformation.

  We have secured Australian-specific statistics on our misinformation efforts, please see page 28 for further detail.

- **Meta removes manipulated media, also known as "deepfakes", that violates our Manipulated Media policy.**

  Meta continues to enforce its policy on manipulated media. We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta removes material that violates our Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network policy.**

  We have continued to build on the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

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[23] Meta, *Community Standards*, https://transparency.fb.com/en-gb/policies/community-standards/
[24] K Jin, 'Supporting covid-19 vaccination efforts for children', *Meta Newsroom*, 29 October 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/10/supporting-covid-19-vaccine-children/
[25] Meta, *Community Standards Enforcement Report Q2 2021*, https://transparency.fb.com/data/community-standards-enforcement/

We have secured new data on our efforts in this area. As of September 14, 2021, we have identified over 1,013 militarised social movements to date and in total, removed about 4,000 Pages, 20,600 groups, 190 events, 54,900 Facebook profiles and 8,300 Instagram accounts. We've also removed about 3,900 Pages, 11,300 groups, 640 events, 50,300 Facebook profiles and 32,500 Instagram accounts for violating our policy against QAnon.[26]

- **Meta removes election-related misinformation that may constitute voter suppression.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta removes fake accounts.**

  We do not allow fake accounts on Facebook, as they can be vehicles for a range of harmful content and behaviour.

  In the fourth quarter of 2021, from October to December 2021, we detected and removed 1.7 billion fake accounts, 99.8 per cent of which we detected proactively.[27] These are often caught within minutes of registration.

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[26] Meta, 'An update to how we address movements and organizations tied to violence', *Meta Newsroom*, blog post updated 19 January 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2020/08/addressing-movements-and-organizations-tied-to-violence/.
Note - Meta began reporting our enforcement data for the Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network policy in August 2020. Only global data is available, as this includes Groups, Pages and Events which can compromise users based in numerous different countries.
[27] Meta, *Community Standards Enforcement Report Q4 2021,*
https://transparency.fb.com/data/community-standards-enforcement/

Figure 3: # of fake accounts we've taken action on (Oct 2017 – Dec 2021)[28]
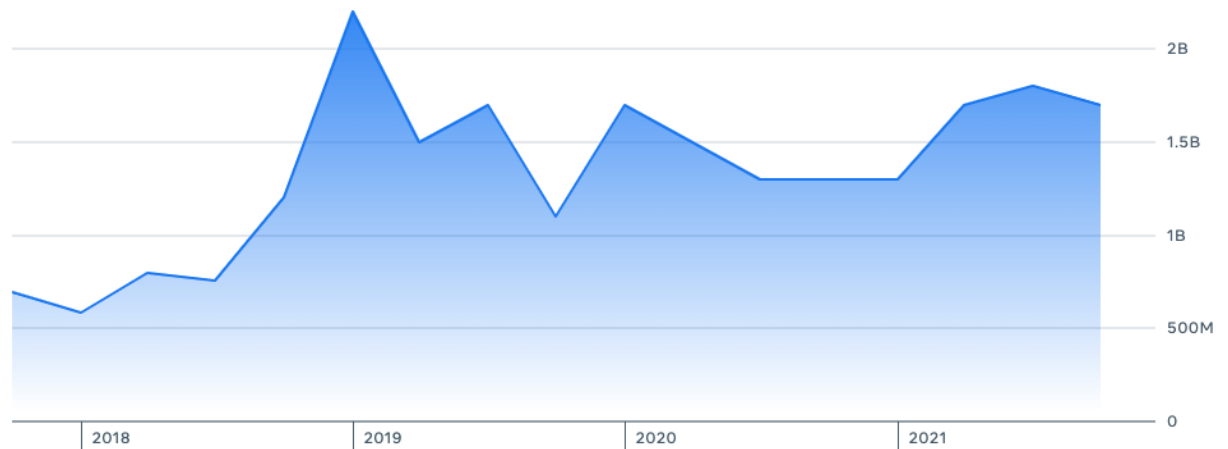
- **Meta allows for appeals in instances where users may disagree with our enforcement, including to the independent and external Oversight Board.**

  As mentioned in the 2021 transparency report, we have voluntarily established the independent Oversight Board to ensure greater accountability for our content governance on Facebook and Instagram.

  The Oversight Board has evolved over the last twelve months, it has:
  - Increased its membership from 20 to 40 members. These include human rights and technology experts, including the Australian academic Professor Nic Suzor from Queensland University of Technology.
  - Issued 24 decisions and made more than 100 recommendations to Meta for future improvements.[29]
  - Begun publishing Transparency Reports which provide new details on the Oversight Board's cases, decisions and recommendations. They will continue to be released each quarter. These quarterly updates are available in the dedicated Oversight Board Transparency Centre. Available at https://oversightboard.com/

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[28] Note - graph represents number of fake accounts removed globally. Australia-specific statistics are not available.

[29] Oversight Board, 'Oversight Board demands more transparency from Facebook', *Oversight Board,* October 2021, https://oversightboard.com/news/215139350722703-oversight-board-demands-more-transparency-from-facebook/

- **Meta partners with third-party fact-checking organisations, globally and in Australia, to assess the accuracy of content on our services.**

  Meta has built the largest global fact-checking network of any digital platform, and has contributed more than $100 million to programs supporting our fact-checking efforts since 2016.[30]

  We now work with over 80 fact-checking partners around the world covering more than 60 languages. Australians benefit from Meta's international approach to fact-checking - an Australian user will see a warning label on content that has been fact-checked by an international fact-checking partner. Content found to be false by our international fact-checking partners will be demoted in an Australian user's Feed, meaning there is less chance of them seeing it.

  In Australia, we partner with the Australian Associated Press, Agence France Presse and RMIT FactLab, all certified by the nonpartisan International FactChecking Network (IFCN). All fact-checks by these partners are publicly available on their websites.[31]

- **Meta will add additional fact-checker capability in Australia in 2021.**

  In March 2022, ahead of the Australian federal election, we announced the expansion of our third-party fact-checking program to include RMIT FactLab.[32]

  The timing of RMIT FactLab joining as a Meta third-party fact-checking partner was driven by the timeline for RMIT to receive accreditation from the International Fact Checking Network. Meta only partners with organisations once they have received accreditation from the IFCN.

