Buddy Locater & Buddy Comms

Setup and Operations User Manual

USER MANUAL v0.2.8
Browser pilot 0.2.7 | Android beta 2.0.0 (11)
Edition: October 17, 2026

> **Read this first**
> This guide covers the current browser-based Local/Staging pilot. Existing messages and files are protected by account access and HTTPS, but **are not end-to-end encrypted**. Use fictional test content. Premium encrypted features are previews only; the Proudly Served App is still in development.

Find your next step

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PEOPLE | COUNTRY | PERSPECTIVE | ALWAYS

01 / Set up your account

Use the Staging account created for you by Proudly Served. A website account, locator membership access and a buddy connection are separate things.

Activate your password and sign in

01. Open the WordPress account-setup or password-reset email sent to your registered email address. The setup message may call itself a password reset even for a new account.

02. Follow the link and choose your own strong, unique password. Keep the password and setup link private. If a link has expired or was already used, request a fresh one.

03. Open the Staging Buddy Locater page. Choose **Sign in to your member account** if prompted. Use the account name supplied to you and the password you set.

04. Return to Buddy Locater. Wait for **Ready. Choose who you connect with and when you share.** Review the message under **Your membership**.

> **Your test address**
> https://staging.proudlyserved.com/battle-buddy-locater/
> A Local account and a Staging account are separate. A password set on one site does not automatically set the password on the other.

What access do I need?

Buddy connections and pilot messaging: a signed-in account and a mutually accepted buddy connection. You do not have to share a location to message an accepted buddy.

Locator features: current locator access is also required. On Staging this is the active **Buddy Locater Access** membership. Creating a Subscriber account alone does not activate that membership. Contact the test administrator if access is missing; do not purchase a test membership unless specifically instructed.

Your first session

Find **Your buddy code**, exchange it privately with a person you know, then follow the next page to connect. Leave location sharing off unless you deliberately want to test it. Sign out when finished on a shared computer.

02 / Connect with a buddy

A buddy code lets someone request a connection. It is not your login password. Share it privately and confirm the person through a separate channel before accepting a request.

Send a request

01. Copy the value shown under **Your buddy code** and share it privately with your buddy. Ask for their code in return.

02. Paste their code into **Friend's buddy code**. Enter the code without extra spaces.

03. Choose **Send buddy request**. Your connection list will show **Request sent** while the request is pending.

04. Ask your buddy to sign in to their own account. Under **Your buddy connections**, they choose **Accept** on your incoming request. Both sides should then see **Accepted buddy**.

Receive or manage a request

Accept approves an incoming request. **Decline** dismisses an incoming request. **Cancel request** withdraws a request you sent. A pending request does not open a conversation or enable nearby discovery.

Remove, block and reconnect

Remove buddy ends an accepted connection. Conversation and attachment access through that connection is then denied. Removing a buddy is not a promise that every stored message has been erased.

Block also prevents new requests, messages and attachment access, and hides locations in both directions. A blocked entry can show **Blocked by you**. Use **Unblock** if you want to lift your block; you will still need a new request and acceptance to reconnect.

> **New connection, new conversation**
> Reconnecting after removal creates a new conversation. Do not rely on the old conversation reappearing. Codes are normally generated automatically; a custom owner code is a configured exception, not a self-service setting for every member.

If a code is rejected

Check that you are both on Staging, that the code was copied correctly, and that neither account has blocked the other. Do not post codes publicly or repeatedly guess another member's code.

03 / Messages and attachments

Open and send a conversation

01. Under **Your buddy connections**, find an **Accepted buddy** and choose **Buddy Comms**.

02. Check the name in the conversation heading before writing. Enter up to **4,000 characters** in **Your message**.

03. Optionally choose a file. You can send a message, a permitted attachment, or both.

04. Choose **Send message** once and wait for the saved message to appear. If an error says your draft is retained, correct the problem and retry from that same draft. Do not repeatedly click Send.

File limits

Allowed types	PDF, plain text (.txt), JPG/JPEG and PNG
Per file	Up to 2 MB
Pilot allowance	20 MB of stored attachments per sender
Message rate	Up to 20 messages per minute
Not supported	Office documents, executables and other file types

Choose **Remove attachment** to remove a file from your unsent draft. Received files have a **Download** button and are downloaded rather than opened inside the chat. The server checks permitted file content as well as the extension.

> **Use test files only**
> Attachments have not been malware-scanned. Do not send passwords, financial information, medical records, classified material or other sensitive content. Download only files you expected from a buddy you trust.

Unread messages and history

An orange **You Have Unread Messages** notice appears when an accepted buddy has unread messages. Connection buttons can show an unread count. Opening a conversation, or actively viewing it in a focused page, can mark messages read.

