

# Coding Scheme

The following is the coding scheme employed in the process of data collection.

## Part One

Measurement strategy: Nominal, univariate. Assign one code per code category to each article.

### 1.1 Date – article publication date.

Code	Description
<i>Day Month Year</i>	Calendar date of article publication

### 1.2 Publication – the newspaper in which article is published.

Code	Description
The Advertiser	Article published in <i>The Advertiser</i>
The Age	Article published in <i>The Age</i>
The Australian	Article published in <i>The Australian</i>
The Australian Financial Review	Article published in <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>
The Canberra Times	Article published in <i>The Canberra Times</i>
The Courier Mail	Article published in <i>The Courier Mail</i>
The Daily Telegraph	Article published in <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
The Herald Sun	Article published in <i>The Herald Sun</i>
The Mercury	Article published in <i>The Mercury</i>
The NT News	Article published in the <i>NT News</i>
The Sydney Morning Herald	Article published in <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>
The West Australian	Article published in <i>The West Australian</i>

**1.3 Media Company Ownership** – the media company that owns the newspaper publication in which article is published.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Australian Community Media	Articles published in <i>The Canberra Times</i>
Fairfax	Articles published in <i>The Australian Financial Review</i> , <i>The Age</i> , or <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>
News Corp	Articles published in <i>The Australian</i> , <i>The NT News</i> , <i>The Herald Sun</i> , <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> , <i>The Advertiser</i> , <i>The Mercury</i> , or <i>The Courier Mail</i>
Seven West Media	Articles published in <i>The West Australian</i>

## Part Two

Measurement strategy: Nominal, multivariate. Record the presence or absence of each code in each code category to each article.

**2.1 Geographic Focus** – the geographic region(s) of sole or dominant focus in article, where dominance is marked by repeated reference. Excluded as indicators of geographic focus are asides, singular mentions, geographic variant names (addressed by code category 2.2, forthcoming), and mentions of location in reference to source or spokesperson location.

Code	Description	Example
International	Geographic region of sole or dominant focus in article is a country or region outside Australia	<p>‘Jabs break lethal hold of virus on Britain’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 9 June 2021  <i>Britain's vaccination program has broken the link between COVID-19 infections and the rate of hospitalisation and death, even for the new India-origin delta variant, the UK government says...</i></p> <p>‘Virus strain risks British exit from lockdown’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 15 May 2021  <i>The highly transmissible "Indian variant" of COVID-19 is spreading rapidly in Britain, threatening to derail Prime Minister Boris Johnson's timetable for bringing the country out of lockdown...</i></p>
National	Geographic region of sole or dominant focus in article is Australia at a national scale (i.e., Australia-wide)	<p>‘Moderna deal vital to counter virus variants’, <i>The Australian</i>, published on 14 May 2021  <i>The federal government has moved to ensure Australians are protected against variant COVID-19 strains by clinching a deal with US biotech Moderna to supply 25 million doses of mRNA vaccine... The first 10 million Moderna vaccine doses will arrive in Australia late this year ‘</i></p> <p>‘Calls to close gap between injections’, <i>The Courier Mail</i>, published on 1 June 2021  <i>The gap between the first and second dose of the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine must be cut from 12 to eight weeks to protect Australia against the threat of the Indian virus variant, experts have said...</i></p>

## 2.1 Geographic Focus (cont.)

Code	Description	Example
Multiple States or Territories	Geographic regions of sole or dominant focus in article are two or more Australian states or territories	‘Victorian pair bring new virus into state’, <i>The Courier Mail</i> , published on 12 June 2021 <i>A Melbourne couple under police investigation for allegedly breaching public health directions have brought the Covid-19 Kappa variant to Queensland for the first time...</i>
Single State or Territory	Geographic region of sole or dominant focus in article is one Australian state or territory	‘Vic Covid patient in ICU’, <i>The NT News</i> , published on 28 May 2021 <i>Victorian authorities have confirmed a person who contracted coronavirus has been placed into intensive care, as the state battles the highly infectious Indian variant. The state recorded 11 new cases on Thursday and will enter a seven-day circuit day breaker lockdown...</i>
Local	Geographic region of sole or dominant focus in article is a specifically identified city or suburb within an Australian state or territory	‘Missing link as cluster expands’, <i>The Advertiser</i> , published on 26 May 2021 <i>Contact tracers are desperately hunting down a missing mystery link as a growing coronavirus outbreak in Melbourne’s northern suburbs has the state on high alert... genomic sequencing linked the latest positive cases to a Wollert man...</i>

**2.2 Variant Naming** – the name(s) used in reference to SARS-CoV-2 variants throughout the headline and body of each article.