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[30] C Alexander, 'Facebook launches accelerator challenge for global fact-checkers to expand reach of reliable information', *Facebook Journalism Project*, 26 August 2021, https://www.facebook.com/journalismproject/accelerator-fact-checkers

[31] Agence France Presse Australia, Fact Check, https://factcheck.afp.com/afp-australia; Australian Associated Press; AAP Fact Check, https://www.aap.com.au/category/factcheck; RMIT FactLab https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/schools-colleges/media-and-communication/industry/factlab/debunking-misinformation

[32] J Machin, 'How Meta is preparing for the 2022 Australian election', *Facebook Australia blog*, 15 March 2022, https://australia.fb.com/post/how-meta-is-preparing-for-the-2022-australian-election/

- **Meta applies a warning label to content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations.**

  Meta continues to apply a warning label to content that a third-party fact-checking partner rates as 'false'. When people see these warning labels, 95% of the time they do not go on to view the original content.

  Since the beginning of the pandemic to June 2021, we have displayed warnings on more than 190 million pieces of COVID-related content on Facebook that our third-party fact-checking partners have rated as false, partly false, altered or missing content.[33]

- **Meta reduces the distribution of content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations.**

  We continue to reduce the distribution of the 'false' content so it appears lower in the Facebook Feed and is less discoverable on Instagram, which slows its distribution significantly.

- **Meta proactively searches for content that makes claims debunked by our fact-checking partners, to apply the same treatments.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta limits the ability to forward material via private messaging.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

  Since the 2021 transparency report, DIGI engaged an independent reviewer to prepare best practice guidelines for signatories. The independent reviewer indicated Meta should not include information about private messaging when it is not within scope of the code. In response to that feedback, we have not made commitments relating to private messaging for 2022.

- **Meta takes action on Pages, Groups, accounts, or websites found to repeatedly share misinformation.**

  We continue to take action on Pages, Groups, accounts or websites that

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[33] Meta, *Community Standards Enforcement Report Q2 2021,* https://transparency.fb.com/data/community-standards-enforcement/
Note - this represents the number of warning labels applied to content globally. Australia-specific statistics are not available as Australians will benefit from warning labels that has been fact-checked by an international fact-checking partner.

repeatedly share misinformation. Since the beginning of the pandemic to June 2021, Meta has removed over 3,000 accounts, pages, and groups for repeatedly violating our rules against spreading COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation.[34]

- **Meta removes Groups from recommendations if they violate our recommendation guidelines, including around misinformation.**

  Meta continues to remove Groups from recommendations if they have violated our misinformation policies.

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[34] Meta, *Community Standards Enforcement Report Q2 2021,*
https://transparency.fb.com/data/community-standards-enforcement/
Note - Only global data is available, as this includes Groups and Pages which can compromise users based in numerous different countries.

Case study: Meta's response to the war in Ukraine

Since the beginning of the devastating war in Ukraine, Meta has taken a number of steps to combat misuse of our services and help ensure the safety of our community - both in Ukraine and around the world.[35]

The steps we take are well-aligned with our commitments under the Australian voluntary industry code on disinformation and misinformation.

Throughout the conflict, we have seen Russian state-controlled media spread misinformation and misleading content. Although the Russian government has attempted to reduce access to authoritative information by blocking Facebook and Instagram in Russia, we continue to introduce new measures to stop the spread of misinformation globally, and link users to support through other platforms such as WhatsApp.

In relation to **misinformation**, we are taking extensive steps to fight the spread of misinformation on our services and continuing to consult with outside experts:

Remove
- Removing content that violates our policies and working with third-party fact-checkers in the region to debunk false claims. When they rate something as false, we reduce the distribution of that content in Feed so fewer people see it.
- Prohibiting Russian state media from running ads or monetising on our platform anywhere in the world.

Reduce
- Expanding our third-party fact-checking capacity in Russian and Ukrainian languages across the region and are working to provide additional financial support to Ukrainian fact-checking partners.
- Globally demoting content from Facebook pages and Instagram accounts from Russian state-controlled media outlets, or posts that contain links to Russian state-controlled media, and labelling these links to provide more information to people before they share or click on them.
- We refused an order from the Russian authorities to stop the independent fact-checking and labeling of content posted on Facebook by four Russian state media organisations.

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[35] Meta, 'Meta's ongoing efforts regarding Russia's invasion of Ukraine', *Meta Newsroom,* 26 February 2022, https://about.fb.com/news/2022/02/metas-ongoing-efforts-regarding-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/

Inform

- To supplement labels from our fact-checking partners, we are warning users when they try to share war-related images that we detect are over one year old, so people have more context about outdated images.
- We label Facebook Pages and Instagram accounts from Russian state-controlled media outlets so people know where this information comes from.
- We've supported Ukraine's State Emergency Services to launch an information helpline on WhatsApp. The free service connects users to critical updates, reliable information, and emergency response procedures.
- We've launched a message in Ukraine at the top of Facebook's Feed connecting users to high-quality, timely information to stay safe, find family and friends, and locate support services like housing and immigration assistance.

