



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

DIGITAL MEDIA STRATEGY

2016–18



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FOREWORD



Diplomacy may be an art but its tradecraft is firmly anchored by skills. And in diplomacy, the skills of advocacy, persuasion and networking are indispensable. They are central to DFAT's mission to help make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous. And they are crucial to meet the challenges facing a modern foreign service.

Exponential growth in digital communications is one such challenge. Driven by technology, the communications landscape is more congested than ever. With a rapidly proliferating number of voices online, the competition for attention has never been greater.

DFAT has to work harder and smarter online to be heard above the noise.

Challenge presents opportunity. Enhanced digital engagement offers us the means to better connect with government and non-government organisations, business and community groups, and draw on these conversations to design and deliver responsive policies, programs and services.

Taking action to meet this digital challenge is the purpose of this strategy. It outlines how the department, and our staff, can realise the goal of becoming digital by default.

This strategy is closely connected to every other part of the department's reform agenda. A digital by default approach will help build capability, drive innovation, enable us to cut red tape, empower staff and allow us to work more flexibly.


DFAT's actions are part of a broader Australian Government and Australian Public Service commitment to using new technologies, including digital media, to realise a more open, transparent and consultative form of government.

From initial cautious steps, we have in the last few years witnessed DFAT build the foundations for sustained and successful digital engagement. Now, with the focus this strategy brings to further developing our digital efforts, we are on the pathway to becoming more open, more effective and better equipped to compete in today's crowded marketplace.

With collective commitment across the department to this strategy, I am confident that we can adapt and build our skills to become digital by default, strengthening our tradecraft for 21st century digital diplomacy.

Gary Quinlan AO

Deputy Secretary and Digital Champion



“ GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO
EMBRACE NEW TECHNOLOGIES,
LEVERAGE DATA AND
INNOVATE THE WAY PUBLIC
SERVICES ARE DELIVERED. ”

— Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister.
Speech to the Cebit e-government conference,
Sydney 6 May 2015

INTRODUCTION

No aspect of DFAT's work today is untouched by digital information, digital communication and digital tools. This strategy therefore applies to every area of the department's work in Australia and across our global network of diplomatic posts.

Digital diplomacy – or rather, the use of social media for diplomatic purposes – relates to how diplomats use information and communications technologies to engage in information sharing, public diplomacy, international negotiations and crisis management. It is not just used to promote government policy, it can also help create and implement it.

The objective of the strategy is to instil the practices and build a culture where staff routinely incorporate digital tools and media in all aspects of their work to improve the delivery of our policies, programs and services. This is what digital by default means.

As much as this strategy is a digital agenda, it is also a departmental change agenda. In keeping with broader departmental reforms and capability building initiatives, this strategy is about strengthening the department, engaging with risk, and embedding the value of innovation.

Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will assume general oversight for the strategy and will monitor and report on its implementation throughout its lifespan.

Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will also institute a high-level digital reference group, comprising senior leaders from the department, the wider Australian Public Service and the private sector to provide ongoing guidance as we develop and implement our digital agenda.

Each area of the department should review the strategy and incorporate actions, where appropriate, in work unit business plans and individual Performance and Development Agreements.



“ TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE
WORLD, AND IT IS IMPORTANT
THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE
EMBRACES THIS CHANGE,
AND HARNESSSES IT, TO THE
GREATER ADVANTAGE OF
OUR NATION AND TO THE
PROMOTION OF OUR VALUES
AND OUR INTERESTS ABROAD. ”

— Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs.
Address to the Lowy Institute for
International Policy, Sydney June 2015

DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATIONS

Though informed by professional advice and best practice from across the Australian Public Service and a number of other foreign ministries, this strategy is the result of extensive consultations within the department, through a process which reached out to all staff.

These consultations identified two clear, high-level messages:

1. staff want to do more in terms of digital engagement to further our work, but...
2. are held back by the absence of clear guidance, sufficient skills and enabling tools.

We must include locally engaged staff who are experienced in social media for best-practice examples and to train others in the regions they are in.

The key to successful digital engagement is empowerment of staff, supported by the best available tools and technologies and underpinned by training.

The breadth of the department's work means we need to communicate in a range of ways, depending on the audience and issue at hand. Social media allows more personal communication with key influencers on specific issues.