Code	Description	Example
Alphanumeric	Use of the alphanumeric terminology of the Pango, Nextstrain, or GISAID naming systems, e.g., B.1.617.2, in nominal reference to variants	<p>‘Virus strain risks British exit from lockdown’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 15 May 2021  <i>...Mr Johnson is being urged to slow down his "road map" out of the country's five-month lockdown to ensure that the small number of B.1.617.2-variant infections does not spiral exponentially....</i></p> <p>‘What we know about the variant hitting Melbourne’, <i>The Age</i>, published on 27 May 2021  <i>...Evidence from experiments on animals suggests B.1.617.1 generates higher viral loads than older versions of the virus...</i></p>
Greek Letter	Use of the WHO-designated Greek letter name in nominal reference to variants	<p>‘Delta variant may be more transmissible than others’, <i>The Age</i>, published on 5 June 2021  <i>The Delta variant of COVID-19 now in Melbourne is likely to be more transmissible than other variants of the virus seen...</i></p> <p>‘Both vaccines winning battle against Delta variant: Reports’, <i>The Advertiser</i>, published on 16 June 2021  <i>The AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines are both highly effective against the Delta variant...</i></p>

## 2.2 Variant Naming (cont.)

Code	Description	Example
Qualified Geographic	Nominal reference to variants with direct reference to a country or region (employing a country or region name immediately preceding key words ‘variant’, ‘mutation’, or ‘strain’), <i>with</i> punctuation or syntax markers rendering name less definite or absolute, such as quotation marks or the phrase ‘so-called’	<p>‘Missing link as cluster expands’, <i>The Advertiser</i>, published on 26 May 2021 <i>Five new cases of the so-called Indian variant emerged on Tuesday...</i></p> <p>‘Virus strain risks British exit from lockdown’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 15 May 2021 <i>The highly transmissible "Indian variant" of COVID-19 is spreading rapidly in Britain...</i></p>
Unqualified Geographic	Nominal reference to variants with direct reference to a country or region (employing a country or region name immediately preceding key words ‘variant’, ‘mutation’ or ‘strain’), <i>without</i> punctuation or syntax markers rendering name less definite or absolute, such as quotation marks or the phrase ‘so-called’	<p>‘Lockdown could be extended’, <i>The Mercury</i>, published on 30 May 2021 <i>Victoria’s lockdown may be extended further than a week, as the state battles to contain the spread of a highly infectious Indian variant of coronavirus...</i></p> <p>‘Variant ‘of concern but not of doom or panic’, experts say’, <i>The Australian</i>, published on 8 June 2021 <i>It’s at least 50 per cent more transmissible than the UK variant, which is itself twice as transmissible as the strain that caused Victoria’s second wave last year...</i></p>

**2.3 Headline Framing** – the aspect(s) of the described event, issue, or topic made salient in the headline of the article.

Code	Description	Example
Call to action	Emphasis on action deemed to be justified or necessitated by event, issue, or problem presented	‘Vax news needs to go viral’, <i>The Advertiser</i> , published on 8 June 2021
Disagreement	Emphasis on disagreement between individuals, groups, or countries (excluding expression of author disagreement)	‘Singapore backlash at India Covid claim’, <i>The Australian</i> , published on 20 May 2021
Economic consequence	Emphasis on economic impact (e.g., financial loss or gain, expense incurred or threatened) in the presentation of event, issue, or problem	‘Snap lockdown is a \$1bn hit to enraged Vic traders’, <i>The Advertiser</i> , published on 28 May 2021
Hope	Emphasis on reassurance or a possible favourable outcome in the presentation of event, issue, or problem	‘All smiles as Europe opens up’, <i>The Advertiser</i> , published on 19 May 2021
Negative causal attribution	Emphasis on or attribution of responsibility in the presentation of a negative or potentially harmful event, issue, or problem (i.e., blame)	‘Indian variant’s high speed stuns contact tracers’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i> , published on 28 May 2021