The most recent 50 messages load first. Choose **Load older messages** when offered. Messages refresh while the page is open; there are no email, SMS or native push alerts for new chat messages. **Close conversation** closes the panel; it does not delete the conversation.

04 / Optional location sharing

Sharing is off by default. You choose when to send an approximate location. Buddy Comms works without location sharing.

Share deliberately

01. Confirm that **Locator access is active** appears under **Your membership**.

02. Under **Your location, your choice**, check **Share my approximate location with accepted buddies**.

03. Choose **Use my location & share**. If your browser asks, allow location only if you want to proceed.

04. Check the on-screen sharing status and update time. Checking the box alone does not share a location; wait for confirmation after pressing the button.

Find nearby buddies

01. Ask your accepted buddy to enable sharing on their own account. Both people need current locator access and recent shared locations.

02. Set **Search radius** from **5 to 5,000 miles** using the distance menu. The default is 25 miles. For buddies over 1,500 miles apart, choose 2,000, 3,000 or 5,000 miles as needed. Messaging works at any distance without location sharing.

03. Choose **Find buddies**. Review the approximate distance band and the location-update time in each result. Changing the radius clears earlier results; run a new search.

> **Approximate, not a live tracker**
> Coordinates are reduced to a grid before storage. Results show approximate 5-mile distance bands, not exact coordinates or map pins. Grid size varies with latitude, and a buddy near the search boundary may appear inside or outside the selected radius. Sharing is not continuous background tracking.

Stop or refresh sharing

Choose **Stop sharing** to delete your saved shared location immediately. Simply closing the browser or unchecking the consent box is not a substitute for Stop sharing. Use the button whenever you want your saved location removed.

A shared location expires after **24 hours**. To send a newer position, deliberately use the sharing controls again. An expired location is excluded from results even if routine cleanup has not yet run. Membership changes also clear a stored location and require fresh consent.

For controlled tests, ask the administrator for the approved synthetic-location procedure. Do not use another person's real location to test the system.

05 / Privacy and premium status

What protects the current pilot?

The pilot uses HTTPS and signed-in account access. Every conversation read, send and attachment download checks the accepted connection and blocks in both directions. Files are stored privately with the site's message records rather than published as public Media Library links.

> **Current pilot is not end-to-end encrypted**
> Site and database operators can access stored message content and files. A private conversation is not a guarantee that only the two members can read the underlying data. Use fictional, non-sensitive content while testing.

Manage your own data

Expand **Manage my Buddy Locater data** and review the explanation before choosing **Clear my Buddy Locater data**. The control clears your shared location, buddy code, connections, and messages and attachments you sent. It does not delete your WordPress account or membership.

Messages sent by your buddies remain in their records. Blocks placed by other members remain in effect. Backups can retain prior data according to the site's backup policy. Clearing data has no Undo control in this pilot; treat it as permanent for normal use.

Premium preview: not active yet

Expand **Buddy Comms Premium - Development preview** to read the planned features. None of the following can yet be used as working encrypted features:

Messages and files: planned end-to-end encryption using an established encryption service.
Trusted devices: planned device verification and lost-device removal controls.
Your backup, your key: planned optional encrypted backup controlled by the member.

The proposed recovery design means a password reset will not unlock encrypted history. Losing every trusted device and your recovery key would mean losing that history. Those are future design rules, not a claim that current pilot history is encrypted.

Encrypted voice/video is planned for a later phase, with recording off by default. Device registration, recovery-key creation, calling, native app authentication and app-store availability are not supplied by this build. Premium pricing and availability have not been set.

06 / Troubleshooting

No setup email

Check Spam/Junk and confirm the email address with the administrator. A WordPress "link sent" notice confirms acceptance of the send request, not inbox delivery. Ask for a fresh link only if needed.

Password link expired

Use the site's password-reset flow, or ask the administrator to send a new link. Use the newest message and never share its link or your password.

Cannot sign in

Confirm that you are using the Staging site and the correct username. Local and Staging accounts do not automatically share passwords. Reset the password through the normal account flow if needed.

Locator button disabled

An ordinary Subscriber account does not itself grant locator access. Ask the administrator to verify the intended test membership and its exact start/expiry time. Do not assume a one-day date difference is harmless.

No nearby buddies

Both people must be accepted buddies with active locator access and recent shared locations. Check for blocking, expired sharing and the selected radius. No result does not prove that a person is absent or safe.

Location denied/unavailable

Check the browser's site location permission and device location services. Use the HTTPS Staging address. Re-enable permission only if you choose to share, then try the sharing button again.

Message/file rejected

Confirm the connection is accepted and unblocked. Check message length, file type, 2 MB file limit and your 20 MB allowance. If rate-limited, wait a minute. Do not repeatedly send copies.

Unread notice disappears

Opening or actively viewing a conversation may mark it read. Close unused chat pages on other devices during testing; keep one browser session in focus when verifying unread behavior.