Digital diplomacy cannot be an afterthought. We need to move away from broadcasting and into engagement; a back and forth rather than a one-sided presentation of our views.

Current graduates understand that jobs can be found all over the place...DFAT needs to be visible at all of the digital touch points where ambitious graduates search.

One of the most useful benefits of an embassy Twitter account is the opportunity to engage local governments, institutions, industry and stakeholders in a way that was not possible in the past.

If you don't know the difference between platforms, you risk communicating in the wrong way. We need good guidance from the start.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

We are living in the digital age. The power of the internet combined with mobile technology has empowered citizens, disrupted industries, and continues to challenge policymakers.

For DFAT, this translates into greater competition for influence. Our political leaders and the public now have multiple sources of information on international affairs and direct means of communication with counterparts in other countries.

Today, our stakeholders are engaged digitally. They are talking to one another, transacting business, delivering and receiving services, disseminating news and information, influencing, forming opinions and making decisions as much via social media as through traditional means of communication.

Digital engagement has therefore become fundamental to the practice of diplomacy and to the department's work.

Since 2011, DFAT has taken a measured approach in its use of social media, primarily as a public diplomacy tool. As the department's digital experience has matured,

the demand for information and more immediate engagement from Ministers and the public alike has grown significantly.

To prosper in the digital age, we should build our internal capabilities and further enhance DFAT's external digital footprint.

We should harness the power of social media platforms and their unprecedented reach as a principal means to communicate directly with stakeholders, inform people about Australia's interests and win influence.

We should find smarter ways to engage with people in Australia, to listen to and reflect domestic perspectives on what we're doing.

Overseas, our posts should consistently pursue social media opportunities to shape debate and manage issues in the same way they do for other forms of communication.

This strategy outlines how we'll achieve this.

The department's social media platforms at end of 2016

 83	 12	 3	 2	 1
 82	 9	 2	 3	 4

DFAT DIGITAL MEDIA STRATEGY 2016-18

This Strategy is built around five separate strands of activity with specific actions and commitments underpinning each: Equip, listen, explain, engage, influence.

These will be central to DFAT building a culture where staff routinely incorporate digital tools and media into all aspects of their work.

Along with the existing actions identified, these strands provide the framework for testing and incorporating new and emerging digital actions throughout the life of the strategy.

Importantly, this is not a series of steps to be worked through sequentially. Each strand contains actions that staff and work units can consider and begin to implement straight away. However a top priority will be to provide staff with the guidance, skills and tools necessary to elevate our digital engagement and communications. Equip will therefore be the foundation for our efforts.

Guided by this framework, and the actions within it, this strategy aims to empower and support the department and its staff, improving the delivery of our policies, programs and services.

101,591
POTENTIAL REACH



DFAT Twitter account, @dfat, live tweeted from the Lowy Institute of International Policy, Sydney 15 February 2016.

OPPORTUNITIES OUTWEIGH RISKS

“ RISK MANAGEMENT IS ABOUT MAKING A CLEAR CALCULATION OF THE BENEFIT OR OPPORTUNITY OF TAKING A COURSE OF ACTION AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF NOT MEETING THAT OBJECTIVE. ”

— Foreword to DFAT’s Guide to Better Risk Management

Today’s world of instant communication challenges traditional models of diplomacy. But the costs of not engaging digitally outweigh the risks. Digital diplomacy will help to retain Australian influence on the international stage and to continue to garner support for DFAT domestically.

The department’s digital engagement will help protect and promote Australian interests. We will use digital communications to be innovative, and to find new ways to explain policies and deliver services. DFAT’s digital diplomacy will add to our existing practice.

We will learn by doing, evaluating what has worked and looking for ways to improve as social media continues to evolve. Through this approach we will meet the standard expected of agencies under the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy by engaging with risk in a positive and open way.



Digital media training at a staff public diplomacy workshop in Canberra.

SCOPE

THIS STRATEGY COVERS THE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLIC FACING DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH TO THE END OF 2018 TO GUIDE SOCIAL MEDIA, MULTIMEDIA AND ONLINE CONTENT.

OVERALL DIRECTION OF GOVERNMENT WEBSITES IS BEING CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE DIGITAL SERVICE STANDARD AGENDA, LED BY THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AGENCY .

