



Cross-agency communication and media protocol

Protocol owners

Department of Social Services (DSS)	██████████ Branch Manager, Communication Services Branch (CSB), Corporate and Governance Group ██████████, Branch Manager, Community Cohesion Branch (CCB), Communities Group
eSafety Commissioner (eSafety)	██████████, A/g Executive Manager, eSafety ██████████, Communications Advisor, ██████████ ██████████, Manager Diverse Communities, ██████████
Good Things Foundation (GTF) Australia	██████████ ██ ██

Protocol owners and their team members are responsible for the implementation and management of these protocols.

Introduction

This protocol outlines a collaborative approach for developing and handling communication and media activities for the jointly promoted Be Connected program.

Scope

The following activities are in scope under this protocol:

- development of communication strategies and plans outlining promotional and marketing activities (for example, blogs and media releases)
- paid and unpaid communication activities to promote the program or components (including tools and resources, or statistics)
- communication products developed for the program, including media products application of the program’s messages¹ and brand name²
- attending or sponsoring events on behalf of the program
- research to support the program
- evaluation of marketing and promotional activities, tools, products and resources.

Governance

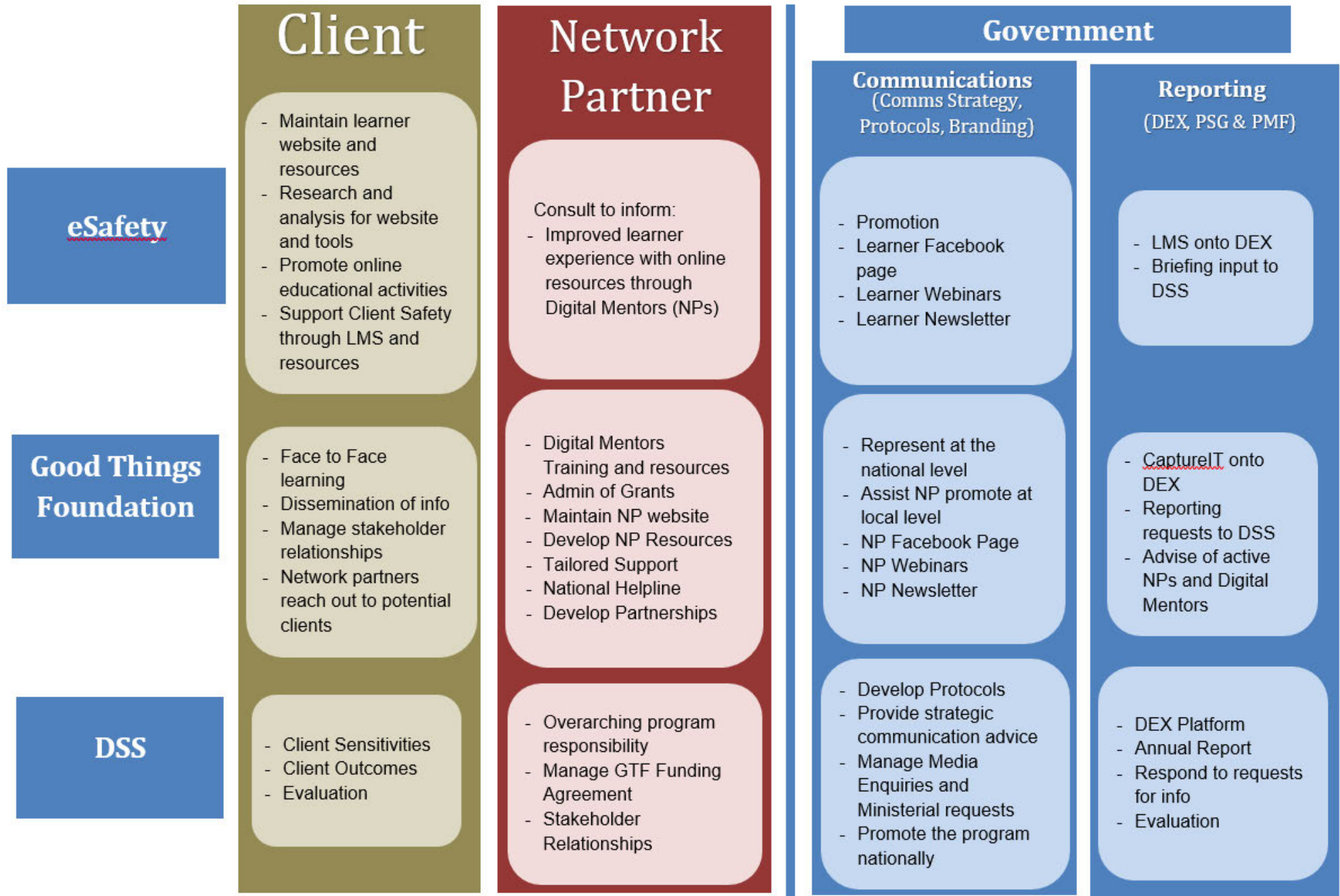
¹ See Attachment A: Program Messages

Roles and responsibilities

Outlined below are the responsibilities of the core agencies promoting the Be Connected program.