### 2.3 Headline Framing (cont.)

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
Positive causal attribution	Emphasis on or attribution of responsibility in the presentation of a positive or favourable event or outcome (i.e., credit)	'Vaccines the 'pillar' for reopening the country', <i>The Age</i> , published on 9 June 2021
Threat	Emphasis on (immediate) danger or potential risk to personal or collective safety or security (excluding economic threats)	'Brush past a case to catch it', <i>The Herald Sun</i> , published on 2 June 2021
Uncertainty	Emphasis on unknowns and/or lack of certainty	'Delta variant may be more transmissible than others', <i>The Age</i> , published on 5 June 2021



**2.4 Article Framing** – the aspect(s) of the described event, issue or topic made salient in the body of the article.

Code	Description	Example
Call to action	Emphasis on action deemed to be justified or necessitated by event, issue, or problem presented	‘Lockdown must be a blip, not onset of a grim winter’, <i>The Australian</i> , published on 28 May 2021 <i>The Victorian government’s contact tracing system, which has proven inadequate in the past, also needs serious attention</i>
Disagreement	Emphasis on disagreement between individuals, groups, or countries (excluding expression of author disagreement)	‘Beast not so great a burden’, <i>The Herald Sun</i> , published on 3 June 2021 <i>Chief health officer Professor Brett Sutton was forced on Wednesday to defend his description of the Indian strain as a “beast”, after epidemiologists claimed his and other officials’ confronting language was overplaying the severity of the current outbreak.</i>
Economic consequence	Emphasis on economic impact (e.g., financial loss or gain, expense incurred or threatened) in the presentation of event, issue, or problem	‘Snap lockdown is a \$1bn hit to enraged Vic traders’, <i>The Advertiser</i> , published on 28 May 2021 <i>All Victorians have to stay in their homes for seven days and jobs have also been extended to over 40s in a desperate bid to turbo charge the stuttering vaccine rollout. But businesses have reacted with fury, saying it would “break” some and cost the economy more than a \$1bn with no JobKeeper or rent relief for traders.</i>
Hope	Emphasis on reassurance or a possible favourable outcome in the presentation of event, issue, or problem	‘Pfizer and AZ work on variant’, <i>The Herald Sun</i> , published on 16 June 2021 <i>Reports that both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines prevent hospital admissions of patients in the UK who test positive to the Delta variant of coronavirus should be treated as “good news” because they show the potential of vaccines to provide protection against future variants as well.</i>

## 2.4 Article Framing (cont.)

Code	Description	Example
Negative causal attribution	Emphasis on or attribution of responsibility in the presentation of a negative or potentially harmful event, issue, or problem (i.e., blame)	‘A strain on state’s mind’, <i>The Courier Mail</i> , published on 3 June 2021 <i>The aggressive strain of Covid wreaking havoc in Melbourne has put Queensland authorities on high alert.</i>
Positive causal attribution	Emphasis on or attribution of responsibility in the presentation of a positive or favourable event or outcome (i.e., credit)	‘Vaccines the ‘pillar’ for reopening the country’, <i>The Age</i> , published on 9 June 2021 <i>Dr Stuart Turville, an associate professor in immunovirology at the Kirby Institute, said the UK data on the impact of vaccination on the Delta variant was promising. "The good news is, even though the variant is more transmissible compared to Alpha or Kappa, the vaccines still offer enough breadth of protection in terms of their immune response," he said.</i>
Threat	Emphasis on (immediate) danger or potential risk to personal or collective safety or security (excluding economic threats)	‘Tough to combat India strain’, <i>The Mercury</i> , published on 29 May 2021 <i>Current vaccines could be less effective at combating the current strain of coronavirus circulating in Victoria, the federal government has said.</i>
Uncertainty	Emphasis on unknowns and/or lack of certainty	‘Lockdown could be extended’, <i>The Mercury</i> , published on 30 May 2021 <i>A leading Australian epidemiologist says Victoria’s lockdown may be extended further than a week, as the state battles to contain the spread of a highly infectious Indian variant of coronavirus.</i>

**2.5 Source Citation** – the individual(s) or organisation(s) directly or indirectly quoted in articles, in specific relation to variants.