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS, INCLUDING THE INTRANET, ARE BEING ADDRESSED SEPARATELY AS PART OF THE DEPARTMENT'S CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

1



EQUIP

We will equip our people at all levels with the right tools and skills to use digital communications effectively.

2



LISTEN

We will actively listen to conversations taking place online to add to our understanding of the world in which we work.

3



EXPLAIN

We will use the right platforms and develop tailored, strategic messaging to explain the Government's international policies and programs and advocate Australian interests overseas.

4



ENGAGE

We will strengthen and extend Australia's relationships through digital diplomacy, networking and by taking part in online discussions.

5



INFLUENCE

We will use our enhanced digital footprint to influence behaviours and shape outcomes that advance Australia's interests.



WE WILL EQUIP OUR PEOPLE AT ALL LEVELS WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS AND SKILLS TO USE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS EFFECTIVELY.

GUIDANCE

We will produce updated departmental guidance to provide clarity on appropriate and effective use of social media in both an official and personal capacity to enable staff to engage online proactively, confidently and responsibly.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

In consultation with Corporate Management Group and the Diplomatic Academy, Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will launch a digital literacy learning and development program. A suite of bespoke learning and development tools, compatible with individual learning styles, will equip staff at all levels to engage more confidently, work more collaboratively and produce work that is digital by default.

 Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade			DFAT Digital Literacy Program		
All Staff		Social Media Managers		HOM/HOP/SES	
Digital Lessons via intranet library + Updated guidance for generalists		Digital Lessons via intranet library + Updated guidance for account managers		Digital Lessons via intranet library + Updated guidance for SES	
Face to Face Pre-posting training for generalists		Face to Face Quarterly training in Canberra + Regional training at Post		Face to Face Pre-posting consultations and training + Upwards Mentoring Program	
Videos Library of training videos for generalists + Updated social media policy video		Videos Library of training videos for account managers		Videos Library of training videos for HOM/HOPs and SES	
Digital Innovation Labs All staff sessions		Digital Innovation Labs All staff sessions + Account manager focus sessions		Digital Innovation Labs All staff sessions + Leadership focus sessions	

DFAT's first Digital Literacy Program will equip staff with the skills needed to work collaboratively and confidently in a digital environment.

UPWARDS MENTORING

To ensure the department's digital agenda is understood and supported from the top, Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will deliver an upwards mentoring program focused on upskilling senior staff in social media as a diplomatic tool.

Senior officers will be paired with junior DFAT officers who will provide practical advice and ongoing support to assist with digital outreach and advocacy, particularly in Head of Mission and special representative roles.



Through DFAT's Upwards Mentoring Program junior staff members will mentor senior staff in engaging confidently on social media.

SPECIALIST RECRUITMENT

In addition to increasing the digital capabilities of DFAT's generalist cohort, the department recognises the value of specialist digital media and communications skills. With support from Corporate Management Group, Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will establish and maintain a specialist media and communications recruitment stream. Specialist officers will be recruited to work across the department, including with overseas posts, to respond to media enquiries and support the department's global advocacy and digital diplomacy efforts.

REGIONAL HUBS

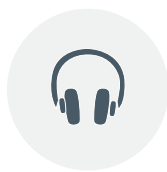
Building on existing regional public diplomacy training programs, the department will establish formal digital diplomacy networks at a regional level. Supported by Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division, regional Hubs will host events and training opportunities focused on building digital capabilities in their region, and will be responsible for connecting informally with other posts and Canberra to share information and best practice. Our posts in Jakarta and London will trial regional hub arrangements with hub posts for other regions to be identified in 2017.



Focussed on building DFAT's digital capabilities at post, regional hubs will be established to host training and maintain social media manager networks in each region.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT LIBRARY

Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will develop and maintain a central library of social media content for use across our global network. Parliamentary and Media Branch will work with subject matter experts across the portfolio to plan and develop content ahead of international days, for high-profile issues and for campaigns and events for use across all Australian Government web and social media channels. This library will also include approved icons and templates to enable staff to easily create infographics to better communicate and explain foreign policy issues. Providing these tools will help ensure the department communicates in a consistent style.