Figure 4: State-controlled media label on Instagram
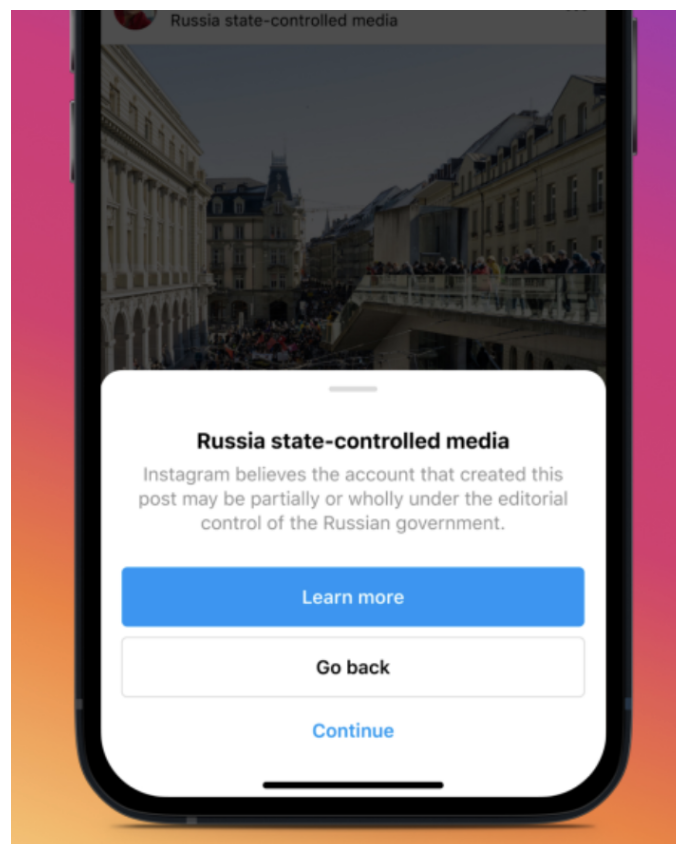
We have also received formal requests from a number of Governments and the EU to take further steps in relation to Russian state controlled media. Given the exceptional nature of the current situation, we are restricting access to RT and Sputnik across the EU

at this time. We will continue to work closely with Governments on this issue and assess any content restriction requests.

In relation to coordinated inauthentic behaviour (or influence operations / **disinformation**), we have set up new teams to monitor and respond to emerging threats of inauthentic behaviour.[36]

- In February 2022, we uncovered a relatively small network of about 40 accounts, Pages and Groups on Facebook and Instagram operated from Russia targeting people in Ukraine. We took down this operation, blocked their domains from being shared on our platform, and shared information with other tech platforms, researchers and governments.

- We detected and took down an attempt to come back by a network we removed in December 2020 and linked to individuals associated with past activity by the Russian Internet Research Agency (IRA).

- We detected and took down an attempt to come back by the network we removed in December 2020 and linked to people in the Luhansk region of Ukraine.

- We also removed a network in Russia for violating our Inauthentic Behavior policy against mass reporting.

- Finally, we've seen a spike in compromise attempts aimed at members of the Ukrainian military by Ghostwriter, a threat actor tracked by the security community. In a handful of cases, groups posted videos calling on the Army to surrender as if these posts were coming from the legitimate account owners. We blocked these videos from being shared.

For more information on our efforts relating to the war in Ukraine please visit https://about.fb.com/news/2022/02/metas-ongoing-efforts-regarding-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/

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[36] B Nimmo, D Agranovich & N Gleicher, 'Adversarial Threat Report', *Meta,* April 2022, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Meta-Quarterly-Adversarial-Threat-Report_Q1-2022.pdf

> **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.

> Signatories will implement and publish policies and procedures and any appropriate guidelines or information relating to the prohibition and/or management of user behaviours that may propagate Disinformation and Misinformation via their services or products.

- **Meta makes available a detailed list of claims that we consider to violate our COVID-19 Misinformation & Harm policy**. Meta has updated the misinformation section to our Community Standards to make our policies easier to access and understand. This is in part a response to the Oversight Board's request that we do so.[37]

- **Meta makes information available via a dedicated website that outlines our efforts to combat misinformation.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

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[37] Meta, *Community Standards - Misinformation*, https://transparency.fb.com/en-gb/

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

Signatories will implement and publish policies, procedures and any appropriate guidelines or information regarding the reporting of the types of content and behaviours that may propagate Disinformation and Misinformation via their platforms.

- **Meta makes on-platform reporting channels available to users for false information.**

  Meta continues to make reporting channels available to users on both Facebook and Instagram. Users have the ability to report individual pieces of content in-app. Instead of providing a link for users to report misinformation, we have provided a link to our Help Centre that outlines the steps to report misinformation in-app:

  Facebook Help Centre - https://www.facebook.com/help/572838089565953
  Instagram Help Centre - https://www.facebook.com/help/instagram/2442045389198631

  Our Australian third-party fact-checking partners are also able to receive referrals from the public using the channels below:

  - Agence France Presse: https://factcheck.afp.com/contact
  - Australian Associated Press: https://www.aap.com.au/make-a-submission/
  - RMIT FactLab:
  https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/schools-colleges/media-and-communication/industry/factlab/debunking-misinformation

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

Signatories will implement and publish policies, procedures and/or aggregated reports (including summaries of reports made under 5.11) regarding the detection and removal of content that violates platform policies, including but not necessarily limited to content on their platforms that qualifies as Misinformation and/or Disinformation.

- **Meta makes global transparency reports available regularly.**

    We continue to make aggregated reports publicly available on our misinformation and disinformation efforts to provide oversight of our work.

    In addition to the Community Standards Enforcement Report and the Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour Report, outlined in the 2021 transparency report, we now make available:

    1. **The Widely Viewed Content Report.** This is outlined further on page 11.[38]

    2. **Content Distribution Guidelines.** This is outlined further on page 10.[39]

    3. **Threat Report - State of Influence Operations 2017-2020.** This is outlined further on page 14.[40]

- **Meta will supplement these reports with additional Australia-specific statistics, provided as part of this Annual Report process.**

    While country-specific statistics should be interpreted with caution and have limitations in understanding misinformation and disinformation, Meta has again provided Australia-specific statistics in the spirit of transparency of our efforts. As

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[38] A Stepanov, 'Introducing the Widely Viewed Content Report', 18 August 2021, *Meta Newsroom,* https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/widely-viewed-content-report/

[39] Meta, 'Types of content we demote', *Transparency Centre,* 20 December 2021, https://transparency.fb.com/en-gb/features/approach-to-ranking/types-of-content-we-demote/

[40] Meta, 'Threat Report - State of Influence Operations 2017-2020', *Meta Newsroom*, May 2021, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/IO-Threat-Report-May-20-2021.pdf

noted by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)[41], we were only one of two companies to do so in 2021.