	Responsibilities
Department of Social Services (DSS), Communication Services Branch (CSB)	<p>Overarching responsibility for Be Connected communications and media protocols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide ongoing strategic communication advice to support the policy team to implement the program to promote the program at a national level and maintain the Be Connected brand to manage media enquiries directed to the Department and ministerial requests related to the program.
eSafety Commissioner (eSafety)	<p>The Be Connected website and online integrated learning management system for older Australians (Learners) to access a range of digital learning tools and resources is managed by the eSafety Commissioner.</p> <p>Learner Communications & Research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain the Be Connected Learner website and associated tools and resources to undertake research and analytics for the website and tools to promote any educational activities for the tools developed to contribute to the design, implementation and delivery of Be Connected Learner materials and resources. <p>The eSafety Commissioner promotes Be Connected and the online integrated learning management system at a corporate, government and philanthropic partner level.</p> <p>Manage media enquiries directed to eSafety</p>
Good Things Foundation Australia (GTF)	<p>The Be Connected Network of community organisations (Network Partners) is managed by Good Things Foundation.</p> <p>Note: Network Partners play a key role in promoting their programs at a local level. They are provided with marketing resources as part of their participation in the program.</p> <p>Community & Network Partner Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to manage the continued engagement and retention of Be Connected Network Partners delivering digital learning to manage the provision and dissemination of information, tools and resources to Be Connected Network Partners to enable them to meet the needs of learners to manage and promote the Be Connected Community Grants program to assist Network Partners deliver Be Connected program learning support to older Australians. <p>The Good Things Foundation promotes the Be Connected Network at the corporate, government and philanthropic partner level.</p> <p>Manage media enquiries directed to Good Things Foundation Australia</p>

Be Connected – Digital Skills for Older Australians – Responsibilities Overview



Communication between agencies

CSB will lead a monthly communication working group. The group will discuss the progress of their respective current communication activities and upcoming issues. A summary from this meeting will be presented at the Digital Literacy of Older Australians working group during the standing Communications item.

Communication between the parties will also occur through informal channels, for example phone calls and emails.

Partnership Principles

- **Be Unified** - Have a unified focus on the best outcomes for Older Australians.
- **Strengths** - Make the most of each others' strengths.
- **Be Creative and Curious** - Focus on taking a creative, positive and curious approach to working together .
- **Support Each Other** - Have a mindset where you identify the problem to solve, and support each other to solve it.
- **Be Transparent** – Be clear about expectations. It is important to share skills and expertise to reach a common goal.
- **Be Inclusive** – share information so that everyone is kept in the loop.

Processes and guidelines

Each party will be mindful of each other's internal processes and respect internal approval protocols.

Media enquiries

- Media enquiries directed to each agency will be managed by that agency, unless it falls outside of their scope for the program. Each agency will liaise with DSS prior to significant media outreach campaigns relating to Be Connected. [All media enquiries relating to Be Connected specifically by other agencies will be forwarded to DSS for visibility.](#)
- If ownership of an enquiry is unclear, the responsible media officers will discuss and agree on the lead. This may involve discussion with media advisors in the relevant Minister's Office (MO).
- Regardless of the lead, CSB must be informed of **every media enquiry** about the program and sent a cleared response.
- Each party who has responsibility for content in an enquiry will be informed as soon as possible (via their media inbox and follow up phone call) regardless of which party receives the initial enquiry.
- A copy of the final version of the response will be sent for information only to the communication teams of all other relevant parties.
- Each party will proactively manage issues that may arise relating to the program. Other parties will be consulted/informed where an issue has been identified.

Announcements and media releases

- All parties must be informed of any plans for announcements/media releases that mention the Be Connected program.
- Parties should receive a copy of a media release for reference during the drafting stage.
- Media releases should always include the approved 'background' line⁴ and other approved program messages in the first instance where appropriate.
- The agency/party instigating a media release is responsible for its progress and approval.
- The Minister for Families and Social Services, Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, and eSafety Commissioner will be provided joint opportunities

to issue media releases about the program and all associated activities. These opportunities will be identified during the monthly communication meeting.