LISTEN

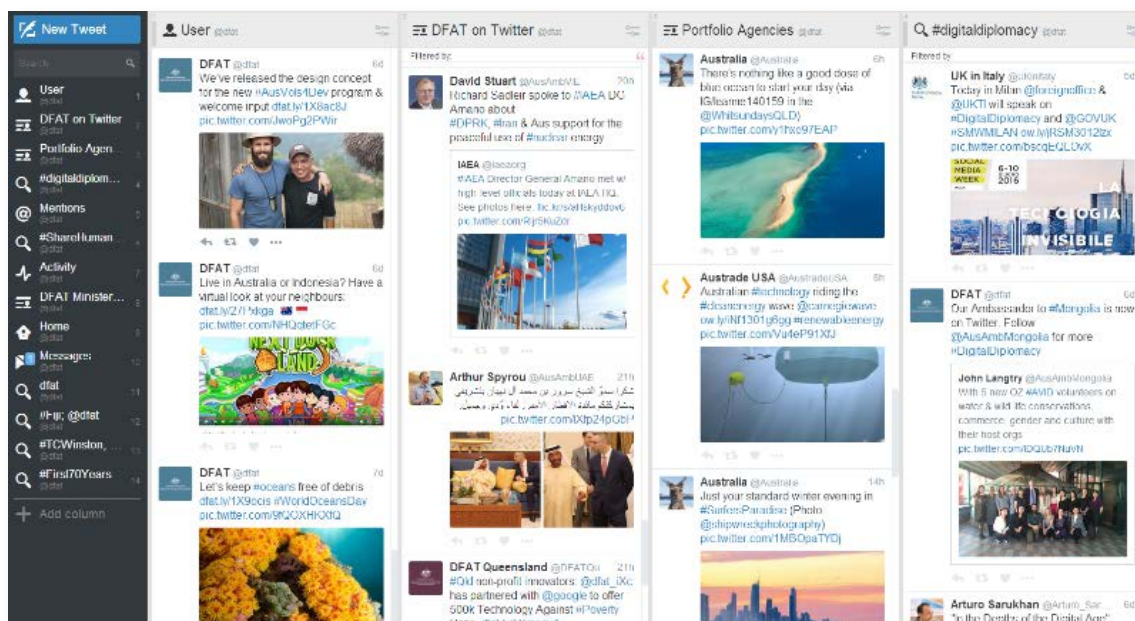
WE WILL ACTIVELY LISTEN TO CONVERSATIONS TAKING PLACE ONLINE TO ADD TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD IN WHICH WE WORK.

SOCIAL MONITORING AND ANALYSIS

In order to pursue more proactive and targeted engagement with our stakeholders, the department must be aware of real-time conversations taking place online and ensure our content and messaging is reaching intended audiences. Parliamentary and Media Branch will manage a range of high-level web and social media reporting and analytics tools that will identify influential groups and conversations, track sentiment towards Australian policy, measure the department's global social reach and enable centralised reporting on the progress of major campaigns.

TOOLS FOR ALL STAFF

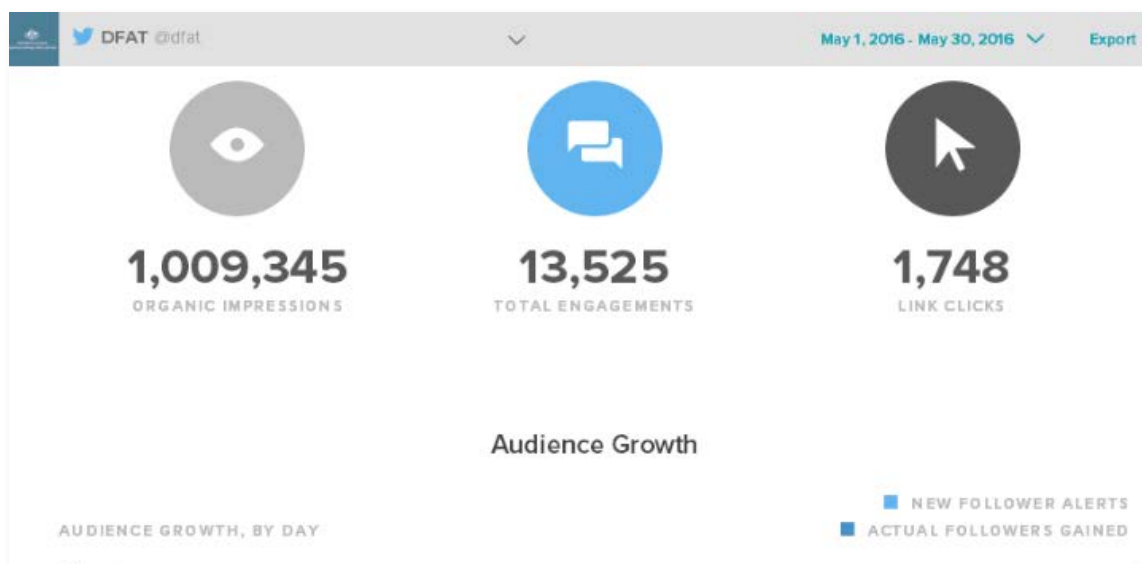
DFAT officers will be offered training to use online social media monitoring tools to follow partner organisations and stakeholders online, to gather news and information relevant to their work.



