

## Category: Corporate Design and Communications

### Project: Improving Collaboration and Understanding Through Visualising Complex Policy



#### What was the challenge?

Family and Community Services (FACS) are a government department responsible for a broad and challenging range of social policy work in New South Wales, including statutory out of home care (OOHC) for children and young people. In recent years, the provision of this care has moved to a partnership between FACS and the non-government sector, particularly in the areas of placement and case management. Managing this relationship well is fundamental to ensuring good outcomes for children, young people, families and carers in OOHC.

When FACS approached Second Road, the way the relationship should be managed was articulated in two key modes: a 30 page policy document and a similarly lengthy table of over 130 compliance requirements. The language was mostly bureaucratic and the table was hard to comprehend and navigate. The challenge was to create new artefacts that dramatically lifted their usefulness and accessibility.

#### What was the solution?

Our goal was to create documents that dramatically enhanced caseworkers' understanding of the policy and process for how the relationship should work, in an accessible and easily navigable way. This required refocusing the documents from compliance to the end user, a much clearer and tighter organising structure and a preference for visual rather than word-based communication.

The first document helps orient staff around the policy. It includes a high-level overview of key information and clear descriptions of the main roles and stages in the OOHC process, guiding principles and responsibilities, straight forward answers to common questions and a visualisation of the interactions between agencies.

Accompanying this is a document and poster that visually communicate specific detail around the policy. As well as clear, step-by-step descriptions of activities, colours and icons are used to visually identify important information such as responsibilities, exceptions and other references and resources.

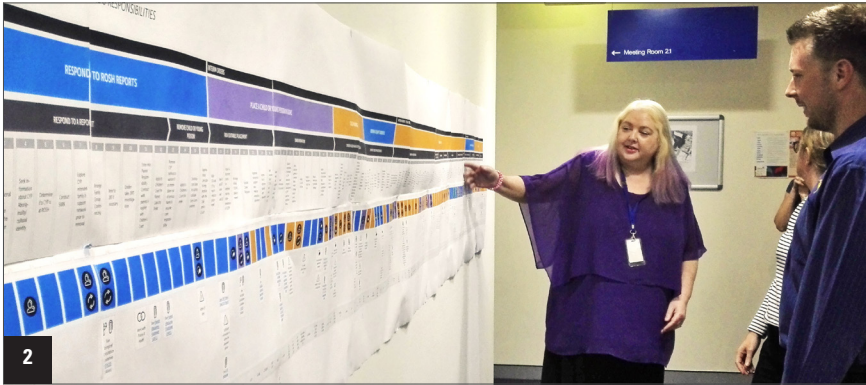
#### What was the effect?

Together, the two documents allow caseworkers to better understand the key aspects and structure of the policy as well as the detail that sits behind it. They have succeeded in making information easier to both find and understand, and the user-friendly format allows easy navigation of the process and clarification of roles and responsibilities.

*"Feedback on the design of the policy and guidelines has been overwhelmingly positive. Practitioners have told us that the visual layout of the child's journey and the use of colour and symbols is appealing and a huge improvement on a Word-based format...this feedback suggests the design has contributed to improving the use of the policy and guidelines by staff which in turn contributes to better understanding of key case management tasks and the different roles and responsibilities...in case management service delivery."*

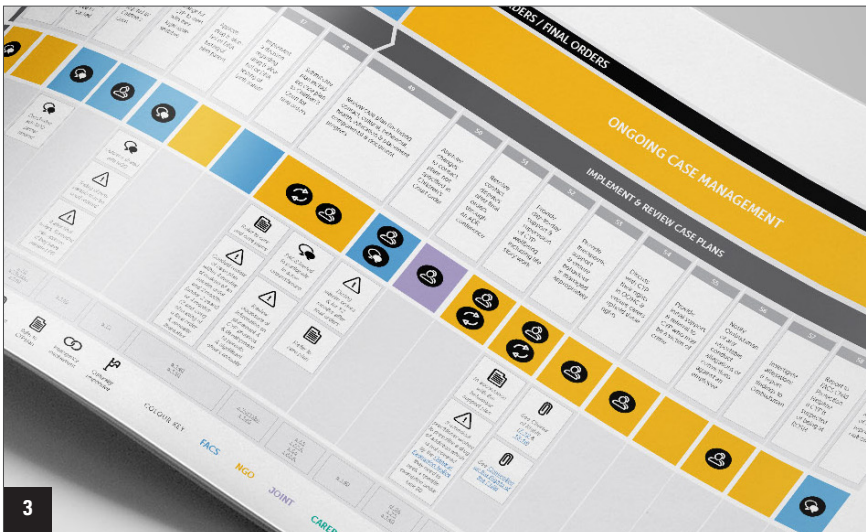
- Senior Project Officer, FACS

Overall, an improved understanding of the guidelines, roles and responsibilities, interactions, steps and resources required by staff ensures that the best outcomes are achieved for all involved, further allowing caseworkers to focus on and support the most vulnerable families.



## 1 Poster format (opposite)

A key aim of the design was to bring the information off the page and make it clear, engaging and discussable. A poster format allowed for this, while at the same time accommodating the necessary detail for each stage of the journey.

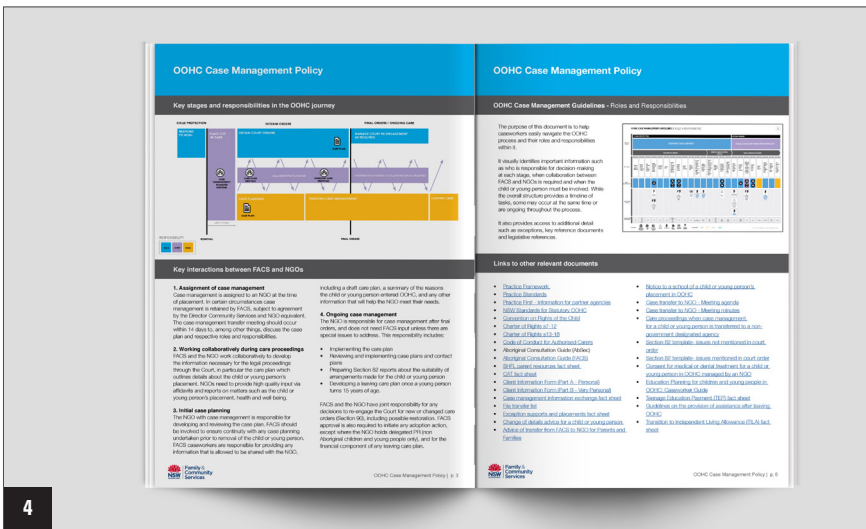


## 2 Poster interaction

The scale of the poster allows staff to use it as a communal reference tool, opening the space for discussion and collaboration.

## 3 Example of process detail

Complex information has been presented in a simplified and user-friendly format that uses icons and colours to denote important information. Examples include showing who is responsible for decision-making at each stage, when collaboration between agencies is required and when the child or young person must be involved. The document also provides additional detail for staff such as relevant document templates and legislative references.



## 4 Policy overview

The policy overview document sets out the overarching context and key information for the policy in six succinct pages.

## Contact:

**name:** Julian Jenkins/ Jessica Browne  
**company/organisation:** Second Road  
**email:** julian.jenkins@secondroad.com.au/ jessica.browne@secondroad.com.au