Figure 5: Australia – Number of pieces of harmful health misinformation content removed[42]

2020[43]	2021
110,000	180,000

- **Meta makes the service CrowdTangle freely available to journalists, third-party fact-checking partners and some academics.** Meta continues to provide CrowdTangle for free to journalists, third-parties, fact-checking partners and eligible academics to analyse and report on trends in public content on social media.

  As mentioned on page 16, Meta has also worked with CrowdTangle to build a platform where researchers and ASPI can access data about CIB networks.[44]

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[41] Australian Communications and Media Authority, 'ACMA report to government on the adequacy of digital platforms' disinformation and news quality measures', *ACMA,* 21 March 2022, https://www.acma.gov.au/articles/2022-03/release-acmas-disinformation-report

[42] These figures capture content from Pages or accounts specific to Australia (noting Australians benefitted from the content we removed from other countries as well).

[43] Meta began providing Australia-specific statistics on our misinformation enforcement in 2020.

[44] B Nimmo, D Agranovich & N Gleicher, 'Adversarial Threat Report', *Meta,* April 2022, https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Meta-Quarterly-Adversarial-Threat-Report_Q1-2022.pdf

Outcome 2
Advertising and/or monetisation incentives for Disinformation are reduced.

Signatories will implement policies and processes that aim to disrupt advertising and/or monetisation incentives for Disinformation.

- **Meta sets a higher threshold for users to be able to advertise on our services, and takes action against users who spread misinformation.** As outlined in our 2021 transparency report, Meta has a number of policies and processes in place to demonetise or disrupt advertising for bad actors.

  In 2021, we updated our Advertising Policies to prohibit ads with misinformation that could harm public health efforts.[45] These include:
    - ads with vaccine hoaxes that have been publicly identified by leading global health organisations, such as the WHO; and
    - ads discouraging people from getting vaccinated.

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[45] Meta, 'Supporting public health experts' vaccine efforts', *Meta Newsroom*, 13 October 2020, https://about.fb.com/news/2020/10/supporting-public-health-experts-vaccine-efforts/

Outcome 3

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

Signatories commit to take measures that prohibit or manage the types of user behaviours that are designed to undermine the security and integrity of their services and products, for example, the use of fake accounts or automated bots that are designed to propagate Disinformation.

Please see Outcome 1a for the actions Meta takes against inauthentic user behaviours.

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.

Signatories will implement measures to enable users to make informed choices about news and factual information and to access alternative sources of information.

We continue to implement new measures to inform users about the content they see on our platforms.

- **Meta provides contextual information around posts that users see from public Pages.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta provides a COVID-19 Information Centre with verified, authoritative information about COVID-19.** Meta continues to provide the COVID-19 Information Centre around the world to promote authoritative information to Facebook users.

  Figure 6: Australia – number of people visiting the COVID-19 Information Centre[46]

 | | 2020 | 2021 – Q4 |
  |---|---|---|
  | Global | 2 billion | 350 million |
  | Australia | 6.2 million | 3.5 million |

- **Meta will launch a Climate Science Information Centre in Australia.**
  In November 2021, Meta launched the Climate Science Information Centre in Australia.[47] The Centre connects users to authoritative information from leading climate organisations around the world.

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[46] Note – only data for Q4 2021 is available at this time.

[47] N Clegg, 'Our commitment to combatting climate change', *Meta Newsroom,* 1 November 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/11/our-commitment-to-combating-climate-change/

We also announced a US$1 million for a grant program with the International Fact Checking Network, to support organisations to combat climate misinformation.[48]

Figure 7: Facebook's Climate Science Information Centre
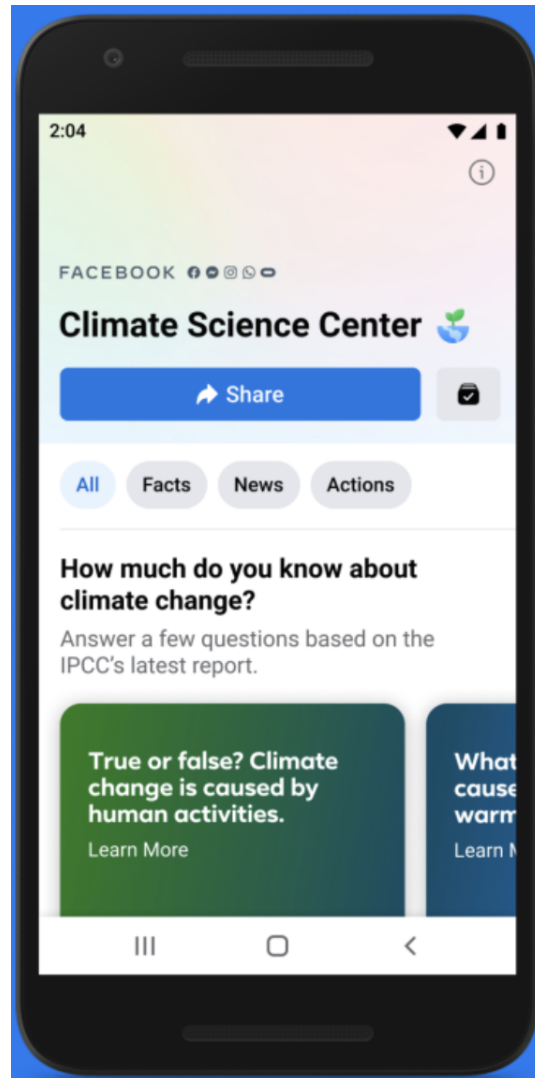
- **Meta uses in-product prompts to direct Australians to authoritative information on key COVID-19 related topics.**

    - **Facebook Local Alerts.** In June 2021, we announced the launch of a new product, Local Alerts, in Australia which helps authorities communicate urgent, need-to-know or actionable information to communities in time

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[48] Meta, 'Tackling climate change together', *Meta Newsroom,* 16 September 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/09/tackling-climate-change-together/

critical situations. When authorities with access to the product mark posts as Local Alerts, Facebook will send a notification to Page followers located in the affected area, and mark the post as an alert to make it stand out in News Feed.