Staff will be able to follow stakeholders and gather online news and information related to their work.

TOOLS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGERS

The department's network of social media managers will receive access to a single corporate social media tool for content management and reporting of official accounts. Access to quality management and reporting tools will enable our social media managers to undertake a more in-depth analysis of their online presence and enable teams to work more efficiently and flexibly.



Access to quality management and reporting tools will enable our social media managers to undertake a more in-depth analysis of DFAT's online presence.

DOMESTIC SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

To ensure the department is maximising the impact of its domestic channels, DFAT will conduct an annual independent audit to identify where and how Australians are engaging with our issues on social media. Audits will inform the strategic direction and focus of our domestic social media channels.



EXPLAIN

WE WILL USE THE RIGHT PLATFORMS AND DEVELOP TAILORED, STRATEGIC MESSAGING TO EXPLAIN THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AND ADVOCATE AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS OVERSEAS.

COMMITMENT TO REMAIN PLATFORM AGNOSTIC

As technology evolves and our audiences alter the way they receive information, DFAT will continue to explore new and emerging digital platforms and networks to ensure our public engagement remains effective and fit for purpose. Parliamentary and Media Branch will work closely with divisions and posts to identify and use the most appropriate platforms and networks to ensure our advocacy and outreach in each region reaches its full potential.

