SMMA Academic Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting 5 | 16 June 2026 | 7:00 – 9:00am (AEDT)

Attendees

Affiliation	Name
eSafety	Kathryn King, General Manager, Corporate and Strategy Division, eSafety Commissioner (Chair) Deborah Welsh, Executive Manager, Strategy, Engagement and Research Members of the eSafety Research and Evaluation Team
Social Media Lab (SML), Stanford University	Professor Jeff Hancock Dr Sunny Xun Liu Members of the SML team
University of Melbourne; Royal Children's Hospital; Murdoch Children's Research institute	Professor Susan Sawyer
Black Dog Institute, University of New South Wales	Associate Professor Aliza Werner-Seidler
Professorial Fellow and Director, Centre for Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne	Associate Professor Jo Robinson
Young and Resilient Research Centre, Western Sydney University	Professor Amanda Third
School of Psychology, Bath Spa University	Professor Peter Etchells
MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, University of Cambridge	Professor Amy Orben
School of Education, Deakin University	Professor Julian Sefton-Green

Apologies

Distinguished Professor Mitch Prinstein

Professor Katherine Keyes

Distinguished Professor Bronwyn Carlson

Associate Professor Munmun De Choudhury

Minutes

Welcome and opening remarks

- The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.
- The Chair provided the following updates:
    - eSafety published the first compliance update (March 2026) and will continue to uplift compliance and build the evidence base required to support potential enforcement action.
    - There is continued high media and public interest in SMMA, particularly in response to Senate Estimates and whether/when penalties will be issued to platforms.

Update on SMMA evaluation

- eSafety thanked AAG members for their contributions to the review of the protocol paper and explained that it is in the process of resubmission with the British Medical Journal (BMJ).
- eSafety provided updates on components of the evaluation, listed below.

Fieldwork and reporting

- eSafety gave an overview of the completed and upcoming fieldwork activities.
    - Baseline data collection was completed in December 2025. The sample is 4121 parent-child dyads.
    - Wave 2 data collection was completed in April 2026. The sample is 1021 parent-child dyads.
    - Wave 3 data collection commenced in late-June 2026. All 4121 parent-child dyads who completed the baseline survey will be recontacted and given the opportunity to participate. Wave 3 data collection will conclude in mid-July.
- eSafety also provided an update on reporting, noting that the first wave of the public reports, being the Baseline and Wave 2 report and methodology report, are in progress and will be released in August 2026. Additionally, the data collection

provider, Social Research Centre, are writing a technical report for each wave, which will be released alongside the listed eSafety reports.

Qualitative planning

- eSafety thanked the qualitative special interest group for their contributions to qualitative study planning and invited them, along with other interested members, to meet in July to continue planning the next stage of qualitative research.

Key insights form Baseline and Wave 2 data

- eSafety led a sense-making discussion with members, sharing early insights from the Baseline and Wave 2 surveys. Members provided reflections, feedback, and interpretations of the data.
- Members were advised that they will have an opportunity to peer review the Baseline and Wave 2 report in early July.
- Publication timelines for this report were also discussed.

SML update

Pre-registration collaboration

- The SML led a discussion about pre-registration collaboration opportunities and shared their ideas for peer-reviewed publications with the AAG, as listed below:
    - Wellbeing impacts for children and young people
    - Intentions to adhere with SMMA
    - Perceptions and attitudes towards SMMA
    - Digital harm for children and young people
    - Parent-child cohesion and parent experiences.
- SML discussed options for publishing the papers, either as a single consolidated paper or as five separate papers, to ensure consistent messaging across all publications.

International studies

- SML shared they are continuing to work with the supplier to commence fieldwork in New Zealand.

Data sharing principles and process

- eSafety updated the AAG on the development of a data request form for members to complete to request evaluation data. eSafety noted that members will be given the opportunity to review the form and provide any feedback in July.
- eSafety encouraged collaboration and invited members to connect with lead investigators if they are interested in contributing to existing or proposed studies, and to list their details in the data request form.

AAG survey results

- eSafety thanked members for completing the AAG feedback survey, and shared results with the group. Respondents indicated:
    - willingness to continue in their advisory role.
    - the group was functioning well, with open, honest and respectful conversations, productive meetings and feedback from the group actioned transparently
    - smaller working groups and shared documents were seen as useful enablers of collaboration amongst members.
    - a challenge for some was time, and flexible engagement options were noted as ideal, including additional touchpoints outside of formal meetings.
    - that the value of the group could be deepened by leveraging member expertise earlier in the decision-making process, and through enhancing collaboration between members.
    - opportunities to extend the coverage of the group in relation to policy evaluation expertise, more Australian-based expertise and to bring lived experience into the group.
- eSafety noted that it may undertake a second EOI process for AAG members in early 2027 and will use this opportunity to reassess the coverage and membership requirements.

Any other business and close

- There was a discussion about the timeline for the release of the evaluation report and a request to support the development of talking points from the AAG to draw on when discussing the report in the lead up to and after its

release. eSafety reminded AAG members to keep their conflict of interest declarations up to date and alert the Secretariat as/when there are changes to these.

- eSafety reminded AAG members to inform them of any forthcoming publications that cover the SMMA legislation.
- eSafety encouraged AAG members to direct stakeholders requesting briefings or updates on the evaluation to the eSafety Research and Evaluation team.
- eSafety thanked members for their time and thoughtful contributions over the year and formally closed the meeting.

Action Items

- eSafety to share draft public-facing reporting with members for peer review.
- eSafety to share a draft data request form for member's review.
- Members to share and confirm pre-registrations with the broader AAG group and eSafety.
- Members to review draft minutes of this AAG meeting prior to publication on the Evaluation Hub.
- Members to update eSafety of any change to conflict of interest declarations.