So far, Australia is the only country outside of the US to have access to this important product.

A recent analysis in the US found that Page posts marked as Local Alerts by their administrators gained over 250% more views on average than regular Page posts.[49]

Figure 8: Facebook Local Alerts tool
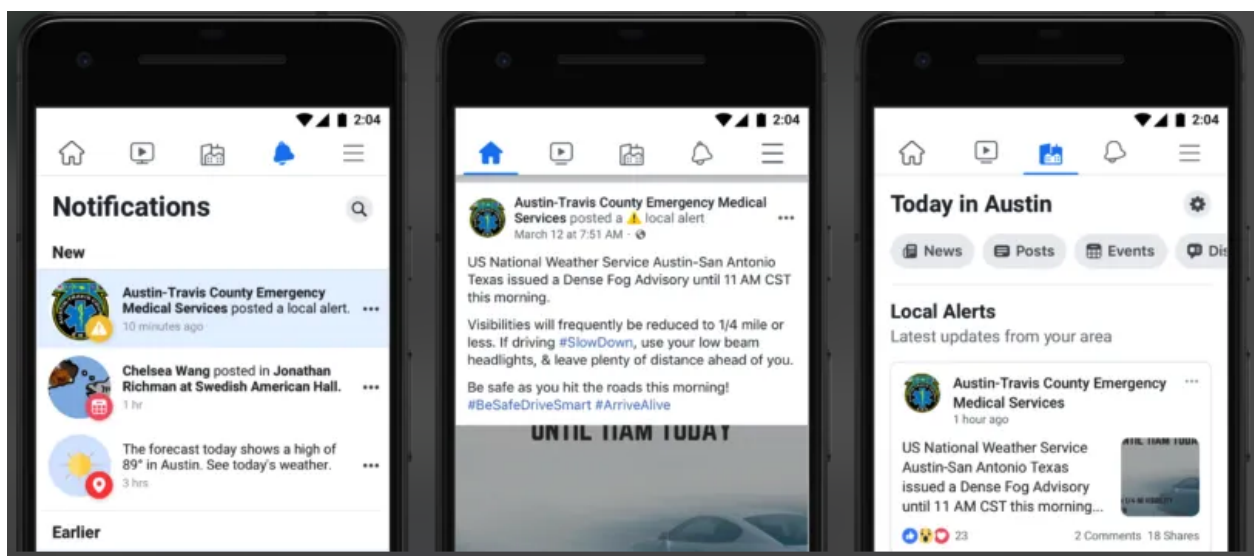
- **Facebook Election prompts.** We have also developed a number of prompts with the Australian Electoral Commission to raise awareness about the Australian election and link users to authoritative election information.

- **Instagram Election stickers.** We've also updated our Instagram election stickers to encourage people to vote. Clicking on the stickers directs users to the AEC website to find information like where and how to vote.

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[49] J Machin, 'Facebook expands Local Alerts Tool', *Facebook Australia Blog*, 29 June 2021, https://australia.fb.com/post/facebook-expands-local-alerts-tool/

More information about these initiatives to promote authoritative information are included in the case study below, see page 35.

- **Meta promotes authoritative information by providing significant support to organisations such as the Australian, state and territory governments and First Nations health organisations to promote authoritative health information.**

  To date, Meta has given millions of dollars worth of Facebook advertising credits to federal, state and territory governments and NGOs, to increase access to COVID-19 vaccine and preventative health information.

- **Meta directs users to authoritative information when they search for high-priority topics on Facebook and Instagram.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta directs users to authoritative information once they have seen or shared COVID-19 related misinformation.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta will look for opportunities to continue to work with the Government on other ways to promote authoritative information**. We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta promotes public service announcements to our users to encourage them to be wary of potential misinformation.** We continue to support the promotion of public service announcements on our platforms, working with government, industry and civil society organisations.

Case study: Australian federal election 2022

Meta has been involved in more than 200 elections around the world since 2017, and we've learned key lessons from each one on combatting misinformation, election interference and promoting civic participation.

We have initiated a number of new programs of work in the lead up to the Australian election in relation to misinformation and disinformation.[50] This work includes:

Combatting misinformation
- **Increasing our fact-checking capability.** As well as onboarding RMIT FactLab as a new fact-checking partner, we have provided one-off grants to our fact-checkers to increase their capacity in the lead up to the election.
- **Increasing misinformation monitoring.** We are working with First Draft to increase misinformation monitoring and analyses and provide pre-election training for Australian journalists on how to prevent amplifying mis and dis information.
- **Misinformation awareness campaigns.** As well as launching the 'Check the Facts' and 'Don't be a Misinfluencer' campaigns, for the first time, we'll run the 'Check the Facts' campaign translated in three other languages – Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese and Arabic to extend the benefits of the campaign even further.

Security, disinformation and election interference
- **Sharing intelligence on potential foreign interference.** We are coordinating with the Government's election integrity assurance taskforce and security agencies in the lead up to the election.
- **Increasing account security.** In December 2021, we extended our Facebook Protect security program to Australia.[51] Since rolling out Facebook Protect, we've seen a 90 per cent adoption rate in these highly targeted groups in the first month.

*Encouraging civic engagement and empowering voters*
- **Training candidates to better reach their audience.** We have run training sessions with political parties on our policies and tools, and how to engage with voters.
- **Empowering people to participate – Facebook.** To raise awareness about the election, we also prompt Australians with an 'Election Day Reminder' and a 'Pre-polling Reminder' that link a user to the AEC website for more information.