CENTRALISED MULTIMEDIA LIBRARY

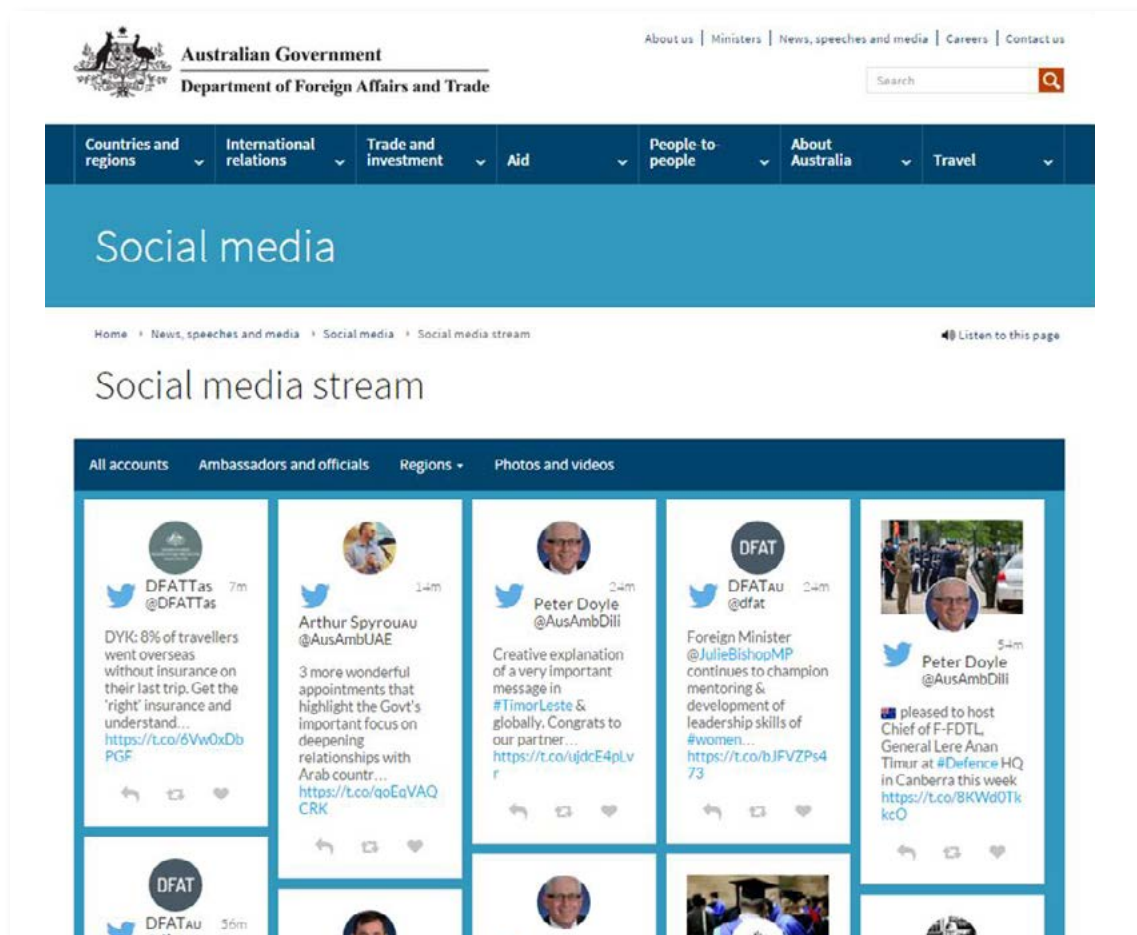
Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division will establish a multimedia library to house the department's growing collection of images, videos and audio files. Using cloud technology, multimedia content owned by DFAT will be centrally housed and made available to the general public, DFAT staff, partner organisations and the media. This will help generate more original social media content, ensure that DFAT's historical legacy is captured, and assist the department and others to communicate the Australian story more broadly.



A centralised multimedia library will support the creation of online content.

THE STREAM

To increase visibility of DFAT's work at home and abroad, the department will launch an interactive social media dashboard showcasing Australia's online diplomatic footprint. 2015 innovationXchange Ideas Challenge finalist, The Stream, will display the department's global online network through the DFAT website. It will allow Australian and global audiences to explore the department's work in real time, and will act as a listening tool for staff working in geographic and thematic areas of the department.



The Stream will allow our audiences to explore the department's work in real time - an innovationXchange Ideas Challenge winner.

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Traditional media talking points provide Ministers, Minister's Offices, Departmental Executive, Media Liaison Section and our overseas posts with essential material on current issues. To support the department's commitment to become digital by default, media talking points will include social media content for use on official social media accounts.

310
RESPONSES

5.9m
POTENTIAL REACH

264,500
POTENTIAL REACH



DFAT Twitter account, @dfat, reaches over 5 million users through UN 70th Anniversary celebrations. anniversary.



The announcement of the new DFAT Secretary was shared by our official Twitter accounts overseas to inform local audiences.



ENGAGE

WE WILL STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH DIGITAL DIPLOMACY, NETWORKING AND BY TAKING PART IN ONLINE DISCUSSIONS.

DIGITAL BY DEFAULT AGENDA

DFAT is committed to pursuing more proactive and targeted engagement with audiences online. As of 2016, all work units planning any form of public outreach must consider digital platforms within their communications and media plans.

62,684
POTENTIAL REACH

198
SHARES



Smartraveller provides safe airtravel tips through infographics.

COMMITMENT TO BEST PRACTICE ENGAGEMENT

As the policy lead on the Digital Media Strategy, Parliamentary and Media Branch will model best practice through its management of the department's website and central social media accounts to provide a benchmark for all departmental digital communications and engagement. Parliamentary and Media Branch will continue to expand the department's digital footprint and experiment with new technologies and new methods of engagement with the public to achieve Australia's diplomatic objectives.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLANS

By 2018, all work units with direct and sustained contact with the public will be required to develop strategic social media communications plans in consultation with Parliamentary and Media Branch. Plans will include annual content strategies and key performance indicators to ensure content has maximum impact.

