

Weather and climate misinformation



Tackling weather and climate dis-, mis- and mal-information



1. Proof driving action: championing evidence-based approaches for trusted communications

- GCS RESIST 2 Counter-disinformation toolkit
- Wall of beliefs
- Audience insight
- Reviewing academic research
- Social & behavioural science
- Expert advice and insight



2. Ready when it matters: planned responses for reactive, real-time impact

- Selectively debunk
- Evidence-based counter-narrative
- Responding to Freedom of Information requests
- Enforcing social media policies
- Web toolkit of information
- Video content



3. Leading the conversation: proactive action to shape the narrative

- Inoculation – inform and explain
- Awareness raising
- Resilience building - encouraging critical thinking
- Supporting scientists' wellbeing
- Network building
- Social media and web content
- Climate literacy video campaign

Disinformation - verifiably false information that is shared with an intent to deceive and mislead

Misinformation - verifiably false information that is shared without the intent to mislead

Malinformation - deliberately misleads by twisting the meaning of truthful information

What the research says

The Government Communications RESIST 2 Disinformation Toolkit and social and behavioural science principles have provided an evidence-base for our approaches to tackling climate misinformation.

For example:

- Inoculation or pre-bunking by providing expertise, credibility and explanation can strengthen resilience to misinformation.
- When debunking or fact checking, leading with the truth is important in order to maximise clarity and impact.
- Encouraging doubt rather than attacking beliefs is more effective at tackling misinformation as is aligning messaging with your audience's values

Let's look at weather first

An unwinnable battle

A culture of weather misinformation

But some green shoots...

- Tiered process developed for dealing with misinformation
- Increased frequency of weather press releases at 'interesting' times
- Fact checking headlines
- Weather briefings for online journalists
- Contextual and educational content

FACT CHECK

Our forecast says:

Dry and settled weather continues for much of the UK, with just a chance of a few showers on Monday and Tuesday. It is expected to gradually turn more unsettled later next week.

15 May 2025

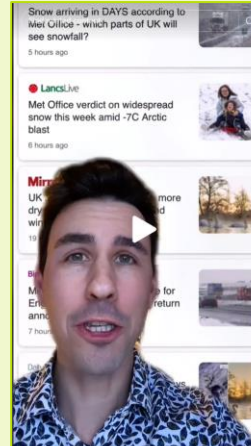
THE NEWS HEADLINE

UK weather maps turn purple as 24-hour snow bomb batters Britain



Weather forecasting in the news media

The media plays a crucial role in keeping everyone informed about the latest weather forecasts and the potential for any severe weather, helping people to make better decisions and to stay safe.



Reactive strategies

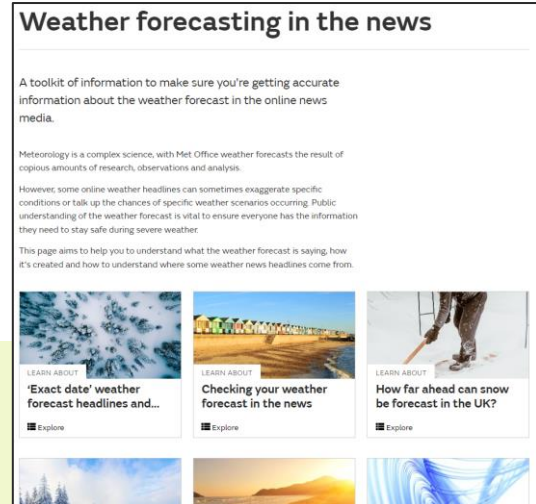
Responses to active misinformation comes in three categories:

- Strategic Silence
 - Monitor reach and impact
- Counter Narrative
 - PRs, briefing, content
- Direct Address
 - Fact checks, videos or blogs specifically on media reports



Proactive strategies

- Evergreen content to improve public weather literacy and ability to determine trustworthy news sources.
- <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/learn-about/weather-forecasting-in-the-news/index>
- Pairing with trusted sources when possible.



What about climate?

Summer 2023 onwards:

- Rise in misinformation on our social media channels
- Rise in Freedom of Information requests

Highlighted the need to develop an evidence-based approach to protect our reputation and help combat the spread and potential impacts of misinformation.

The climate has
always changed...
it's not down to
humans

You can't get the
weather right; how can
you tell us what the
climate will be like?

CO₂ is only a tiny part
of the atmosphere so it
can't have much impact
on the climate...

Reactive communications

Reactive responses to recurring themes with supporting web and video content.



Tackling climate misinformation

A toolkit of information you can trust.

There is overwhelming evidence that climate change is affecting the health of the planet and the wellbeing of billions of people around the world. The impacts are affecting the lives and livelihoods of many, sometimes on a daily basis.

 **Met Office****KNOW YOUR FACTS**

Natural warming?



The climate has **natural variability**,
but most of the recent warming

FACT

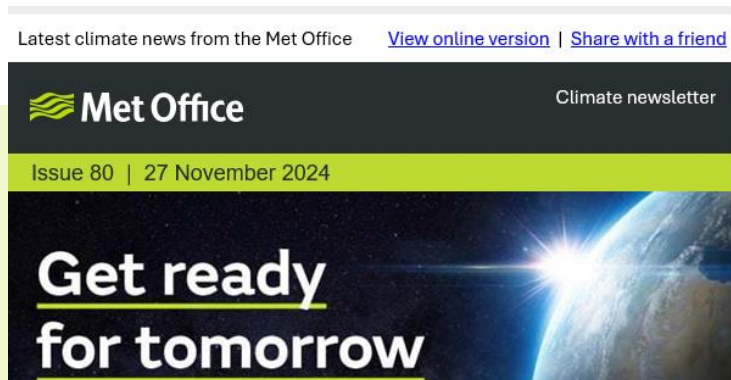
Myth

Explain fallacy

FACT

Proactive communications

- Continuing to share scientific evidence
- Climate literacy campaign



Proactive activity

- Supporting scientists' wellbeing
- Network building – Countering Climate Misinformation Network
- Resilience building



Any questions?

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