Social media

- Each party will work collaboratively to develop responses to questions on social media accounts that fall within another party's responsibility in a timely manner.
- If a party receives a query they cannot answer, they should engage with the relevant party(s) to develop a response before replying to the post/comment.
- Each party is responsible for ensuring the voice and tone of responses is appropriate for their own social media accounts.
- Each party will use the #BeConnectedAU hashtag as part of their social posts.
- Each party will be notified of published social media posts so they can be shared or 'liked' by other party's accounts. A forward plan of social media posts will be discussed at the monthly communication meeting where possible/practicable.

Communication and marketing activities

- Each party will work collaboratively to inform one another of planned communication activities and take advantage of joint opportunities to reach common target audiences.
- Parties will attend a monthly communication working group to discuss communication activities.
- Each party is responsible for updating the communication activities table.
- Each party will consult as early as possible in regards to communication where there may be service delivery implications.
- Each party will consult with the communication working group when:
 - new learner content and/or learner opportunities are announced; and
 - new Be Connected marketing materials are produced.
- Parties are responsible for informing each other when a breakdown in communication is identified or issues arise and will actively work collaboratively to resolve issues.
- All communications and marketing activities will follow the Be Connected Brand Guide (Attachment C).

Business, policy and program area management

- Individual communication teams are responsible for managing relationships with their respective business areas/policy and program areas.
- Where possible all parties will undertake post-implementation reviews to measure the effectiveness of communication, media and marketing activities. The scope of these reviews will depend upon the specified deliverables. Findings will be made available (where data can be released externally) to each party.

Websites and product branding

- All Learner and Network Partner product materials will follow the Be Connected Brand Guide, listed in the Overarching Communications Strategy, (Attachment C).
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- All Network Partner resources produced for the program will direct Network Partners and learners to the learning content found on the Be Connected website.
- Learner website will follow the Be Connected Brand Guide.
- Any non-Be Connected program funded content will not use the 'Be Connected' branding.

Issues management

- Each party will proactively manage issues that may arise relating to the program. Other parties will be consulted/informed where an issue has been identified.
- In crisis communications scenarios, DSS will be engaged in preparing response as appropriate.

Any issues unable to be resolved should be escalated to DSS for final approval. Key contacts

Agency	Contact person	Role	Phone	Email
DSS Communication Services Branch (CSB)	[REDACTED]	Director, Children, Communities and Redress (CCR)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@dss.gov.au
	[REDACTED]	Account Manager, CCR	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@dss.gov.au
	Media Inbox		02 6146 8080	media@dss.gov.au (for all media enquiries)
DSS Community Cohesion Branch (CCB)	[REDACTED]	Director (Acting)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@dss.gov.au
	[REDACTED]	Assistant Director	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@dss.gov.au
eSafety Commissioner (eSafety)	[REDACTED]	Manager, Diverse Communities	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@esafety.gov.au
	[REDACTED]	Assistant Manager	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]@esafety.gov.au
	[REDACTED]	Communications Advisor		[REDACTED]@esafety.gov.au
Good Things Foundation (GTF)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Monitoring and review

This protocol is in effect from **1 September 2021**. It will be reviewed every six months (minimum) to reflect any program or policy changes that may affect the information contained within the document.

Document change history

Version	Date change was made	Description of change	Author(s)
1	7 December 2016	Initial draft	[REDACTED]
2	17 January 2017	First version	[REDACTED]
3	7 July 2017	Updates to content	[REDACTED]
4	14 August 2017	Updates	[REDACTED]
5	22 August 2017	Updates	[REDACTED]
6	20 October 2017	Updates to Key contacts	[REDACTED]
7	16 January 2019	Updates to content	[REDACTED]
8	24 January 2019	Updates to content	[REDACTED]
9	31 January 2019	Updates and comments	[REDACTED]
10	6 March 2019	Updates and comments	[REDACTED]
11	18 March 2019	Major updates	[REDACTED]
12	19 March 2019	Comments	[REDACTED]
13	26 March 2019	Feedback provided	[REDACTED]
14	29 March 2019	Minor updates	[REDACTED]
15	8 April 2019	Approved protocol in effect	[REDACTED]
16	1 May 2019	Minor revisions	[REDACTED]
17	October 2019	First review due	[REDACTED]
18	19 March 2020	Updates and comments	[REDACTED]
19	19 March 2020	Minor revisions	[REDACTED]
20	22 October 2020	Minor revisions	[REDACTED]
21	21 December 2020	Review & Major Updates	[REDACTED]
22	8 July 2021	Review & Major Updates	[REDACTED]
23	27 September 2021	Minor Revisions	[REDACTED]
24	14 October 2021	Updates approved	[REDACTED]