2,200
FOLLOWED
THE Q&A



DFAT graduate recruits engage with potential applicants during a live Q&A event on the DFAT Graduate Program Facebook Page.

DFAT BLOGS AND WEBINARS

To better support Australian Government policy and in consultation with portfolio Ministers, Parliamentary and Media Branch will increase its range of corporate social media channels to offer opportunities for senior departmental staff, with appropriate clearance, to engage directly with the public on issues related to their areas of expertise. A departmental blog and webinars will strengthen and extend Australia's relationships through digital diplomacy. These channels will enable us to further communicate the work of the department to the public, both domestically and abroad.



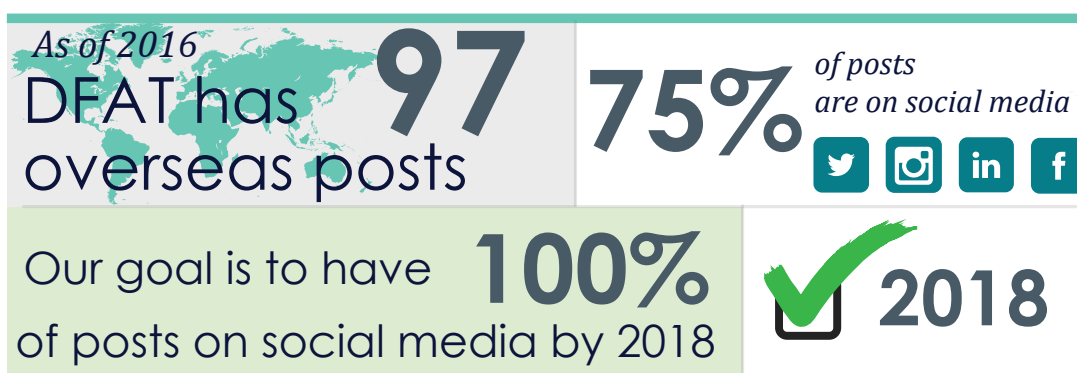
INFLUENCE

WE WILL USE OUR ENHANCED DIGITAL FOOTPRINT TO INFLUENCE BEHAVIOURS AND SHAPE OUTCOMES THAT ADVANCE AUSTRALIA'S INTERESTS.

ENHANCING OUR FOOTPRINT

To ensure Australia remains influential and relevant in the digital operating environment, we must maintain a strong digital diplomatic presence.

By the end of 2017, all posts will aim to be active on at least one social media platform to reach local audiences. Posts will be required to review their online presence, web and social media, every three years or when there is a change of Head of Mission.



DIGITAL CHAMPIONS NETWORK

Parliamentary and Media Branch will identify a group of Digital Champions, who will support new initiatives, provide sustained leadership and demonstrate their specialist capabilities in supporting the department's digital agenda.

Digital Champions will be offered specialist training opportunities to ensure they are up-to-date with the department's position on digital diplomacy in order to provide informal advice and support to staff throughout the department and to further digital advocacy efforts.

SENIOR STAFF ADVOCACY

Australian Heads of Mission and senior officers will be encouraged to think creatively about pursuing social media opportunities to shape debate and manage challenging issues, in the same way they do for other forms of communication.

In addition to post social media accounts, all Australian Heads of Mission will be encouraged to use at least one social media platform by 2018 to engage, influence and inform on Australian policy in their countries of accreditation. The roll-out of new accounts will be overseen by Parliamentary and Media Branch, which will provide advice and support for staff at post and Heads of Mission in selecting a platform and developing a communications and engagement plan.



Paul Grigson
@DubesAustralia

Follow

In Washington, PM Turnbull retells story of taking off his jacket during #blusukan with President Jokowi in #Jakarta



Ambassador to Indonesia, Paul Grigson, updated his Twitter followers on the Australia-Indonesia relationship in real-time.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

To increase influence and strengthen our ability to communicate in an integrated way, web and social media must take a whole-of-government approach.

Guided by Parliamentary and Media Branch, work units in Australia and overseas will actively seek opportunities to leverage digital channels managed by other Australian government agencies and funding partners.

Digital communications will continue to be a central and enforceable element of all funding agreements, whereby recipients must publicly acknowledge DFAT's support and promote project outcomes on their web and social media platforms.