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[50] Meta, 'How Meta is preparing for the 2022 Australian election', *Facebook Australia blog*, 15 March 2022, https://australia.fb.com/post/how-meta-is-preparing-for-the-2022-australian-election/

[51] N Gleicher, 'Expanding Facebook Protect to more countries', *Meta Newsroom*, 2 December 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/12/expanding-facebook-protect-to-more-countries/

Figure 9: Australian 2019 Federal Election in-product prompts
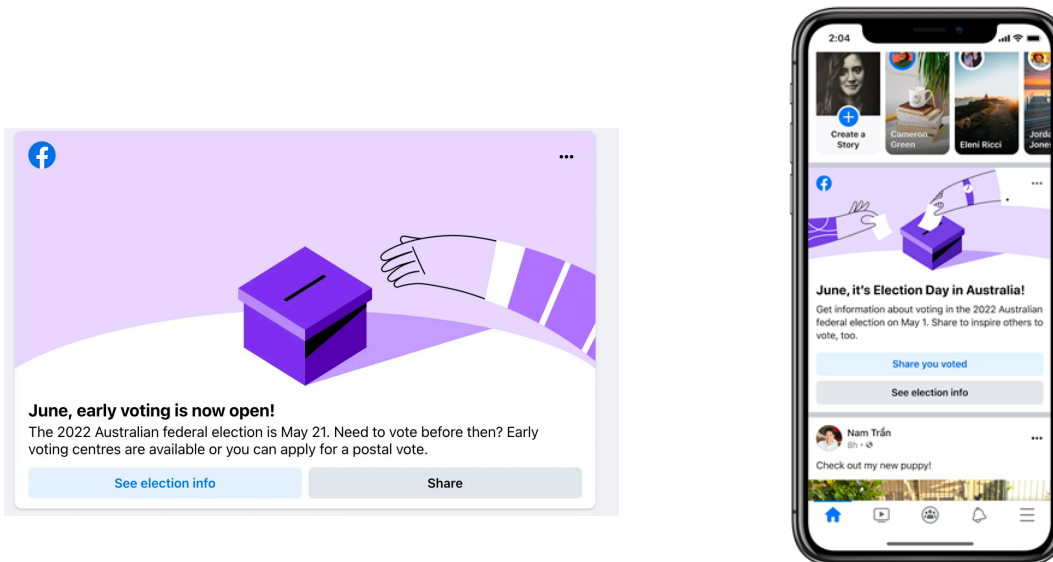
- **Empowering people to participate – Instagram.** We've once again developed election stickers with the Australian Electoral Commission. Clicking on the stickers directed users to the AEC website to find information like where and how to vote. We'll also launch a 'Election Reminder' at the top of the Instagram Feed on election day.

Figure 10: Australian 2022 Federal Election Instagram stickers
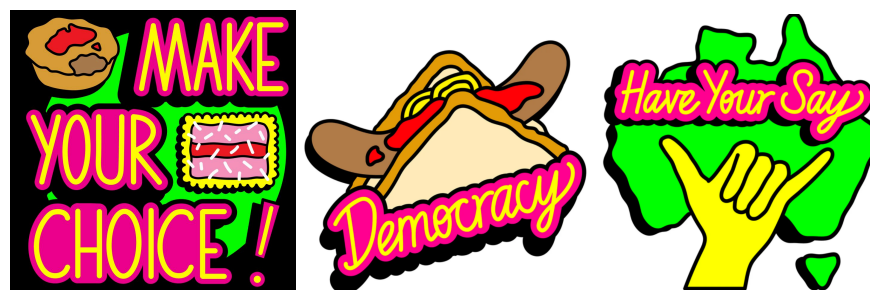
- **Informing people about election communications.** We've released a public, Live Display on Crowdtangle dedicated to the Australian Election.[52] The Live Display will provide real-time coverage of the most recent communications about the election on Facebook and Instagram.

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[52] CrowdTangle, *Australian Election 2022,*
https://apps.crowdtangle.com/anz/boards/australianelections2022#

Outcome 5
Users are better informed about the source of Political Advertising

Signatories will develop and implement policies that provide users with greater transparency about the source of Political Advertising carried on digital platforms.

- **Meta requires all advertisers of political ads[53] to complete an ad authorisation, which includes verifying the advertiser's identity.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta requires political ads to include a disclaimer disclosing who is paying for the ad.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta provides the Ad Library, a searchable archive of all political ads on our services in Australia.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta enables an Ad Library report that provides aggregated spend information about Pages undertaking political ads.** We have maintained the approach outlined in our 2021 transparency report.

- **Meta will extend the policies and enforcement for political ads to social issue ads in 2021.** As per the commitment in the 2021 transparency report, in June 2021, we made a major step in enhancing ad transparency by requiring anyone in Australia running a social issue ad to complete an ad authorisation and disclaimer.[54] This means that social issue ads attract the same requirements as political ads.

  The rollout of this product was expedited to ensure it had launched in time for the Australian federal election.

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[53] We define political ads as advertisements: (1) made by, on behalf of, or about a candidate for public office, a political figure, a political party or advocates for the outcome of an election to public office; or (2) about any election, referendum or ballot initiative, including "go out and vote" or election campaigns. We recognise the definition of Political Advertising in the voluntary industry code for disinformation and misinformation is broader than Facebook's definition of "political ads", as it also encompasses ads that we refer to as "social issue ads".

[54] J Machin, 'Expanding transparency around social issue ads in Australia', *Facebook Australia Blog,* 18 June 2021, https://australia.fb.com/post/expanding-transparency-around-social-issue-ads-in-australia/

Outcome 6

Signatories support the efforts of independent researchers to improve public understanding of Disinformation and Misinformation.

Signatories commit to support and encourage good faith independent efforts to research Disinformation and Misinformation both online and offline.