Code	Description	Example
Academic	Researcher or academic identified as such, directly or indirectly quoted in specific relation to variants, e.g., epidemiologist	‘What we know about the variant hitting Melbourne’, <i>The Age</i> , published on 27 May 2021 <i>[...] evidence does suggest that there is a small reduction in neutralisation by antibodies generated by the AstraZeneca or Pfizer vaccines when compared to earlier variants," said Dr Megan Steain, a researcher at the University of Sydney.</i>
Advisory	Directly or indirectly quoted chief medical officer, chief health officer, health department spokesperson, other government advisor or organisational body, directly or indirectly quoted in specific relation to variants	‘Just a trace of panic’, <i>The Herald Sun</i> , published on 28 May 2021 <i>Chief health officer Brett Sutton said the new Indian variant was spreading twice as fast in Victoria as the peak of coronavirus throughout 2020.</i>
Medical	Doctor or medical practitioner identified as such, directly or indirectly quoted in specific relation to variants	‘Variant ‘of concern but not of doom or panic’, experts say’, <i>The Australian</i> , published on 8 June 2021 <i>Canberra Hospital infectious diseases physician Sanjaya Senanayake said it was not yet clear that the Delta variant was more infectious than other strains</i>
Political	Prime minister, state premier, territory chief minister, federal health minister or other government minister (including acting ministers), directly or indirectly quoted in specific relation to variants	‘Singapore closes schools to fight variant outbreak’, <i>The Australian</i> , published on 18 May 2021 <i>The city-state’s Education Minister, Chan Chun Sing, said the decision was necessary because of the detection of more dangerous viral variants in recent weeks...</i>

## 2.5 Source Citation (cont.)

Code	Description	Example
Unspecified	Unspecified source, directly or indirectly quoted in specific relation to variants	<p data-bbox="1124 347 2022 539">‘UK on edge as variant hits the unvaccinated’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 19 May 2021  <i>Some experts say the Indian variant - the incidence of which has surged 75 per cent in the past week to more than 2300 cases - means Mr Johnson should reconsider his timetable for lifting all remaining restrictions on June 21. Others argue that a delay amounts to costly protection for those who are refusing to protect themselves.</i></p> <p data-bbox="1124 571 2022 794">‘Calls to close gap between injections’, <i>The Courier Mail</i>, published on 1 June 2021  <i>[...] experts say mixing and matching doses of Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines should also be considered after evidence emerged from Spain that it produced a stronger immune response to the virus. Already an aged care worker in Melbourne who had received just a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine has been infected with the Indian virus variant.</i></p>

**2.6 Acknowledgement of Variant History** – reference to a geographic location in the context of variant history outside Australia.

Code	Description	Example
Impartial	Non-attributing, descriptive reference to variant history outside Australia, e.g., ‘first detected in’, ‘first identified in’, ‘first discovered in’	<p>‘No evidence virus strain is a ‘beast’: scientists’, <i>The Age</i>, published on 3 June 2021  <i>The Kappa variant is the new World Health Organisation name given to the B.1.617.1 variant first detected in India.</i></p> <p>‘What we know about the variant hitting Melbourne’, <i>The Age</i>, published on 27 May 2021  <i>The variant now spreading in Victoria was first identified in India in October as the country experienced a surge in infections.</i></p>
Implicating	Implicating or attributing reference to variant history outside Australia, e.g., ‘from’, ‘originated in’	<p>‘‘No evidence’ family caught COVID in NSW’, <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>, published on 5 June 2021  <i>The strain - the more infectious Delta variant that originated in India - has been detected in the family of four...</i></p> <p>‘Virus strain risks British exit from lockdown’, <i>The Australian Financial Review</i>, published on 15 May 2021  <i>Mr Johnson on Thursday (Friday AEST) acknowledged that the new strain from India was "a variant of concern"</i></p>