Report a problem

Use **Report a concern to Proudly Served** on the Buddy page or visit the Staging Contact page. Include the action attempted, exact error, date/time and time zone, browser/device and whether this was Staging or Local. Remove private conversation content from screenshots. Never send a password, reset link or recovery key.

07 / Administrator setup

This page is for the site owner or an authorized test administrator. Members do not need administrator privileges to use Buddy Locater or Buddy Comms.

Add a tester safely

01. In the correct Staging WordPress dashboard, open **Users > All Users**. Search the intended email/username before creating an account to avoid duplicates.

02. Choose **Add User**, enter the agreed username and email, and choose the **Subscriber** role. Do not grant Administrator or Editor simply for testing.

03. Use WordPress's normal setup email so the tester chooses their own password. If invitations are being held, clear **Send the new user an email about their account** before adding the user. When authorized, use **Send password reset** on the saved user row.

04. Separately review **Memberships > Members** for locator access. Staging maps the **Buddy Locater Access** level (ID 2) to locator permission; Free Member does not grant it. Confirm the intended account and approved test-access dates. Account creation alone does not assign the level.

> **Preserve the test boundary**
> Do not launch paid memberships, change prices, submit a Stripe checkout or create a recurring payment merely to add a tester. Complimentary test access needs its own approved assignment. The setup steps above do not authorize charges.

Local differs from Staging

Local currently uses manual pilot access under **Users > Edit user > Battle Buddy Locater development access**. That field is labeled UTC. Staging uses PMPro status and WordPress-local time checks; old manual dates are ignored there. Verify the actual configured time zone and exact expiry rather than copying displayed dates blindly. Administrators retain pilot locator access.

Two-person acceptance checklist

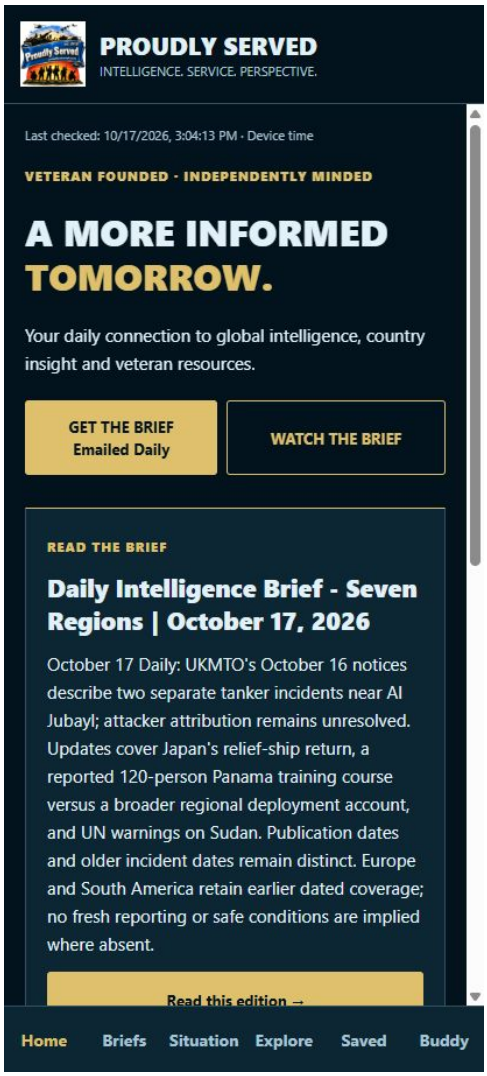
Confirm both logins and expected access. Exchange private codes; send and accept a request. Send a fictional message and a permitted test attachment. Check unread behavior from a focused session. Verify messaging with location sharing off. If authorized, test sharing, radius changes and Stop sharing. Test removal/blocking and confirm conversation/file access is denied. Avoid destructive clearing of another person's records.