- **Meta will continue to support research and events in relation to misinformation and media literacy.**
  Since the 2021 transparency report, we have supported a number of new pieces of research on misinformation, including:
  - Supporting the Australian Media Literacy Alliance to conduct the first Australian national media literacy survey. The results of the survey were released in October 2021 alongside recommendations for governments, companies and communities to improve media literacy.[55]
  - Investing in academic research on misinformation and polarisation in 2022, with two winners from Australian universities. We announced support for:
    - 'Testing fact and logic-based responses to polarising climate misinformation' (John Cook and Sojung Kim, Monash University); and
    - 'How fact checkers compare: News trust and COVID-19 information quality' (Andrea Carson, James Meese, Justin B. Phillips, Leah Ruppanner, La Trobe University).[56]

  We have also supported a number of new media literacy partnerships and campaigns:
  - We partnered with the Business Council of Australia in their 'One Shot Closer Campaign' to provide authoritative information about vaccines from trusted employers across Australia.[57] It reached over 14 million people over

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[55] Australian Media Literacy Alliance, 'Towards a national strategy for media literacy', *AMLA*, October 2021, https://medialiteracy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/AMLA-Consultation-Workshop-Report_UPDATE-25-10-2021.pdf

[56] Meta Research, 'Announcing the 2021 recipients of research awards in misinformation and polarisation', *Meta Research,* 14 September 2021, https://research.facebook.com/blog/2021/09/announcing-the-2021-recipients-of-research-awards-in-misinformation-and-polarization/

[57] Business Council Australia, '*One shot closer' Campaign*, https://www.oneshotcloser.com.au/

41.2 million times.

○ Meta has joined UNICEF Australia's Vaccine Alliance that encourages cross-sector collaboration in Australia and around the world to provide equitable access to the vaccine.[58] Meta has contributed free advertising to the alliance to provide authoritative information about vaccines.

○ In September 2021 we launched a "Don't Be a Misinfluencer" campaign with First Draft for public figures and creators. The campaign aims to prevent the amplification of misinformation by creators and includes a toolkit with information on how to identify and combat misinformation.[59]

Figure 11: First Draft 'Don't Be A Mis-Influencer' Campaign

○ In October 2021, we launched a media literacy 'Check the Facts' initiative for Australians with the Australian Associated Press to teach Australians how to recognise and avoid the spread of misinformation.[60]

We have also translated this campaign into Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese in the lead up to the Australia election campaign, to spread awareness about misinformation in culturally diverse communities.

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[58] UNICEF Australia, '*COVID vaccination alliance*', https://www.unicef.org.au/about-us/partnerships/covid-vaccination-alliance
[59] First Draft, 'Protect your voice: a toolkit for Australian influencers and celebrities', *First Draft website*, https://firstdraftnews.org/tackling/protect-your-voice-a-toolkit-for-australian-influencers-and-celebrities/
[60] Australian Associated Press, 'Australians urged to Check the Facts', *AAP website,* 25 October 2021, https://www.aap.com.au/news/australians-urged-to-check-the-facts/

Figure 12: Australian Associated Press 'Check the Facts' Campaign

- **Meta will continue to support research and events in relation to disinformation.**
  - Meta supported an analytical paper by First Draft on disinformation and misinformation amongst diaspora groups with a focus on Chinese language.[61] The paper aims to inform policymakers on how to reduce misinformation within Chinese diaspora communities ahead of the next federal election.

  - We also commissioned Dr Jake Wallis and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute to undertake a review of disinformation-for-hire, specifically targeting Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. This research was launched in August 2021.[62]

  - Meta was a primary sponsor in the Australian Strategic Policy Institute's 'Sydney Dialogue'. This event was a high level two day event to discuss significant technology issues, including misinformation and disinformation. Meta participated in two panels, one on *Democracies and Global Technology Governance*, and another on *Increasing Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World.*

    In particular, Sir Nick Clegg, Meta's President of Global Affairs appeared with Australian Foreign Minister, Marise Payne, and the Indian External

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[61] E Chan, S Zhang, 'Disinformation, stigma and chinese diaspora: policy guidance for Australia', *First Draft website,* 31 August 2021, https://firstdraftnews.org/long-form-article/disinformation-stigma-and-chinese-diaspora-policy-guidance-for-australia/,

[62] Dr J Wallis, 'Influence for hire: the Asia-Pacific's online shadow economy', *Australian Strategic Policy Institute,* 10 August 2021, https://www.aspi.org.au/report/influence-hire

Affairs Minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar to discuss global technology governance, including how governments and the private sector can work together to combat misinformation and disinformation.

- **Meta provides a free CrowdTangle public live display on COVID-19 publicly available to allow anybody to analyse public content on our platforms.** We continue to provide access to CrowdTangle by news publishers, third-party fact-checking partners and approved academics.

  We also continue to provide access to the COVID-19 public live display that tracks engagement on Facebook and Instagram. It is available at: https://apps.crowdtangle.com/covid19/boards/covid-19australia.

  In March 2022, we launched a new public, Live Display on Crowdtangle to provide real-time coverage of the Australian federal election.[63] Further detail can be found in the Case Study: Australian federal election 2022, on page 36.

- **Meta collaborates with researchers to undertake surveys of our users to assess their views on topics such as vaccines and climate change.** We continue to offer the COVID-19 Symptom Survey, the largest public health survey in history, with Carnegie-Mellon and University of Maryland.

  Since the 2021 transparency report, we have expanded the survey and consolidated new insights on its effectiveness:
  - This survey has now been rolled out to over 200 countries across more than 55 languages.
  - Since its launch in April 2020, over 38 million responses have been collected.[64]
  - We have been able to use these responses to better understand vaccine acceptance. Comparing the responses over time, we've seen people's vaccine acceptance rising i.e. by 35 percent in France, 25 percent in Indonesia, and 20 percent in Nigeria.[65]

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[63] J Machin, 'How Meta is preparing for the 2022 Australian election', *Facebook Australia blog*, 15 March 2022, https://australia.fb.com/post/how-meta-is-preparing-for-the-2022-australian-election/

[64] Social Data Science Centre, 'Tracking global COVID-19 vaccination uptake and sentiment in 200+ countries and territories' 16 Feb 2021, https://socialdatascience.umd.edu/tracking-global-covid-19-vaccination-uptake-and-sentiments-in-200-countries-and-territories-using-the-covid-symptom-survey/

[65] G Rosen, 'Community standards enforcement report - second quarter 2021', *Meta Newsroom,* 18 August 202,, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/community-standards-enforcement-report-q2-2021/

- **Meta provides data to researchers in a privacy-protective way via the Facebook Open Research and Transparency initiative.**
  In November 2021 we announced the piloting of a new Researcher API as part of the Facebook Open Research and Transparency (FORT) initiative, which allows qualified academics to conduct longitudinal research across all public Facebook Pages, Groups and Events.[66] This API will help academics understand how public discussions on Facebook influence the social issues of the day.