UNICEF Australia
@unicefaustralia

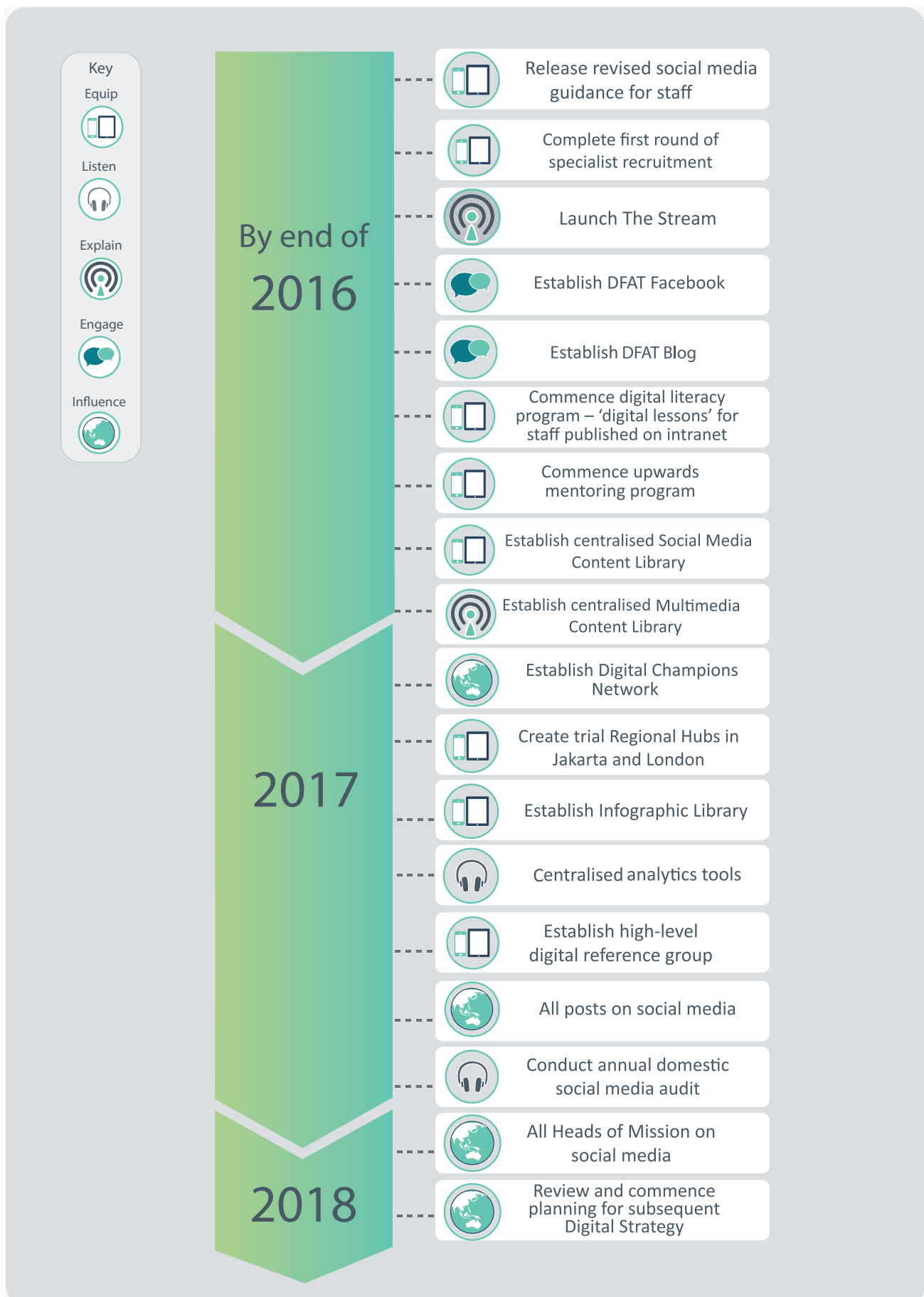
Follow

UNICEF has set up 60 temporary classrooms in #Fiji. More to come thanks to #AustralianAid from @dfat and supporters



UNICEF Australia, @unicefaustralia, recognises its aid partnership with DFAT.

Major Milestones Implementation Timeline



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