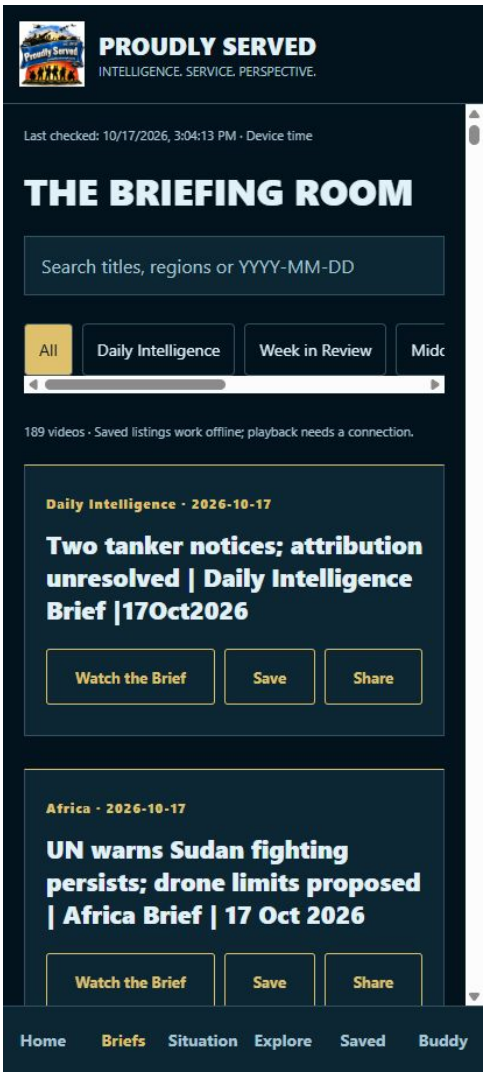
Maintain and distribute this guide

Update the website manual with every available feature rollout: include dated screenshots, build numbers, navigation and expected results. Label previews honestly. Reconcile each new user in Local and Staging WordPress and the existing Buddy Locater Access PMPro level. Verify downloads. Keep tester emails, passwords and setup secrets out of the manual.

08 / Find your way in the App

These are actual mobile-browser captures of the Proudly Served App preview, captured October 17, 2026. They are **not Android device screenshots**; spacing and prompts can differ on the phone. They show navigation, not native service readiness.





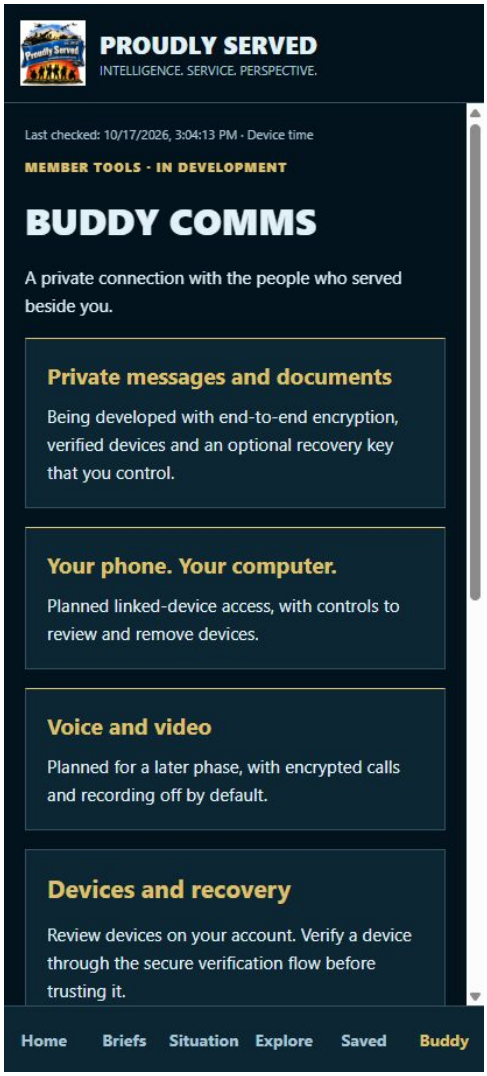
Use the bottom navigation

Home: latest dated brief and video. **Briefs:** browse the series and choose a video. **Situation:** regional assessments and the full map. **Explore:** website areas. **Saved:** locally saved listings. **Buddy:** member-tool preview and beta diagnostics when enabled.

The active tab is highlighted in gold. Scroll within the page to see lower cards. Check the edition and refresh date before using a brief. Open the full website when a feature takes you out of the app.

09 / Buddy tab and beta checks

Select **Buddy** in the bottom navigation. This October 17 mobile-browser preview shows the development cards. It does not demonstrate Android biometrics or a working encrypted conversation.



What to look for

Private messages and documents, linked devices, voice/video and device/recovery cards describe planned secure features. A development-preview label means the feature is not ready for ordinary use.

Android beta 2.0.0 (11)

Approved internal testers can find **Android secure-storage test** further down the Buddy screen in the diagnostic build. That phone-only section is not shown in this browser screenshot.

Use fictional data only. Create or unlock a saved synthetic check, then choose **Unlock lifecycle check**. Background the app and return: expect it to remain locked until an explicit unlock.

Use **Lock lifecycle check** to close the synthetic engine. Keep enrollment between restarts. Clear synthetic check resets only the disposable diagnostic data.

Still unavailable

Native member sign-in, real service messages, attachments, trusted-device verification and recovery are not enabled in build 11. Follow the versioned beta guide for detailed checks. New service tests require a separate readiness notice.

Current limits matter
The browser pilot is not end-to-end encrypted. Build 11 checks synthetic storage and native lifecycle only. Source code and laboratory passes do not make future features available on a phone.