  We have invited a small group of qualified academics from the US and EU to test this product and provide feedback, so we can iterate and improve it before launching more broadly. We intend to launch the Researcher API to other countries soon, including Australia.

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[66] G Rosen, 'Community standards enforcement report - third quarter 2021', *Meta Newsroom*, 9 November 2021, https://about.fb.com/news/2021/11/community-standards-enforcement-report-q3-2021/

Outcome 7

The public can access information about the measures Signatories have taken to combat Disinformation and Misinformation.

All Signatories will make and publish the annual report information in section 7

- **Meta will continue to publish annual reports in Australia, such as these, to be transparent about the steps we are taking to combat disinformation and misinformation.** We met this requirement in 2021 by publishing a transparency report on our Meta Australia blog, and speaking publicly to media about our work.[67]

   The publication of this report satisfies this requirement for 2022.

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[67] J Machin, 'Facebook's response to Australia's disinformation and misinformation code', Facebook Australia blog, 21 May 2021, https://australia.fb.com/post/facebooks-response-to-australias-disinformation-and-misinformation-industry-code/

Appendix A: 2021 specific commitments made by Meta under the industry code on misinformation and disinformation

Please note: the previous commitments referred to "Facebook". Given the company changed its name in October 2021, we have updated the commitments below to reflect the new company name.

Outcome 1: **Combatting misinformation / disinformation**	● Meta removes networks of accounts, Pages and Groups that violate our inauthentic behaviour policy, including disinformation that violates our policy on Coordinated Inauthentic Behaviour. ● Meta partners with experts and organisations who assist in providing tips or further investigation about possible inauthentic behaviour on our services. ● Meta removes misinformation that violates our Misinformation & Harm policy. ● Meta removes manipulated media, also known as "deepfakes", that violates our Manipulated Media policy. ● Meta removes material that violates our Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network policy. ● Meta removes election-related misinformation that may constitute voter suppression. ● Meta removes fake accounts. ● Meta allows for appeals in instances where users may disagree with our enforcement, including to the independent and external Oversight Board. ● Meta partners with third-party fact-checking organisations, globally and in Australia, to assess the accuracy of content on our services. ● Meta will add additional fact-checking capability in Australia in 2021. ● Meta applies a warning label to content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations. ● Meta reduces the distribution of content found to be false by third-party fact-checking organisations.

	• Meta proactively searches for content that makes claims debunked by our fact-checking partners, to apply the same treatments.
	• Meta limits the ability to forward material via private messaging.
	• Meta takes action on Pages, Groups, accounts or websites found to repeatedly share misinformation.
	• Meta removes Groups from recommendations if they violate our recommendation guidelines, including around misinformation.
	• Meta makes available a detailed list of claims that we consider to violate our COVID-19 Misinformation & Harm policy.
	• Meta makes information available via a dedicated website that outlines our efforts to combat misinformation.
	• Meta makes on-platform reporting channels available to users for false information.
	• Meta makes global transparent reports available regularly.
	• Meta will supplement these reports with additional Australia-specific statistics, provided as part of this Annual Report process.
	• Meta makes the service CrowdTangle freely available to journalists, third-party fact-checking partners, and some academics.
Outcome 2: **Disrupt monetisation and advertising incentives**	• Meta sets a higher threshold for users to be able to advertise on our services, and takes action against users who spread misinformation.
Outcome 3: **Combat inauthentic user behaviour**	See items listed under Outcome 1.

Outcome 4: **Empower consumers to be informed**	● Meta provides contextual information around posts that users see from public Pages. ● Meta provides a COVID-19 Information Centre with verified, authoritative information about COVID-19. ● Meta will launch a Climate Science Information Centre in Australia. ● Meta uses in-product prompts to direct Australians to authoritative information on key topics. ● Meta gives substantial ad credits to authoritative organisations, including the Australian Government and state and territory governments, to promote authoritative information. ● Meta directs users to authoritative information when they search for high-priority topics on Facebook. ● Meta directs users to authoritative information once they have seen or shared COVID-19 related misinformation. ● Meta will look for opportunities to continue to work with the Government on other ways to promote authoritative information. ● Meta promotes public service announcements to our users to encourage them to be wary of potential misinformation.
Outcome 5: **Political advertising**	● Meta requires all advertisers of political ads to complete an ad authorisation, which includes verifying the advertiser's identity. ● Meta requires political ads to include a disclaimer disclosing who is paying for the ad. ● Meta provides the Ad Library, a searchable archive of all political ads on our services in Australia, and will continue to add functionality to encourage scrutiny of political advertising. ● Meta enables an Ad Library report that provides aggregated spend information about Pages undertaking political ads. ● Meta will extend the policies and enforcement for political ads to social issue ads in 2021.

Outcome 6: **Research**	● Meta will continue to support research and events in relation to misinformation and media literacy. ● Meta will continue to support research and events in relation to disinformation. ● Meta provides a free CrowdTangle live display on COVID-19 publicly available to allow anybody to track public content on our platforms. ● Meta collaborates with researchers to undertake surveys of our users to assess their views on topics such as vaccines and climate change. ● Meta provides data to researchers in a privacy-protective way via the Facebook Open Research and Transparency initiative.
Outcome 7: **Annual reports**	● Meta will continue to publish annual reports in Australia, such as these, to be transparent about the steps we are taking to combat disinformation and misinformation.